

September 2025



MANAGEMENT OF DRUGS INCIDENT POLICY

Issue date: July 2025

Signed: 

Review period: Annually

MANAGEMENT OF DRUGS INCIDENT POLICY ISSUES AND UPDATES

PAGES	ISSUE	DATE
	Review of whole document	12/07/23
All	Pupil/Young person changed to participant	12/07/23
ALL	Review of whole document	23/07/2024
Page 5	Wording - This is in line with the behaviour policy.	23/07/2024
Page 6	Updates to class drug gradings	24/07/2024
Page 8	Updated link to Search, Screen and Confiscation	24/07/2024
Page 9	Update to statutory power to search a pupil	24/07/2024
Page 9	Information added on response to Vapes/vaping	24/07/2024
All document	Section on: Alcohol, tobacco and vapes	28/07/2025

	Wording of Head of Foundation to CEO	
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The following policy has been approved by the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis unless circumstances arise requiring the policy to be reviewed earlier.

Approved by Board of Trustees: July 2025

Board signatory: Jon Drown

Planned review: July 2026

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STUDENT MANAGEMENT OF DRUGS POLICY STATEMENT

This policy formalises and clarifies the way in which Northampton Saints Foundation respond to drug related incidents.

The Management of Drugs Incidents Policy has reviewed by Chief Executive Officer and the Senior Leadership Team.

Central to this is the understanding that the unauthorised possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs (and alcohol) within the Foundations boundaries is unacceptable. Clear protocols and expectations relating to the management and reporting of drugs incidents within the Foundation are set out within the policy and are common to all settings the Foundation works from.

The policy seeks to support and encourage an underlying culture of intolerance to drugs within our society and the principle of 'Say no to drugs'.

It is recognised that controlled drug misuse is a criminal offence and if discovered on the Foundations premises it will be dealt with robustly, where appropriate taking advice from the police. The methods of investigation and sanctions will be in keeping with the Foundations Behaviour Policy.

This policy also provides advice and guidance to staff on the procedures to be followed when dealing with drug-related incidents (whatever the circumstances) in a fair, professional and proportionate manner.

1. DRUG-RELATED INCIDENTS

1.1. Legislation defines 'Drug Misuse' as the non-medical use of drugs that are only intended for use in medical treatment, and the use of drugs that have no accepted medical purpose. Such drugs are prescribed and controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. The Act does not cover other substances such as solvents, tobacco and alcohol. (see Appendix 1: Controlled Drugs)

1.2. A substance-related incident is: 'Any incident which is suspected to be substance-related by any responsible person affected, occurring within the confines and curtilage of the Foundations premises or featuring within organised activity, occurring outside the premises and usual times.' – the reasonable person test. This includes any or all of the following:

- drugs or drugs paraphernalia found on Foundation premises;
- students in possession of unauthorised drugs;
- students supplying unauthorised drugs;
- students under the influence of drugs, or exhibiting signs of intoxication or illness;
- disclosure of drug use;
- information suggesting student(s) involved in substance misuse • illegitimate sale/supply of drugs in the Foundations vicinity.

But it will not include:

- the supply and management of prescribed drugs to students as approved by a medical practitioner and parents/guardian.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. The Chief Executive Officer takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation.

2.2. The Chief Executive Officer will ensure all staff dealing with substance issues are trained and experienced.

3. INVESTIGATION

3.1. The Chief Executive Officer will decide upon the appropriate level and nature of investigation, having established the basic details and seriousness of the situation. It is the primary role of the police to investigate a criminal offence such as those encompassed under the Misuse of Drugs Act. This will run in conjunction with and in support of Foundations discipline procedures.

3.2. It is good practice to isolate the person suspected to allow a better examination of the issue. This may include suspension to enable investigations to take place.

4. SANCTIONS

4.1. Any response will balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider community and aim to provide students with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals. Exclusion, be it fixed term or permanent, is the accepted response for proven violations of possessing and supplying drugs, and students should understand that they may be excluded if they are involved in drug use.

