



Drugs Misuse Policy 2024/25

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STATEMENT

All members of the Tavistock College community are committed to tackling drug misuse and to maintaining a drug-free environment; within which pro-active drug education, pastoral support and care can be provided.

SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

1. The College is dedicated to the health and safety of all its students and in doing all it can to make Tavistock College an environment free of illegal drugs. Any drugs that are not prescribed and listed as illegal are controlled by legislation of law, and their general use is considered illegal.
2. Tavistock College is committed to tackling drug misuse.
3. The College acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and seeks to encourage students in need of support to come forward, and to provide them with that support and guidance.

DRUG EDUCATION

The College believes that it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse. The school takes a pro-active stance on this matter, believing that drug education is a vital part of the PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) curriculum for every student.

The aim of drug education at Tavistock College is to give students the facts about drug use and misuse, to emphasise the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and to give students the knowledge, skills and confidence to resist the use of illegal drugs and associated items to ensure students make healthy and informed choices. The College is keen to encourage inter agency cooperation in the field of drug use prevention, and experts in this field will be used wherever possible. The College will continue to liaise with local health and social services and the Police when required.

PASTORAL CARE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AT RISK



The College is aware of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people and is committed to providing support and help for students within a secure and drug-free environment. If a student comes forward, or has been identified by the school as having experimented with drugs outside the College premises, or as being at risk of doing so, they will be offered appropriate advice and support of parents/carers will be requested.

DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS ON THE SCHOOL PREMISES (NOW INCLUDING PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES)

The Psychoactive Substances Act of 2016 now bans formerly 'legal highs' such as 'meow-meow', which are now classified as class B drugs.

1. If the College has reasonable grounds to suspect that drugs are being used on the school premises, the school reserves the right to inform the police. Parents/carers of any students identified as being involved will also be informed.
2. If the College has reasonable grounds to suspect that drugs are being supplied on the College premises, the College will inform the police. Parents/carers of any students identified as being involved will also be informed.
3. If the College is informed of possible criminal activity in relation to drug misuse outside the school premises, the police will be informed, in the interest of safeguarding the health and safety of young people in the area. Parents/carers of any students identified as being involved will also be informed.
4. If controlled drugs or associated items are found on a student or on College premises, parents/carers will be informed and the College reserves the right to inform the police.
5. Tavistock College is committed to tackling drug misuse among young people. Any instances of possession, use or supply of controlled drugs and associated items on school premises will be regarded as a threat to the health and safety of others and will be treated with the utmost seriousness as per the College's behaviour policy.

The College will consider and investigate each incident individually. In an event where the College suspects (or knows) that a student is under the influence of a controlled substance, we will always prioritise the student's safety and well-being first so will seek support (e.g. medical) before taking any other action.

However, it must be made clear that:



A. Students selling controlled and illegal drugs on College premises can expect this to lead to a permanent exclusion.

B. Students being in possession of, using, or under the influence of controlled drugs on the College premises, or when representing the College (e.g. trips, sports matches, etc.), can expect this to lead to at least fixed term exclusion and could lead to permanent exclusion.

C. Students being in possession of controlled drugs outside the College premises and/or during breaks from lessons, on the way to and from the College, when they are in the vicinity of the College can expect this to lead to fixed term exclusion and could lead to permanent exclusion. The vicinity of the College includes, but is not

limited to the surrounding streets, bus stops and recreational areas. This should not be construed as the College's condoning the possession and use of drugs at times and in places other than those referred to above.

D. Any involvement in drug-related incidents will be treated very seriously and students can expect this to lead to fixed term exclusion and could lead to permanent exclusion.

E. The College reserves the right to search students if it is suspected that they may be in possession of banned items or items that are inappropriate in a school setting. In all cases, the school will take steps to ensure that students have access to professional support and advice. The College will consider any incident individually and recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with such incidents.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document:

"PSHE" stands for Personal, Social, Health and Economic education. PSHE education can be defined as a planned programme of learning through which children and young people acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives.



“associated items” means items used in connection with the manufacture, use, storage, sale or concealment of illegal drugs or psychoactive substances.

“at the College” means each of the following: (a) on College premises; (b) anywhere where a student is engaged in an activity organised by College staff or anyone acting on behalf of the College (including when on trips and expeditions); and (c) whenever and wherever the student is wearing the College uniform or other clothing which identifies them as a Tavistock College student, including when travelling to and from the College.

“illegal drug” means a drug or substance that is controlled under the United Kingdom’s misuse of drugs legislation (including the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001), excluding medicine that was prescribed for use by the relevant student by a qualified medical practitioner.

“psychoactive substance” means a substance that affects a person’s mental functioning or emotional state by stimulating or depressing their central nervous system, as described in the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.

Guidance to staff

If you believe, or it is reported to you, that a student may have illegal drugs, psychoactive substances or associated items on their person or in their possession at the College, you should report the matter to the Pastoral Vice Principal and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Action by the member of SLT will then be taken as follows:

1. The student will be seen by the Vice Principal (or designated member of SLT) and another member of staff together and told that the accusation has been made.
2. The student will be asked to empty their pockets, bags etc in front of the Vice Principal (or designated member of SLT) and a witness. This may also extend to their locker.
3. If a student refuses, they will be detained and parents/carers will be contacted. The Police may be contacted.



4. Parents/carers will be informed of the accusation and the results of any subsequent search.

5. If any illegal drugs, psychoactive substances or associated items are found, the student will be questioned further by the Vice Principal, with the parents/carers in attendance (if available) and a witness. If the student's parents/carers cannot be immediately contacted, the interview will take place and they will be informed as soon as possible. The student will be asked to write their statement and account of the situation.

6. A decision as to whether the Police should be called in will be made. The decision will be affected by: - the items found - whether other students are involved - other wider circumstances

At all points the College reserves the right to inform the Police if it deems it to be necessary.

Any member of staff who believes that a student is taking or dealing in illegal drugs, psychoactive substances or associated items whilst at the College, should report the matter immediately to a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who will investigate the allegation following the above guidelines. Students should be encouraged to report immediately to a member of staff any matter(s) concerning illegal drugs, psychoactive substances or associated items.