SANDWELL ACADEMY

Drug Education Policy

July 2026

Document Details

Policy Title:	Drug Education Policy
Policy Reference:	Sandwell Academy / Student
Description:	This document sets out the consequences of student involvement in drug activity at Sandwell Academy and the measures Sandwell Academy takes to educate students about the risk of illegal and harmful drugs.
Status:	Statutory
Category:	Academy
Contact:	Name: Mrs J Chapman Title: Deputy Head Email : jchapman@sandwellacademy.com
Version:	1.7 – July 2026
Other relevant SA polices:	Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy PSHE and Citizenship Policies Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy. Science Curriculum
Adopted by the Governing Board on:	July 2026
Date for Review:	July 2027

Change Record

Version	Date	Description
1.1	February 2014	Update of government policy
1.2	July 2017	Change of name of GCSE Science unit
1.3	July 2018	Change of contact details
1.4	July 2020	Change of contact details
1.5	July 2023	Change of personnel Update of whole policy
1.6	Sept 2024	Addition of section 2.5 on e-cigarettes and vaping
1.7	July 2025	Update on key staff, reference to Welfare Curriculum

Table of Contents

1. Introduction 4
   1.1 Rationale 4
   1.2 Aims 4
   1.3 Policy Context 4
   1.4 Where and to whom the policy applies 4
   1.5 Definition of Drugs 4
2. The Academy's Stance 5
   2.1 What constitutes involvement in drug activity at the Academy? 5
   2.2 The consequences of drug activity by students 5
   2.3 Searching students for harmful or illegal substances 5
   Conducting a search with consent 5
   Conducting a search without consent 5
   2.4 Alcohol and tobacco 6
   2.5 E-cigarettes and Vaping Materials 6
   2.6 Early Intervention 6
   2.7 Confidentiality 7
   2.8 Support for Students 7
3. Drugs education 7
   3.1 Aims of Drug Education 7
   3.2 Drug Education Content 8
   Curriculum 8
   Personal Tutor time and Assemblies 8
   Use of external agencies 9
   3.3 Drug education co-ordination and delivery 9
4 Use of drugs by staff or guardians 9
   4.1 Use of drugs by guardians 9
   4.2 Use of drugs by staff 9
5 Key Staff responsible 9
6 Date for next review 9

1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale

Sandwell Academy understands the harm that involvement in harmful and illegal drug taking can have on a young person's life. The stance taken by the Academy is therefore a reflection of the very dangerous nature of such activity.

1.2 Aims

The aims of the drugs education policy is to:

- clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school
- reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of students and the whole school community
- clarify the school's approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme
- clarify the procedures for responding to and managing any drug-related incidents that may occur so that they are managed with confidence and consistency and in the best interests of those involved

1.3 Policy Context

As part of their statutory duty to promote students' wellbeing, schools have a clear role to play in preventing drug misuse. The Drugs Education Policy has been developed with reference to Department for Education advice and guidance.

The drugs education of students considers the statutory requirements within the National Curriculum for Science, the non-statutory framework for PSHE/RSE at Key Stages 3 and 4 and the statutory Citizenship Programme of Study at Key Stages 3 and 4.

Other related policies and documents include:

- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy
- PSHE and Citizenship Policies
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy
- Science Curriculum
- Student Charter/Student Code of Conduct

1.4 Where and to whom the policy applies

This policy applies to all school staff, students, parents/carers, governors and other partner agencies working with the school. The policy applies to the school premises, the school day, while travelling to and from school, journeys in school time, work experience, day and residential trips and when the school is deemed to be in loco parentis.

1.5 Definition of Drugs

A drug is defined as a substance which will the change the biochemical reactions within the body and will affect either the way a person feels, thinks or behaves.

2. The Academy's Stance

2.1 What constitutes involvement in drug activity at the Academy?

As stated in the Student Charter "Illegal or harmful drugs and substances are very dangerous, and students should note that there will be no toleration of possession, sale, purchase or consumption at the Academy or away from School. Such activity will result in permanent exclusion."

