WREKIN

LOVE THE JOURNEY

WREKIN COLLEGE
CONTROLLED DRUGS AND MISUSE OF SUBSTANCES POLICY AND GUIDELINES

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CONTROLLED DRUGS AND MISUSE OF SUBSTANCES POLICY

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This policy and guidelines needs to be read alongside other school documentation including:

- Anti-Bullying and Child-on-Child Abuse Policies
- Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- Code of Conduct for all staff and governors
- Complaints Policy
- Conducting Interviews, Searches and Confiscation Procedures (Pupils)
- Data Protection Policy (Confidentiality of Information)
- E-Safety and Online Safety Policies
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Centre and First Aid Policy
- Missing Pupil Policy
- PSHE Policy and Programme
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Welfare and Health Policy - Pupils (includes Alcohol and Smoking Policies)
- Wellbeing and Mental Health Policies and Guidelines (includes depression, anxiety, self-harm, eating disorders and suicide intervention)
- Whistleblowing Policy

Other relevant documentation:

- Boarding Mission Statement (available on the school's website, printed in the Parents' Handbook and Pupil Handbook)

- Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards May 2026
- Keeping Children Safe In Education September 2026
- Parents' Handbook
- The School's Aims and Code of Conduct
- Pupil Handbook (accessible via Pupil Homepage (eLearning Hub))

The senior member of staff with overall responsibility for all drug issues within the school is: Deputy Head (Pastoral)/ Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Safeguarding and Child Protection

The person responsible for this policy, in consultation with key personnel (including Health and Wellbeing Centre Staff and parents), is: Supervising DSL/Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Standard 15 of the Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards - Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships:

15.1 The school has and consistently implements a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils, including boarders. The school's approach to behaviour is easily apparent to anyone joining or visiting the school and is evident in the actions and messages from all staff and pupils, including boarders. The school behaviour policy includes detail on:

- the underlying objective to create a safe environment in which all pupils, including boarders, can learn and reach their full potential and to reflect the values and ethos of the school;
- the role of designated staff in maintaining consistent behaviour expectations, including the responsibilities of school leaders, any resources allocated, and the involvement of governors or trustees;
- the behaviour expected of pupils (including boarders), including treating others with dignity, kindness and respect, and the measures to promote positive behaviour, including positive reinforcement and reward and consequence systems;
- how the needs of all pupils, including boarders, and staff are met so members of the school community feel safe knowing that bullying, physical threats or abuse are not tolerated, and that they belong;
- school systems and social norms, including rules, routines and consequences systems for pupils, including boarders' behaviour when in the charge of the school and including when outside of the school premises and online;
- pupil (including boarder) support, including the roles and responsibilities of designated staff and the support provided to pupils with additional needs where those needs might affect behaviour;
- measures to prevent child-on-child abuse and the response to incidents of such abuse, including disciplinary action;
- when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and other physical contact and how this will be managed; and
- arrangements for searching and screening children and their possessions and how this relates to safeguarding policies. Any search of boarders' personal belongings should be carried out in accordance with section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996 and with regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

15.2 The policy complies with relevant legislation and has regard to guidance37, and is accessible, clear and easily understood by staff, pupils, parents and carers.

15.3 Senior leaders should monitor the use of restraint, take appropriate action to prevent the inappropriate use of restraint, and take effective action when inappropriate restraint has been used.

15.4 The headteacher should consider whether members of staff require any additional training and support to enable them to de-escalate potential confrontations between pupils, or potentially violent behaviour, to minimise the need for restraint.

Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards May 2026 - the full document may be viewed at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a0c1d22c75cc34a8ff8f499/National_Minimum_Standards_for_Boarding_Schools.pdf

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Date document updated	Document updated by	Comments	Location of saved file	Date of next review
September 2026	DBM	Updates re: KCSIE 2026, updated Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards May 2026	Google Drive	August 2027
November 2026	DBM	Update on Policy	Google Drive & Website	August 2027

PART 1: CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Aims

The aim of this policy is to prevent Wrekin pupils using controlled drugs or misusing substances. Through education, sanctions and counselling, we aim to build discipline and self-discipline, which will prevent the use of such drugs.