The nature of the drug involved, and its classification as prescribed by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and amendments is the significant factor in this decision. The attendant circumstances such as quantities involved, the number and vulnerability of others in the Foundations population affected, impact on the community, repeat offending, and previous character of persons involved should be further considered as aggravating or mitigating features in any decision-making process.

4.3. Save in exceptional circumstances, a student will be permanently excluded for possession, possession with intent to supply or supplying controlled drugs, even for a one off or first-time offence. This is in line with the behaviour policy.

4.4. Following an incident where a student remains in or returns to the Foundation, opportunities will be provided for the student to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals. Opportunities include:

- review with parents/carers after the incident
- further drugs education
- targeted support on a one-to-one basis
- use of SMART targets
- referral to an outside agency

5. ANONYMOUS INCIDENT REPORTING

5.1. Verification will be sought on any anonymous information before positive action is considered.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.1. Every effort will be made to review an incident after a formal Foundation/police investigation.

APPENDIX 1:

Controlled Drugs the Government defines 'Drug Misuse' as the non-medical use of drugs that are only intended for use in medical treatment. The use of drugs that have no accepted medical purposes are controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. (The act does not cover solvent misuse)

DRUG CLASS	DRUG TYPE	COMMENTS
A	Cocaine, Crack Cocaine, Ecstasy (MDMA), Heroin, LSD, Magic Mushrooms, Methadone, Methamphetamine (Crystal Meth)	Possession < 7 years Supply < Life
B	Amphetamines, Barbiturates, Cannabis, Codeine, Gamma Hydroxybutyrate (GHB), Gamma-Butyrolactone (GBL), Ketamine, Methylphenidate (Ritalin), Synthetic Cannabinoids, Synthetic Cathinones (For Example Mephedrone, Methoxetamine)	Possession < 5 years Supply < 14 years
C	Anabolic Steroids, Benzodiazepines (Diazepam), Khat, Nitrous Oxide (Laughing Gas), Piperazines (BZP)	Possession < 2 years Supply < 14 years

THE LAW ON DRUGS

It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971:

- to possess, possess with intent to supply, or supply a controlled drug to another in contravention of the Act
- it is a defence, that knowing or suspecting it to be a controlled drug, the accused took possession of it for the purpose of preventing another from committing or continuing to commit an offence. In so doing he/she as soon as possible took all such steps that were reasonably open to destroy or deliver into the custody of a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.
- for the occupier or someone concerned in the management of any premises, knowingly to permit or suffer on those premises, the smoking of cannabis, or the production, attempted production, supply, attempted supply, or offering to supply any controlled drug.

- although the possession/supply of cannabis has been downgraded to Class C, the maximum prison sentence for supply has been increased to 14 years. A specific power of arrest for possession has been created, in aggravating circumstances, such as connections to young people.

APPENDIX 2:

SIGNS OF POSSIBLE DRUG MISUSE OR SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Some of the main signs which may be associated with drug misuse are summarised in Tables 1, 2 and 3. The presence of these signs alone is not conclusive proof of drug or solvent misuse; many of them are part of normal adolescence.

Early detection of drug misuse is extremely important. If a young person's drug misuse is identified at an early stage, it is easier for action to be taken to prevent further misuse of drugs. Teaching, and non-teaching staff should be alert to the warning signs which may indicate that a student is misusing drugs. Teachers need to be particularly vigilant when they oversee activities which take groups away from the Foundation premises.

TABLE 1: WARNING SIGNS IN INDIVIDUALS

- changes in attendance, and being unwilling to take part in Foundation activities
- decline in performance in work
- unusual outbreaks of temper, marked swings of mood, restlessness or irritability
- reports from parents that more time is being spent away from home, possibly with new friends or with friends in older age groups
- excessive spending or borrowing of money
- stealing money or goods
- excessive tiredness without obvious cause
- no interest in physical appearance
- sores or rashes especially on the mouth or nose
- lack of appetite
- heavy use of scents, colognes etc. to disguise the smell of drugs
- wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times (to hide dilated or constricted participant)

