



Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy and Statement (students)

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1. Purpose and Ethos

- 1.1. At the Royal Grammar School High Wycombe, we are dedicated to inspiring and supporting our students to enable them to flourish throughout their lives. Our community is founded upon our fundamental core values: Respect, Integrity, and Aspiration.
 - 1.1.1. **Respect:** We respect all people, offering them kindness and empathy, while maintaining a safe, clean, and orderly environment where students can study and fulfill their potential.
 - 1.1.2. **Integrity:** We act with courage, humility, and honesty, expecting our students to uphold the laws of the land and resist harmful peer pressures.
 - 1.1.3. **Aspiration:** We challenge our students to achieve their best in all areas of life, recognizing that substance misuse is incompatible with personal excellence, health, and academic success.
- 1.2. This policy aims to protect the safety, physical health, and mental well-being of all students, staff, and visitors. RGS operates a strict stance against substance misuse while maintaining a compassionate, contract-backed pathway for those who proactively seek rehabilitation and support.

2. Jurisdictional Boundaries and Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all students of the Royal Grammar School High Wycombe. The school's authority and the provisions of this policy apply:
 - 2.1.1. On the school premises and surrounding grounds, including Fraser Youens Boarding House.
 - 2.1.2. While traveling to and from school.
 - 2.1.3. On any school-sponsored journey, expedition, training, residential trip, or away sports fixture. Students on school trips are ambassadors for the school, and bad behaviour or substance violations will result in immediate consequences, up to and including being summarily returned home at the parents' expense.
 - 2.1.4. At any time or place, including online and via social media platforms, where the student is identifiable as a member of RGS, where their conduct brings the school into disrepute, or where their actions present a safety risk to the wider student body.

3. General Prohibitions and Prohibited Item

- 3.1. In alignment with our standard expectations for good order and harmony, certain items are strictly forbidden from being brought onto the school site, held in a student's possession, or distributed.
- 3.2. **Prohibited item** - Students must not chew gum, smoke, gamble, or have in their possession:
 - 3.2.1. Smoking materials, tobacco products, and cigarette papers.
 - 3.2.2. E-cigarettes, vaporizers, "vapes," and associated e-liquids.
 - 3.2.3. Alcohol.
 - 3.2.4. "Legal highs" and new psychoactive substances.
 - 3.2.5. Illegal drugs and controlled substances.
 - 3.2.6. Drug-related paraphernalia (including grinders, scales, or storage devices).
 - 3.2.7. Any item which may be considered to be a weapon (including laser pens).
- 3.3. **Sales and Commercial Activity:** No items of any kind are to be sold or bartered on the school site, or while under the jurisdiction of the school, without the express written permission of the school authorities. Commercial dealing or distribution of any prohibited substance is classified as a critical breach and will be dealt with under the school's most severe disciplinary measures.

4. Definitions of Substances

- 4.1. For the purposes of this policy, substances are categorized and defined as follows:
 - 4.1.1. **Tobacco, Nicotine, and Vaping Systems:** Any tobacco-related product and smoking/vaping paraphernalia, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, tobacco, cigarette papers, nicotine substitutes, e-liquids, electronic cigarettes, "vapes," cig-a-likes, and vaporising devices.
 - 4.1.2. **Alcohol:** Any intoxicating liquor of all descriptions, including beer, cider, wine, and spirits. Over-18 students are reminded that purchasing or possessing alcohol on site remains strictly prohibited.
 - 4.1.3. **Solvents and Volatile Substances:** Solves, glues, aerosols, gases (including lighter refills), or any other volatile substances held or supplied for the purpose of inhalation, sniffing, or misuse.
 - 4.1.4. **Controlled Drugs:** All illegal substances classified under the UK Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, including but not limited to Class A (e.g., cocaine, heroin, MDMA, LSD), Class B (e.g., cannabis, ketamine), and Class C drugs.
 - 4.1.5. **Nitrous Oxide:** Strictly classified alongside Class C controlled substances in accordance with UK law. Simple unauthorised possession or use of nitrous oxide on site is treated as a severe drug offense.
 - 4.1.6. **Cognitive Enhancers:** The unauthorised possession, sharing, or distribution of prescription stimulants (such as Methylphenidate/Ritalin or Modafinil). While these medications are supported when clinically prescribed and managed by the school's medical team, their non-prescribed use or distribution constitutes a serious double violation of medical safeguarding and drug-supply regulations.

5. The Dual-Track Governance Model

- 5.1. RGS operates a split-pathway system to ensure that firm, clear boundaries are maintained while providing a supportive, confidential avenue for students seeking recovery. See Appendix 1
- 5.2. **Track 1: Disciplinary and Statutory Enforcement**
 - 5.2.1. This track is initiated when a student is caught in possession of, using, or distributing prohibited substances by school staff, or through discovery during a search. RGS applies its sanctions consistently and proportionally, as outlined in the **RGS Behaviour Chart**:
 - 5.2.2. **Vapes, Tobacco, and Smoking Paraphernalia:** Treated as a serious breach of discipline. A first offence typically results in an external suspension and a parent meeting. Repeated offences will lead to extended suspensions.
 - 5.2.3. **Alcohol and Volatile Solvents:** Possession or consumption of alcohol or solvents results in a Level 6 (L6) sanction, carrying an immediate external suspension.

