

COWLEY INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE



Drug & Alcohol Policy

Spring 2020

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Cowleian Values

The policy is informed by the DfE and St Helens Schools Drug-Related Incident Policy. Cowley International College actively seeks to provide an environment where all members of the community are safe from harm. As such, the college takes a robust approach to any individual or group that violates the drugs and alcohol policy. One of the college's Cowleian values is to be healthy; it is our aim to help all students make healthy choices as young people and as adults in the future so that they are able to take their place safely in a world where wide ranges of drugs exist.

Education and Prevention

We ensure that age appropriate education and support is provided through RS/PSHE and science lessons as well as during team time. Our School Nurse and the Teenage Advice Zone (TAZ) run a regular drop in service for students at lunchtime and our on-site Police Constable supports where appropriate. We ensure that through assemblies, delivered by approved agencies, students are provided with information on the risks of misuse of drugs and alcohol at regular intervals throughout their time at Cowley.

Definition of a drug

Any substance that changes the way you think, feel or behave. Drugs affect how your brain and body work; this can have very serious effects on your health and how you think and feel. It is important to know that all drugs have the potential to cause harm and that every time someone takes a drug they are taking a risk. Not all drugs are illegal and some drugs such as alcohol, caffeine and tobacco are legal for adults over 18. Please be aware NONE of these drugs are allowed in college. For purposes of this policy, by 'drugs' we are referring to illegal substances and also legal substances such as: alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances, over the counter or prescription medicines and new psychoactive substances. By drugs paraphernalia we mean items such as cannabis grinders, rolling papers, filters, matches, lighters and pipes etc. Drugs on college premises; the legal definition of college premises includes everything within the property boundaries including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to include other settings such as vehicles, marquees or any venue managed by the college at the time, e.g. premises of a college trip or visit. The split site nature of the college means that our policy also applies to the areas between our two sites, along with the pathway up to our Sports Hall.

● Medicines

The college has a policy/procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety. If a student has to take a prescribed medicine in college then parents/carers are required to complete a form. This form is returned to college along with the medicine in its original bottle/package. Students must not have any medicine on their person at any one time. Any agreed prescribed medicine must be administered in the medical room.

● Alcohol

No alcohol may be brought on to college premises or consumed during the course of a college day. Any adult (staff, parents, carers and visitors) under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises, by the Principal, and return at a later date for the safety of the whole college. Parents of a child under the influence of alcohol will be asked to remove their child from the college and will be encouraged to seek immediate medical support.

● Smoking

College premises are a smoke free area. Students are not permitted to bring to college smoking materials, including matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a student be found in possession of any of these on college premises, they will be confiscated and parents informed. Smoking or being in the presence of smokers on or near to college premises will result in a day in Inclusion. This also applies to "vaping" and the use of electronic cigarettes.

● Illegal drugs and "psychoactive substances"

No illegal drugs, new psychoactive substances or drugs paraphernalia are allowed to be brought on to, or used on college premises. Bringing any such items onto college premises is considered a serious breach of this drugs policy. Seeking to influence or glamorise illegal drug use or the use of psychoactive substances either in person, on college premises or via social networking sites is also considered a serious breach of this drugs policy.

● Solvents

The college will ensure that potentially hazardous substances it authorises are stored safely, and students will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Students are not permitted to be in possession of solvents. Bringing solvents or hazardous substances onto college premises is considered a serious breach of this drugs policy and will be dealt with in the same way as bringing an illegal drug into college.

Responses to drug related incidents

The college will take a zero tolerance approach to the use, distribution and carrying of drugs and alcohol for students on college premises or travelling to and from college. The consequence of drugs offences while at college or travelling to and from college can and probably will be permanent exclusion.

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, on college premises
- Possession of drugs by an individual on college premises
- Use of drugs by an individual on college premises
- Supply or distribution of drugs on college premises
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
- Student reports of parents, staff or students using drugs
- Hiding drugs in or around the college premises for later collection (by themselves or by third parties)
- Glamorising or encouraging the use of drugs and other substances.

Any response to drug related incidents needs to balance the needs of the individual student concerned with the wider college community.

Any adult (staff, parents, carers and visitors) under the effects of drug use will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole college. If a student is caught with illegal drugs in college, or come to college under the influence of drugs, a number of things can happen:

- Parents/carers will be contacted to collect the student and encouraged to seek immediate medical support.
- The Police may be contacted to dispose of any illegal drugs.
- Young People's Drug & Alcohol Team will be contacted and the student offered an appointment to meet with them.
- The student could be excluded from college for a period of time or permanently excluded from college.
- The student could be arrested and possibly charged by the Police.

A member of the SLT will normally be responsible for co-ordinating the management of drug-related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies. Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and will be reported to the Principal. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours.

Individuals in possession of drugs

If any student or adult on college premises is found in possession of an unauthorised drug, it will be confiscated. If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the college will contact a police officer for discussion and advice. Illegal substances will be handed to the police to be legally destroyed as soon as possible and not stored. Parents and carers will be informed (unless for safeguarding reasons this is not in the best interests of the student) and other professionals such as the local authority, Young Offenders Service, YPAAT, Social Services will be informed or consulted as appropriate.

Confidentiality

Cowley International College will always seek to work with parents and carers when information or allegations of drug use are made. There may be occasions when, for safeguarding reasons, this may not be appropriate. Complete confidentiality can never be promised to a student though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. In particular, if a student chooses to disclose that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, this information will not be used against them. However, action will be taken to try to ensure the student comes to no serious harm if this is considered a risk. Regarding disclosures, staff will follow the advice given in the Child Protection policy and at the annual safeguarding training from HAYS Online.

Support for students

At Cowley, the welfare of the student is paramount and intervention will be made if the college 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 college (Year Team, School Nurse, TAZ)
- Referral to specialist outside agencies for support
- Working with the Police

Right to Search

In line with recent legislation, the staff at Cowley reserve the right to search students if they have reason to believe that they are carrying offensive weapons, illegal substances or anything that is illegal or dangerous. Similarly, students can expect to be physically restrained if they present a danger to themselves or other members of the community. Year leaders or members of the Senior Leadership Team will carry out searches. If inappropriate articles are brought into college or used inappropriately, they may be confiscated and kept in the college safe for collection by parents and carers at the end of the day. If these items are dangerous or illegal, they will be handed to the Police for safe disposal. Cowley International College has its own onsite Police Officer, and if students are involved with any activity, which breaks the law, the police may be involved in the confiscation of items. Restorative Justice Conferencing may be used, an approach to justice that focuses on the needs of the victims and the offenders, as well as the involved community, instead of satisfying abstract legal principles or punishing the offender, unless there are reasons why this should not be the case, for instance, serious safeguarding concerns. Other strategies include group work and education as well as links with home. Parents and carers will always be informed when the police are involved and given the opportunity to attend any interviews. Similarly, the police will be involved if any student is suspected of having contact with an illegal substance. This includes possession, using or dealing. In such cases, the police will decide what course of legal action, if any, should be taken.

Useful Organisations Contact Information

Drugs & Alcohol

CGL - Change, Grow Live

Integrated recovery support for over 19s in St Helens

01744 410752

www.changegrowlive.org

Frank

www.talktofrank.com

Alcohol Concern

www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

SmokeFree St Helens

www.readytostopsmoking.org.uk