The school is aware that some substances which are not illegal may have an intoxicating and/or hallucinating effect. The use of animal, mineral or vegetable products which have such an effect is against the school rules and pupils using such substances will be dealt with in a similar fashion to those who use illegal substances.

The Policy

- **The use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs whether within the school boundaries or beyond is unacceptable.**
- Through **education** (PSHE in particular), all pupils will be informed and warned about the dangers of misusing drugs.
- Through school **rules and sanctions**, the strongest possible message will be given to all pupils about involvement with drugs, especially controlled drugs and psychoactive substances.
- Through **counselling**, should a pupil remain in the school, those involved in a drug related matter will receive advice and care.

School Rules and Sanctions

The introductory paragraph to Wrekin's School Rules (Policy 2, available on the school website, in the Pupils' and Parents' Handbooks) states the following: **"Breaching any of the following 15 rules constitutes a very serious offence for which a pupil will be placed within our disciplinary system. Dependent on the seriousness of the breach, a pupil might be asked to leave the school, even for a first offence. The following (including any criminal act, contravening UK law, committed at any time) are unacceptable:"** and Rule 4 states, "Buying, trying to buy, selling, consuming or using drugs, alcohol or tobacco, attempting to bring such items into school or encouraging

other pupils to use them. Misuse of substances including solvents etc. The use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs whether within the school boundaries or beyond are unacceptable."

Any pupil involved in the use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs should therefore expect to be asked to leave the school.

Searches and Testing

The school reserves the right to search (including mobile phones) and test if a pupil is suspected to be involved in the use or supply of illegal or other unauthorised drugs. From April 2024, this will include testing for nicotine, with the knowledge that smoking cigarettes and electronic cigarettes (vapes) is illegal for under-18s (as well as against the school rules), and with the intention of deterring Wrekin pupils from doing so.

Following discussion with Governors, parents, staff and a selection of pupils, random drug testing for illegal drugs and nicotine, will be carried out on a regular basis. This testing will be done in private and bearing the dignity of those tested in mind. Given that this will be random testing, of course an assumption of innocence will be made.

Statutory Conditions for Searching Without Consent

In accordance with DfE guidance ('Searching, Screening and Confiscation'), any search conducted without consent must fulfill the following statutory requirements:

1. **Gender of Searcher:** The staff member conducting the search must be of the same sex as the pupil.
2. **Witness Requirement:** A second member of staff must be present as a witness, who must also be of the same sex as the pupil where reasonably practicable.
3. **Emergency Exception:** A search may only be conducted by a staff member of the opposite sex or without a witness present if there is a reasonable belief that there is a risk of serious harm to a person if the search is not conducted immediately.

See PART 2: Testing for Controlled Drugs and Substances Policy and Procedure.

See also the school's 'Conducting Interviews, Searches and Confiscation Procedures'.

Controlled Drugs are those covered by the 'Misuse of Drugs Act 1971' classified as Class A, B and C drugs.

Psychoactive Substances are those covered in the 'Psychoactive Substances Act May 2016'.
It is now a specific criminal offence to produce, supply, offer to supply or be in possession with the intent to supply any psychoactive substance if the substance is likely to be used for its psychoactive effects, regardless of its potential for harm.

This particular policy statement does not therefore cover alcohol or tobacco. These are covered in the school's Welfare and Health Policy and Guidelines.

Drug misuse is defined as the non-medical use of drugs that are only intended for medical treatment and the use of drugs that have no medical purpose. Such drugs are covered by the '*Misuse of Drugs Act'.*

The very illegality of these substances imposes special responsibilities on schools. The school is in loco parentis and has responsibility towards the pupil and the community; it is an offence to be in possession of a controlled drug; it is also an offence (for any member of the school) knowingly to allow controlled drugs to be present or taken, on or off the premises.

