

# Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School



## Substance Misuse Policy

Authorised by Resolution of the Governing Body of the Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

Signature: .....

Effective date of the policy: 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

Review date of policy: As and when required

**This policy is written in the light of the school mission statement.**

***To create a Christian environment where each student can grow in personality, relationships, knowledge, and skills, ultimately enabling them to realize their full potential.***

This policy should be read in line with the school's **Behaviour and Discipline** policy.

### **Aim**

Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School provides a safe and caring environment for all of its students and staff. We actively seek to provide an environment where all members of the community are safe from harm. As such, the school takes a robust approach to any individual or group that violates our behaviour, drugs or anti-bullying policies.

### **Definition**

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. For the purpose of this policy, by 'drugs' we are referring to:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971);
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, vapes, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), ketamine, khat, amyl nitrites and new psychoactive drugs ('legal highs');
- Prescription only medicines not being used in accordance with an officially issued prescription;
- "Over the counter" remedies not being used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, or improperly obtained;
- Drug paraphernalia- items such as canisters, cannabis grinders, rolling papers, filters, matches, lighters and pipes.

All of these items are **not permitted on school grounds** and possession/use of any of these represents a **breach of our student code of conduct**, as outlined in Appendix 2 of the Behaviour and Discipline policy. This will result in an appropriate sanction being issued.

Students occasionally obtain substances whose composition they do not know; such substances should never be brought into school. Consuming such substances is a grave risk to the safety of the individual, a risk that is made even worse if shared with others in the school community. Students engaging in this behaviour may be subject to the full range of sanctions, including permanent exclusion.

### **Substance Misuse Outside of School**

The school may impose sanctions on a student for misusing drugs outside schools when students are:

- taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity, such as a trip; **or**
- travelling to or from school; **or**
- in some way identifiable as a student at the school.

The school may also impose sanctions on a student for misusing drugs at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, if the misuse:

- could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school; **or**
- poses a threat to another student or member of the public; **or**
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

## **Investigations**

The school will investigate any and all suspected cases of substance use and misuse. This will be conducted by relevant staff and will follow the principles outlined in **Considering breaches of the Behaviour and Discipline Policy**, Appendix 4 of the Behaviour and Discipline policy.

It may be necessary to search a student and their belongings during such investigations. The school has a statutory power to set rules on searches and has a duty as an employer to manage the safety of staff, students and visitors.

Headteachers and authorised staff may search for any item banned by the school rules, which has been identified as an item which may be searched for. School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item they consider harmful or detrimental to the student or expected school behaviour standards. Certain items, such as illegal drugs will require contact with the Police.

In the event that a search is required the following guidelines should be followed:

- Searches should only be carried out in the presence of two members of staff. At least one member of staff will be part of the Senior Leadership Team or a Head of Year;
- Where available there should be at least one member of staff present of the same gender as the student;
- Students should only be asked to remove outer clothing.

Any prohibited items found will be marked in an envelope and placed in the school safe. In the event that it is an illegal substance, the said item will be handed to the police.

Further guidance on searching, screening and confiscation can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

## **Curriculum**

Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School recognises its responsibility to offer a balanced education to all students in relation to all forms of drug use. The delivery of this education is through the PSHE curriculum, Curriculum Extension Days, assemblies, guest speakers and information within form time. Other external agencies such as the Police and the local Drugs Advisory Team may be used as appropriate.

## **Support for students**

At our school the welfare of the student is paramount and intervention will be made if the school feels a student is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or the involvement of their parents'/carers'. We believe that early intervention, where possible, is significant.

Such interventions may include:

- Support and advice in school (signposting from the relevant pastoral team);
- Referral to specialist outside agencies for support;
- Working with the Police.

### **Information sharing**

Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being. All staff should ensure that the Headteacher [or in their absence the Deputy Headteacher(s)] is informed of any incident and a written report should be made. The school will regularly follow up drug related incidents in order to monitor progress.

As a general principle parents will always be notified of the school's concern over a drug related incident. The only exception to this is when the Headteacher feels that the welfare of the young person would be placed in greater jeopardy by this action, in which case, the DSL would be consulted. The Headteacher will report any drug-related incident to the Chair of Governors.

If the Headteacher has reasonable grounds to suspect that drugs are being used or supplied on school premises, they must inform the Police in order to avoid any liability as a "manager or occupier" of premises under Section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act. If the Police wish to interview a student in relation to an investigation, the parents will be informed.

The Headteacher, alone, will take responsibility for liaison with the media on issues related to substance misuse, with the Deputy Headteacher(s) or a nominated member of SLT deputised in the absence of the Headteacher.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Sources of Advice and Support on Substance Misuse**

**Addaction** is one of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. As well as adult services, they provide services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents. The Skills for Life project supports young people with drug misusing parents.

Website: [www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk)

**ADFAM** offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services.

Website: [www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)

**FRANK** is the national drugs awareness campaign aiming to raise awareness amongst young people of the risks of illegal drugs, and to provide information and advice. It also provides support to parents/carers, helping to give them the skills and confidence to communicate with their children about drugs.

Website: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

**Mentor UK** is a non-government organisation with a focus on protecting the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to their lives.

Website: [www.mentoruk.org.uk](http://www.mentoruk.org.uk)