



Student Drugs and Alcohol Policy



New Barn School

Policy written by	 TJ Watson 22.09.2026
Approved by Head Teacher	Victoria Harrington
Signature and date	 22.09.2026
Next Review	22.09.2027
Policy contents • Introduction • Policy aims and objectives • Definition • Legal framework • Disciplinary rules • Support available	

Our Commitment to Pupils Safety and Well-being

At New Barn School we respect and value all children. We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment where all pupils feel able to access education. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm.

This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at New Barn School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. Our curriculum promotes this culture for safeguarding across all subjects and activities we provide for pupils.

Our Commitment to Supporting Autistic Pupils

At New Barn School we aim to provide an environment where Autistic children thrive. We recognise and celebrate the individuality of our pupils and use personalised approaches, allowing pupils with autism to feel supported during the school day. We believe that autism is not a disability, but a different ability. We strive to provide our pupils with the same opportunities and experiences that pupils would have received at a mainstream school, believing passionately that in the right environment, with the right support, our pupils will flourish in education. We do this by focusing on an autism friendly environment, adapting our curriculum and developing personal development

Vision Mission and Values

Diverse Minds – Infinite possibilities

Vision: Empowering young autistic people to live happy and successful lives

Mission: To educate and nurture young autistic people to achieve their full potential and thrive in the community.

Be Kind

We are respectful to each other, always polite and we keep each other safe

Be Brave

We are resilient, embrace new opportunities and we are accepting.

Be You

We are individuals with a sense of belonging and we are ambitious

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The school is committed to upholding the highest standards of health and safety for the protection of our students' mental and physical wellbeing, and creating an environment where Students can thrive and achieve their educational goals.
- 1.2 Drug misuse is the use of illegal drugs and the misuse, whether deliberate or unintentional, of prescribed drugs and other substances, including psychoactive substances. Drug and alcohol misuse damages physical and mental health and wellbeing, affects cognitive abilities and lifestyle, and may lead to intoxication and dependency.
- 1.3 Drug and alcohol misuse may also impact on the school and its community through increased health and safety risks; antisocial and violent behaviours; substandard academic performance and impact on an individual's ability to progress and learn. It may also raise disciplinary issues and/or be a contributory or aggravating factor in a disciplinary matter.
- 1.4 The School is committed to tackling any issues of student drug and alcohol misuse and at the same time wish to ensure that students who need help or have identified a problem get the support they require.

2. Policy aims and objectives

- 2.1 This policy aims to protect Students from the dangers of drug, psychoactive substances and alcohol misuse and to encourage those who have or may have a drug or alcohol problem or are at risk of addiction to seek help.
- 2.2 The School supports the prevention of drug and alcohol related problems by:

- Providing clarity on the school's position on alcohol and drugs in order to minimise problems for students, staff and the NBS community.
- raising awareness.
- identifying problems at an early stage.
- supporting those affected with alcohol or controlled substance related problems by providing clear signposting to the support available to students and encouraging students to access treatment where possible;
 - offering support to Students who seek it.
- ensuring cases are dealt with sympathetically, fairly, and consistently;
- taking disciplinary action
- **Recognising wider safeguarding risks** including exploitation (criminal, sexual, modern slavery, and financial), child-to-parent abuse, and other forms of harm that may be linked to substance misuse.

3. Definitions

3.1 Drugs:

a. All controlled drugs listed in the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and any substance covered by the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Class A drugs include: heroin (diamorphine), cocaine (including crack), methadone, ecstasy (MDMA), LSD, and magic mushrooms.
- Class B drugs include: amphetamines, barbiturates, codeine, cannabis, cathinones (including mephedrone) and synthetic cannabinoids.
- Class C drugs include: benzodiazepines (tranquilisers), GHB/GBL, ketamine, anabolic steroids and benzylpiperazines (BZP).

b. Prescription only medicines (as determined under the Medicines Act 1968). This also includes but is not limited to nootropics, cognitive enhancement drugs (e.g. Modafinil, Ritalin and Sunifram) which are not illegal if they are prescribed by a doctor.

3.2 Supply: The transfer of physical control of a drug (including nootropic, cognitive enhancement drugs) to someone else. It is not important whether there is profit or benefit of any form, although this may be reflected in any decision regarding disciplinary sanction(s).