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C
Opium	Cannabis resin	Anabolic steroids
Heroin/Methadone	Cannabis herb	Benzodiazepines (diazepam)
Cocaine/Crack cocaine	Amphetamines	(minor tranquillisers e.g.
LSD	Ketamine	temazepam)
Ecstasy (MDMA)	Barbiturates	GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate)
Magic Mushrooms	Codeine	GBL (gamma-butyrolactone)
Methamphetamine (crystal	Ritalin	BZP (benzylpiperazines)
meth)	Synthetic cannabinoids (e.g.	Khat
Class B drugs prepared for	spice)	Some stimulant, anti-depressant
injection	Synthetic cathinones (e.g.	and anti-obesity medicines
	mephedrone, methoxetamine)	Nitrous Oxide (laughing gas)
		Xylazine

The above table refers to some commonly available drugs; **it is not a complete list of controlled drugs.**

Solvents

The school recognises that many ordinary substances lend themselves to misuse and therefore need to be carefully stored and managed. COSHH regulations will apply to secure storage and safekeeping of solvent substances in school.

Mephedrone

Mephedrone (street name 'Meow Meow), a highly addictive and dangerous drug was made illegal 16th April 2010 and is classified as a Class B drug. It is a white or off-white powder. Reports say that it can create a state of psychological dependence.

Cannabis

Cannabis remains an illegal drug with penalties for supply and possession.

CBD and CBD Infused Products

CBD (Cannabidoil) is one of the two active ingredients found in Cannabis (the other being THC - tetrahydrocannabinol).

The possession, supply, production (or concerned in any of these activities) of any form of Cannabis or Cannabis infused products that only contain CBD will be dealt with as a serious disciplinary matter.

The Psychoactive Substances Act May 2016

It is a specific criminal offence to produce, supply, offer to supply or be in possession with the intent to supply any psychoactive substance if the substance is likely to be used for its psychoactive effects, regardless of its potential for harm.

A psychoactive substance is defined in the 2016 law as a drug which is capable of affecting a person's mental functioning or emotional state, but is not currently controlled as a class A, B or C drug. The only exemption from the Act are those substances already controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act, nicotine, alcohol, caffeine and medicinal products.

EDUCATION

Drugs education at Wrekin will take place primarily through our PSHE programme, with regular teachers complemented by outside experts such as the police.

Our education will emphasise that the misuse of drugs has serious consequences for health and future prospects. It will be blunt and factual. We believe there is 'right and wrong' in drug issues. But we will also provide opportunities to listen and to develop personal self-respect as well as respect for the law. In explaining how drugs work, education will stress that apparent short-term thrills are far outweighed by long-term dangers. It will also explore the social pressures that lead to the misuse of drugs.

We will also discuss how to handle social situations positively and in a balanced way, achieving enjoyment, health and fun without personal harm.

Counselling

We encourage pupils to discuss their anxieties with a member of staff. Matters brought in confidence will be treated in confidence and not necessarily subject to disciplinary sanctions.

Confidential and sensitive information is only disclosed internally or externally with careful attention to pupils' rights and needs.

The first concern in managing drugs is meeting the pastoral needs of the pupils and the health and safety of the school community.

Extract from the school's procedure for conducting searches and confiscation:

- The school staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees. The ability for a pupil to give consent may be influenced by the child's age and other factors. If a pupil refuses, then:

- The Head and staff authorised by him (see below) have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item. Prohibited items are:
    - Knives or weapons
    - Alcohol
    - Illegal drugs
    - CBD and CBD infused products
    - So-called 'smart pills'
    - Stolen items
    - Tobacco and cigarette papers
    - Fireworks
    - Pornographic images
    - Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury, or damage to property.

The Head and authorised staff can also search for any item banned by the school rules, which has been identified in the rules as an item, which may be searched for, e.g. electronic cigarettes (vapes).

- Where a member of staff suspects a substance to be a controlled (illegal) drug or is unsure, they should treat the substance as a controlled (illegal) drug as outlined below.

The prohibited items above are included in the school rules.

Authorised staff
The Head decides whom to authorise to use these powers. There is no requirement to provide authorisation in writing.
The following members of staff may search for all items listed above:

- Head
- Deputy Head (Pastoral) and DSL
- Deputy Head (Academic)

In the event of all six being absent from school, the power to search without consent will be passed on to the Assistant Heads.

Safeguarding and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) Lead-In:

Before any formal disciplinary sanction or exclusion is determined following a drug-related incident or positive test, the Supervising DSL will carry out a safeguarding evaluation. This will consider whether the pupil's involvement in drugs or substance misuse is linked to Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), County Lines, coercion, or abuse. Where safeguarding risks are identified, the school's primary response will involve multi-agency referral (such as Children's Social Care/MASH) and targeted pastoral support alongside any necessary disciplinary measures.