Evidence provided to the Academy demonstrating possession, sale, purchase or consumption of illegal or harmful drugs by a student who attends Sandwell Academy will be investigated by the Academy Welfare Team in collaboration with the Academy Inclusion and Welfare Specialist and a member of senior management. This is regardless of the place or time when drug involvement has taken place.

If a student is believed to have been in possession of, sold, purchased or consumed illegal or harmful drugs on the Academy premises, the issue will be investigated by the school Pastoral Team in collaboration with a member of senior management.

2.2 The consequences of drug activity by students

The Academy will not tolerate the possession, sale, purchase or consumption of illegal or harmful drugs either at Sandwell Academy or away from the Academy. Such activity will result in permanent exclusion. The police will be informed of the investigation and may conduct their own investigation. Any drugs removed from student possession will be confiscated by the police.

2.3 Searching students for harmful or illegal substances

If a student is suspected of having illegal or harmful drugs, alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes or vaping materials on their person or in their belongings the Academy will seek to remove the item. Guidelines on searches are in line with DfE advice found in the 2022 document "Screening, Searching and Confiscation. Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies."

Conducting a search with consent

Written consent is not needed to search a student for the items listed above, consent is assumed when a student follows a request to turn out their pockets or to have their bag's content examined. A student refusing to co-operate with a request will be searched without consent or assumed to have a prohibited item in their possession.

Conducting a search without consent

In the absence of consent from a student, and when it is suspected that the student may be in possession of illegal or harmful drugs, alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes or vaping materials, the student will be searched in the presence of two members of staff. The contents of a student's pocket, bag, or other equipment will be searched.

One member of staff conducting the search will be a member of the senior management team or the Academy Inclusion and Welfare Specialist, unless the search takes place away from the Academy premises when students are on an educational trip, in this instance the most senior member of staff

present will conduct the search. The member of staff conducting the search will be of the same sex as the student being searched.

If it is deemed necessary that the removal of clothes other than outer garments is needed for an effective search, this will ***not*** be performed by Academy staff, and the police will be called to the investigation.

2.4 Alcohol and tobacco

Dependent upon age restrictions, the consumption of alcohol and tobacco is not an illegal act. However, students are not allowed to consume these substances on Academy premises or whilst under school supervision (school trips and residential activities). The use of these substances by students will be treated as a serious incident and will be investigated in line with the Academy's Investigation Procedure and Protocol. Please see the Academy Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy.

Employees of Sandwell Academy are not permitted to consume alcohol or tobacco or use e-cigarettes or vaping materials on the school premises during working hours. Such activity would result in disciplinary action that could result in dismissal. Employees of Sandwell Academy are not permitted to come to work under the influence of alcohol. Such activity would result in disciplinary action that could result in dismissal.

2.5 E-cigarettes and Vaping Materials

Students and are not permitted to use e-cigarettes or vaping materials nor should they be in possession of e-cigarettes or vaping materials at school or elsewhere when wearing School uniform or are otherwise clearly identified with the school (e.g. on school trips, fixtures or representing the school).

Students who are found using e-cigarettes or vaping materials (regardless of nicotine or non-nicotine content) on site or to be in possession of e-cigarettes or vaping materials will be subject to the Academy's Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy.

Any student discovered to be dealing in (or giving away) e-cigarettes or vaping materials will also be subject to the Academy's Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy. Any items found or involved on the school site will be confiscated and destroyed.

2.6 Early Intervention

The Academy has a key role in identifying students at risk of drug misuse. The process of identifying needs should aim to distinguish between students who require general information, those who could benefit from targeted prevention, and those who require a detailed needs assessment and more intensive support.

The school will also be alert to behaviour which might indicate that the child is experiencing difficult home circumstances. Where problems are observed or suspected or if a child chooses to disclose that there are difficulties at home, safeguarding procedures will be followed.

2.7 Confidentiality

The Academy 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 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2.8 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 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 (Personal Tutor, Head of Year, Assistant Head of Year, Counsellor, School Nurse, Welfare Team and Attendance Officer)
- Referral to specialist outside agencies for support e.g. DECCA
- Working with the Police

3. Drugs education

3.1 Aims of Drug Education

Drugs education is an important factor in drug prevention.