3.3 Alcohol misuse: Alcohol misuse is a level of consumption which impacts on a student's behaviour.

3.4 The School recognises:

- That if alcohol is consumed then it should be done sensibly and in moderation.
- That excessive drinking on a regular basis or 'binge' drinking may adversely affect individual students, other students, staff or the wider NBS community

3.5 Image Sharing

The School recognises that drug and alcohol misuse may be linked to other safeguarding concerns, including the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes (previously known as sexting). This includes images that are digitally altered or wholly generated by artificial intelligence (e.g., deepfakes). All such incidents mandate a safeguarding response and will be handled in accordance with our safeguarding policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

4. Legal Framework

4.1 The School has a legal responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for students, staff and visitors. Any events where alcohol is made available are also required to be managed properly.

- 4.2 Students are reminded that it is a criminal offence to produce, supply, possess, or import a controlled drug, as defined under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. It is also a criminal offence to produce, supply, possess with the intent to supply, or import psychoactive substances, as defined under the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016. The supply and consumption of alcohol are subject to the restrictions of the Alcohol Licensing Act 1964.

- 4.3 Licence holders, which may include the school and its staff, have a legal duty to manage premises responsibly and have the authority to ban people for their antisocial behaviour from their bars and other places where alcohol is on sale. In addition, this duty encompasses the need to ensure public order when the school provides alcohol that is not necessarily on sale.
- 4.4 The School processes personal information in accordance with current data protection legislation, which collectively encompasses the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. Information about drug or alcohol-related incidents will be handled confidentially and shared only where necessary to safeguard students or meet our legal obligations.

5. Disciplinary rules

5.1 As such, the school prohibits, and will not condone the use or supply of illegal drugs/alcohol on any of its premises. Any such use or supply of illegal drugs/alcohol is a major misconduct offence in its own right.

5.2 The School takes a balanced approach to drug and alcohol-related incidents. While we will not tolerate drug or alcohol misuse, we will not demonise students. Our response will be:

- **Proportionate** – sanctions will reflect the severity and context of the incident
- **Considered** – we will assess each case individually, taking into account the student's age, developmental stage, and personal circumstances
- **Supportive** – we will offer help to all students involved, including those who have misused substances
- **Decided on a case-by-case basis** – we recognise that different situations require different responses

We are committed to supporting students to change their behaviour and understand the risks associated with drug and alcohol misuse. Disciplinary action and support will, where appropriate, take place at the same time.

- 5.3 For the avoidance of doubt, the types of drug or alcohol misuse related conduct most likely to breach Conditions of Registration and be considered under the Disciplinary Procedure for Students (the list is not exhaustive) can be found in the behaviour policy. Students will be signposted to support available for them whilst they may be subject to a disciplinary matter.
- 5.4 Those found in breach will be subject to disciplinary actions either under the behaviour policy and code of conduct for Students and may also be referred to the Police/necessary signposting services.

6. Support available

6.1 Students who believe they have an alcohol or drug-related problem, or are worried about another student at NBS, should seek specialist advice and support as soon as possible. Early intervention is crucial in preventing problems from escalating. Seeking help will not automatically trigger disciplinary action. Our priority is your safety and wellbeing. The support services listed below are confidential, and our staff are here to listen and help you access the right support.

However, if there is a safeguarding concern – for example, if you or another student is at immediate risk of harm – we may need to take action to keep everyone safe. This will always be explained to you, and you will be supported throughout any process.

The School's Pastoral service offers a private and confidential space for students to discuss anything which is impacting their psychological wellbeing and daily life. The service is staffed with trained professionals who understand that drug and alcohol misuse may be linked to other issues, including:

- **Exploitation** – including criminal, sexual, modern slavery, and financial exploitation
- **Mental health difficulties**
- **Trauma or adverse childhood experiences**

- **Peer pressure or relationship difficulties**

The school has an extensive safeguarding team that is available as and when required for all students. The team liaises with parents/carers, students, and professionals (where required), and appropriate referrals may be made to further support the student. We recognise that some students may need specialist external support, and we will work with families to access this where appropriate.

6.2 Students may also speak with a Mental Health lead or first aider within the school. These are:

Jess Larkin – Assistant Headteacher for SEND and Inclusion, Senior Mental Health Lead

Mel Briggs – ELSA – mental health first aider

Dee Kenyon – ELSA – mental health first aider

6.3 External Support. There is also external support available at the following links:

- Drugs and Me: The Home of Harm Reduction (drugsand.me)
- Know the score: Find Out About Drugs - Know the Score
- Talk to Frank: <https://www.talktofrank.com/>
- NHS Drug Addiction: Getting help: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/drug-addictiongetting-help/>
- Drugwise: <https://www.drugwise.org.uk>
- The Mix: essential support for under 25's : <https://www.themix.org.uk/drink-and-drugs>
- Alcohol Change UK: Alcohol harms. Time for change. | Alcohol Change UK • NHS Alcohol Support: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-support/> • Drinkaware: <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/tools/track-and-calculate-units-app>