Useful Website: www.talktofrank.com

PART 2: TESTING FOR CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The reasons for this policy are:

- To deter the use of illegal drugs and unauthorised substances, including nicotine
- To identify users
- To absolve those who have been wrongly suspected
- To protect all pupils, including the taker of drugs

Testing Upon Suspicion

Reasons to suspect use of illegal drugs or unauthorised substances may arise as a result of information or a complaint received, or because of a pupil's behaviour.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil may be involved in the use (or supply) of illegal drugs or unauthorised substances, or if a pupil is found with any suspicious substances, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) should be informed immediately.

If a search is deemed necessary, this will be organised by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) - see Conducting Interviews, Searches and Confiscation Procedures.

The pupil concerned should expect to be suspended until investigations are completed.

It is extremely rare for a pupil to be caught in possession or under the influence of illegal drugs. More often staff may become concerned about a pupil's possible drug use when the school receives information from parents or pupils or when staff notice changes in behaviour. These changes, of course, may be caused by other factors.

Where there is cause for suspicion that a pupil is/has been using illegal drugs:

- The pupil should expect to be asked to undergo an illegal drugs test for which the pupil will be required to provide a hair follicle sample.
- The pupil will be asked to give written consent for the test.
- The Health and Wellbeing Centre nurses will provide full support and guidance with the procedure in a safe controlled and confidential environment. Two nurses (or one nurse with the Deputy Head Pastoral) will be present.

Drugs testing involving hair sample will involve processing by a suitable accredited NHS laboratory, and thus samples will be posted which will result in a delay before results are received. The cost of this test will be borne by the parent.

Notifying Parents: reasonable endeavours will be made, before a hair sample is provided, to notify a parent or guardian of the requirement for a sample and the reasons for that requirement.

Oral Fluid Test

1. **Informed Consent:** the relevant consent to a drugs test is that of the pupil rather than the parents, even if the pupil is under 16 years of age, provided they are of sufficient maturity and understanding and informed consent is given.

2. **Refusal of Drug Testing.** Testing requires the informed consent of the pupil. If a pupil refuses to provide a sample for a random or targeted test, staff will sensitively explore the reasons for refusal, taking into account any special educational needs, disabilities, or pastoral vulnerabilities. While refusal will not be treated as an automatic admission of guilt, persistent refusal where reasonable suspicion exists may lead to further safeguarding assessment, parental discussion, or an investigation under the school's disciplinary framework.

3. **Supervision:** the sample will be taken in the Health and Wellbeing Centre under the supervision of a School Nurse and with the knowledge of the Deputy Head (Pastoral).
    - **Negative result:** Health and Wellbeing Centre staff will dispose of the sample.
    - **Positive result:** if a positive result is observed, then subsequent action will be taken (see below).
4. **Testing Procedures will be in accordance with standard good practice, strictly following test sampling instructions.**
5. A written record of all tests (positive and negative) will be kept.

The cost of testing using a hair sample will be borne by the parents of the pupil.

Subsequent Action

In the case of a drugs test being positive, the pupil must expect to be required to leave the school; at the very least, they will be suspended pending a final decision. A positive test for nicotine will be treated in the same manner as if a pupil were caught smoking or vaping, in terms of disciplinary procedures (see sanctions, below). Parents will be notified if their child tests positive for nicotine.

Procedure

The school will treat a positive test, although not infallible, as evidence that the pupil has been using drugs. A meeting will be arranged with the Head (or, in his absence, the Deputy Head Pastoral) at which:

- The pupil will be asked to attend with their parents or a member of the staff chosen by the pupil to assist them;
- The evidence of the positive sample and all other relevant evidence will be put to the pupil, who will be invited to respond;
- The pupil's response will be heard and considered and further enquiries will be made if necessary;
- The Head will make a finding of fact, based on the evidence and supported by reasons.

Sanction

If the Head's decision is that the pupil has been using drugs, the Head will outline the range of sanctions they are considering and will then, or at a later meeting if requested, hear mitigating circumstances and consider the pupil's disciplinary record before deciding on the sanction.