TABLE 2: WARNING SIGNS IN GROUPS

- regular absence on certain days
- keeping at a distance from other students, away from supervision points
- being the subject of rumours about drug-taking
- talking to strangers on or near the premises
- stealing which appears to be the work of several individuals rather than one person (e.g. perhaps to shoplift solvents)
- use of drug takers' slang
- exchanging money or other objects in unusual circumstances

- associating briefly with one person who is much older and not normally part of the peer group

TABLE 3: OBJECTS THAT MAY INDICATE DRUG MISUSE

- foil containers or cup shapes made from silver foil, discoloured by heat
- metal tins
- spoons discoloured by heat
- pill boxes
- plastic, cellophane or metal foil wrappers
- small plastic or glass phials or bottles
- twists of paper
- straws
- sugar lumps • syringes and needles
- cigarette papers and lighters
- spent matches
- plastic bags or butane gas containers (solvent abuse)
- cardboard or other tubes (heroin)
- stamps, stickers, transfers or similar items
- shredded cigarettes, home-rolled cigarettes and pipes (cannabis)
- paper (about 2 inches square) folded to form an envelope (heroin)

APPENDIX 3: PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

1. All incidents involving illegal drugs, either inside or outside of the Foundation, must be reported to the Chief Executive Officer. Never assume it is a rumour or isolated incident. Any information may help to give a more accurate picture of substance misuse in the area and help to safeguard the health and safety of participants.

2. If a member of staff suspects that a student is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs they should follow the First Aid and Medical Emergencies guidelines.

3. While it is advisable to isolate the individual from other participants, he or she must not be left alone. Do not shout, threaten them or initiate discussion about drug use. Talk quietly and calmly, especially if the student is distressed.

4. PERSONAL SEARCHES

When a person is suspected of concealing illegal or other unauthorised drugs, every effort will be made to persuade the person to hand over any drugs voluntarily, in the presence of a second witness. The Foundation will take all reasonable steps to follow the latest [Government guidelines in conducting a search](#). After any search involving students, parents/carers will normally be contacted by the Foundation, regardless of whether the result of the search is positive or negative.

SEARCHES OF FOUNDATION PROPERTY

Staff may search Foundation property if they believe drugs to be stored there. Prior consent will always be sought. Individuals will be made aware that if consent is

refused the Foundation may wish to proceed with a search. However, when consent is refused, the Foundation will balance the likelihood that an offence has been committed against the risk of infringing the individual's privacy without just cause.

Chief Executive Officer and staff have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item listed below or any other item that the Foundation rules identify as an item which may be searched for.

- Knives And Weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal Drugs
- Stolen Items

Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:

- To Commit an Offence
- To Cause Personal Injury To, Or Damage to Property Of; Any Person (Including The Pupil).
- An Article Specified in Regulations
- Tobacco, Vapes and Cigarette Papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic Images.

5. DISPOSAL

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs the Foundation will:

- 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 safe and secure location with access limited to two senior members of staff;
- without delay notify the police, who will collect it, and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. The law does not require the Foundation to divulge to the police the name of the student from whom the drugs were taken. Where a student is identified, the police will be required to follow set internal procedures;
- inform parents/carers, unless this would jeopardise the safety of the student.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO and VAPES

Alcohol will be confiscated, disposed of or handed back to parents, and parents informed where appropriate (for those students under 18).

Any student found in possession of tobacco or vaping devices will have them confiscated and parents/carers/ education settings will be informed. These may be handed back to an appropriate adult or through appropriate channels.

Staff must report any incidents involving alcohol, tobacco or vaping to designated safeguarding leaders and report on the MyConcern system.

VOLATILE SUBSTANCES

Given the level of danger posed by volatile substances, the Foundation will arrange for their safe disposal. Small amounts will be placed in a bin, to which students do not have access.

Needles/sharps Needles or syringes found on Foundation premises will be removed with due regard to health and safety (e.g. by picking up with a litter picker or with thick leather gardening gloves or sweeping up using a dustpan and brush) and then placed in a plastic screw top bottle, or other suitable container. This will be placed in the domestic waste. If a significant number of syringes are found, Northampton Borough Council should be contacted for further advice on disposal.