The following aims of drug education at Sandwell Academy will be consistent with the values and ethos of the school and laws of society as well as being appropriate to the age, ability and maturity of the students, and relevant to their circumstances:

- To increase students' knowledge and understanding and clarify misconceptions about:
    - the short and long-term effects and risks of drugs
    - the rules and laws relating to drugs
    - the impact of drugs on individuals, families and communities
    - local and national use
    - the complex moral, social, emotional and political issues surrounding drugs
    - the risk associated with 'county lines' and gang-related drugs issues

- To develop students' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy, including:
    - promoting positive attitudes to healthy lifestyles

- assessing, avoiding and managing risk
- communicating effectively
- resisting pressures
- finding information, help and advice
- devising problem-solving and coping strategies
- developing and maintaining self-awareness and self-esteem in order to motivate them to value their welfare and conscientious care of themselves

- To enable students to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes, and exploring media and social influences

- To ensure that students have access to and knowledge of up-to-date information as sources of help.

3.2 Drug Education Content

Sandwell Academy provides a planned drug education curriculum through the following:

Curriculum

Drugs education forms part of:

- The **Science Curriculum** E.g. Key Stage 4: Year 10, Infection and Response unit – antibiotics and painkillers, drug development
- **RSE** and health education curriculum delivered during Key Stage 3 (Year 8).
- **Welfare Curriculum** at Key Stages 3 and 4 includes specific drugs education such as "facts and laws about drug, alcohol and tobacco use and misuse, and the personal and social consequences of misuse for themselves", "ways of recognising and reducing risk, minimising harm and getting help in emergency and risky situations" as well as other topics that reflect knowledge, understanding, attitudes and social skills.
- Other curriculum areas such as Citizenship, Religious Education and Physical Education also contribute to aspects of the drug education curriculum.

The PSHE/RSE annual audit documents all subject areas contributing to drug education at Sandwell Academy.

Personal Tutor time and Assemblies

A copy of the student charter is included in each student planner. At the beginning of each Academic year students spend time reviewing this with their Personal Tutor and sign once this has been completed to indicate their understanding.

A drugs related assembly is delivered to all students at Sandwell Academy during the Academic year. Within the drugs assembly the school's stance on drugs is re-iterated to students, the student charter is read to students and is displayed on the theatre screen.

Use of external agencies

Teachers are the main providers of drug education as they understand the needs of individual students and the context of the school. External agencies are used in the preparation of teaching material, including DVD and written resources. In addition, on occasion external agencies are used to highlight key aspects of drug education in assembly or through PSHE/RSE.

3.3 Drug education co-ordination and delivery

A member of the senior management team will be responsible for the co-ordination of drug education. Delivery of material will take place by trained science specialists. A member of the senior management team will be responsible for the PSHE/RSE audit and will ensure all aspects of PSHE/RSE curriculum are adequately covered across the curriculum.

4 Use of drugs by staff or guardians

4.1 Use of drugs by guardians

If a student discloses that a family member, or a person the student resides with, is involved in the possession, sale, purchase or consumption of drugs the disclosure will be reported to the Child Protection Officer. Safeguarding protocols will be followed to minimise the risk to the student and ensure their safety. Please see the Child Protection Policy.

4.2 Use of drugs by staff

The use of illegal drugs by staff will not be accepted. Evidence that a member of staff is involved in the possession, sale, purchase or consumption of illegal drugs whilst an employee at Sandwell Academy will result in disciplinary action. This may result in the member of staff being dismissed.

5 Key Staff responsible

Progress and review of this policy will be maintained by the designated Deputy Head. This review will be carried out in consultation with the remainder of the Senior team, a selection of tutors and student representation.

6 Date for next review

This policy will be reviewed at the end of each academic year for implementation the following September.

Following appropriate consultation, nothing contained in these policies shall prevent the Headteacher and the Chairman of Governors jointly agreeing in exceptional circumstances some alternative sanction or sanctions, or other measure which, in any case, is thought to provide a more effective resolution of the problem concerned.