If there are exceptional circumstances and the pupil is allowed to return to school, then they will be supported by the school and will be subject to a regime of random testing via urine or hair sample for the remainder of their time in school. The pupil may also be required to meet with an appropriate healthcare professional. A second, similar, offence would automatically lead to their departure from the school.

As regards a positive nicotine test, the pupil should expect to be required to attend a 3-hour Saturday Detention. Repeat offences would result in further disciplinary action. Where a pupil tests positive for nicotine, the school will offer support in case the individual is addicted.

Review

If the pupil is expelled, asked to leave or required to leave, the pupil and their parents will be offered a Governors' Review, which (should they wish to take the opportunity) will normally take place under a separate procedure within ten days, and the pupil's suspension may be continued in the interim.

PART 3: CONFISCATION AND DISPOSAL OF CONTROLLED DRUGS

AND OTHER UNAUTHORISED SUBSTANCES POLICY

This procedure must be read alongside the following school documents: Conducting Interviews, Searches and Confiscation Procedures.

Taking temporary possession of and disposal of suspected illegal drugs
Where staff are unsure as to the legal status of a substance and have reason to believe it may be a controlled drug they should treat it as such.

The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purposes of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug, providing that all reasonable steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

The Procedure

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs:

- Ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout;
- Seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present;
- Store it in a locked storage cupboard or safe, with access limited to two senior members of staff;
- Without delay, the Head or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will notify the police, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it;
- The law does not require a school to divulge to the police the name of the pupil from whom the drugs were taken. Where a pupil is identified, the police may be required to follow set internal procedures;
- Record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number;
- **Inform parents/guardians, unless this would jeopardise the safety of the pupil.**

Staff should not attempt to analyse or taste unknown substances. Police can advise on analysis and formal identification, although this is normally carried out only if it will be required as evidence within a prosecution.

If formal action is to be taken against a pupil, the police should make arrangements for them to attend a local police station, accompanied by an appropriate adult, for interview. Only in exceptional circumstances should arrest or interviews take place at school. An appropriate adult should always be present during interviews, preferably a parent/guardian.

School Trips

If a pupil breaches the School's Code of Conduct and is returned home, parents/guardians would normally be expected to meet the costs of the arrangements.

The procedure below for the disposal of suspected illegal drugs while on school trips should be followed, as far as possible.

Adherence to school rules is part of the consent form signed by a pupil or parent prior to the trip.

While on centre-based residential trips in this country, staff must follow the procedures outlined above or those of the centre being visited. However, laws on drugs and policing arrangements vary widely in other countries. Staff should ensure that they (and all participants on the trip) are fully aware of these differences before departure, and should have considered in advance how they will respond to any drug incident. For in-country advice, staff should contact the British embassy or consulate staff.

Confiscation and Disposal of Other Unauthorised Drugs

The presence of a second adult witness is advisable.

Vapes and Electronic Cigarettes

The school will confiscate any vapes or electronic cigarettes found in a pupil's possession. Due to the presence of lithium-ion batteries and electronic components, these items must not be disposed of in general domestic waste bins due to fire risk. Confiscated vapes will be stored securely and disposed of via a designated WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) recycling facility or returned to parents/guardians if deemed appropriate by the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

Alcohol and Tobacco

The school can dispose of these items, including cigarette papers, as they think appropriate but this MUST NOT include returning them to the pupil.

Parents/guardians would normally be informed and given the opportunity to collect the alcohol or tobacco, unless this would jeopardise the safety of the child.

Volatile Substances

Given the level of danger posed by volatile substances, the school may arrange for their safe disposal. Small amounts may be placed in a bin to which pupils do not have access, for example a bin within a locked cupboard.

Medicines

Disposal of medicines held at school is covered in the school's medicines policy. Parents/guardians should collect and dispose of unused or date-expired medicines. If parents or guardians fail to collect such medication then staff at the Health and Wellbeing Centre will dispose of them at the local pharmacy for decommissioning at the end of the academic term.

Disposal of Drug Paraphernalia

Needles or syringes found on school premises should be placed in the Health and Wellbeing Centre secure sharps container, using gloves. Soft drink cans or plastic bottles should not be used. Used needles and syringes should not be disposed of in domestic waste.