5.2.4. **Illegal Drugs and Controlled Substances (including Nitrous Oxide & Unauthorised Cognitive Enhancers):** Possession, use, or supplying an illegal drug is a Level 7 (L7) offense. The standard response for possession or use is a significant external suspension with a view to permanent exclusion.

5.2.5. **Dealing and Distribution:** Any student found selling, manufacturing, distributing, or inciting others to use illegal substances or controlled drugs, including sharing prescription cognitive enhancers, will be **permanently excluded** from the school.

5.3. Track 2: Contractual and Voluntary Amnesty

5.3.1. We recognise that dependency and substance trials can be driven by peer pressure, anxiety, or mental health difficulties. Therefore, we offer a **Voluntary Disclosure Amnesty**.

5.3.1.1. **Amnesty Guidelines:** If a student, or their parent/carer, voluntarily discloses that they have been misusing substances and requests help before they are caught or become the subject of a school disciplinary investigation, the school will suspend standard disciplinary sanctions.

5.3.1.2. **The Support Contract:** To remain under the amnesty, the student and their parents/carers must sign a formal declaration agreeing to a "Supportive Programme contract". This contract mandates:

5.3.1.2.1. Full cooperation with the school's pastoral and medical staff.

5.3.1.2.2. Active participation in counseling or therapeutic programs (e.g., Switch Bucks, school counseling).

5.3.1.2.3. Agreement to regular, monitored reviews of their progress.

5.3.1.2.4. An absolute commitment to zero further substance misuse while under the school's care.

5.3.1.3. **Revocation of Amnesty:** The amnesty is immediately voided, and the student transferred to Track 1 (Disciplinary), if they violate the support agreement or are found to have supplied or distributed substances to other members of the school community.

6. Search, Confiscation, and Physical Intervention

6.1. All procedures relating to searching, screening, and positive handling comply strictly with statutory legislation, including the Department for Education (DfE) guidelines.

6.2. Search Procedures

6.2.1. Searches will be conducted as outlined in the Behaviour Policy

6.2.2. RGS reserves the right to employ professional, passive drug-detection dogs on site as a protective deterrent and search mechanism.

6.3. Confiscation and Forensic Safety

6.3.1. If a suspected illegal or controlled drug is found on school grounds, staff will immediately isolate the substance, record the circumstances and time of recovery in the presence of a staff witness, and contact the police.

6.3.2. Under no circumstances should staff attempt to taste, inhale, or chemically analyse the substance.

6.3.3. All recovered illegal or controlled drugs will be held in a secure, double-locked location and handed over to the police as soon as practicable for legal destruction.

6.4. Restrictive Interventions

6.4.1. All procedures for physical intervention and the use of force are governed by and fully detailed in our Restrictive Interventions Policy.

7. Medical Administration and Boarding Governance

7.1. Prescribed and Non-Prescribed Medications

7.1.1. RGS High Wycombe operates strict medical protocols managed by the school Matron to ensure that medicines do not present a risk of misuse.

7.1.1.1. Matron's Storage: With the exception of emergency medicines, all prescribed and non-prescribed medications must be stored in a locked cupboard in Matron's room. Medications requiring refrigeration must be kept in an airtight container inside a dedicated medical fridge.

7.1.1.2. Emergency Medications: Life-saving devices (such as asthma inhalers, EpiPens, and diabetic kits) must be stored in a clearly labeled, unlocked cupboard in Matron's room for immediate access. Day students prescribed an EpiPen or inhaler must carry it on their person at all times.

7.1.1.3. Controlled Medicines: Prescribed controlled drugs (e.g., Ritalin for ADHD) must be reported to Matron during the admissions process or if prescribed after this time. They must be delivered in their original pharmacist packaging, logged in the school's controlled drugs book, and administered under Matron's direct supervision.

7.1.1.4. Self-Administration: If a parent requests that a student carry their own mild, non-prescription medication (such as hay fever remedies), the parent must ensure the student knows how to store it responsibly. Students are strictly forbidden from sharing any medication with another student.

7.2. Boarding: Additional guidance on how Boarders can store medication is outlined in Fraser Youens Medical Policy and Guidelines.

8. Safeguarding Protocols for On-Site Intoxication

8.1. To ensure a safe environment for all children, RGS implements strict safeguarding steps for managing intoxication on school grounds :

8.1.1. Intoxicated Parents and Visitors: If a parent, carer, or visitor arrives showing signs of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they will be escorted to a private area immediately and asked to leave the premises. The incident will be logged with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

8.1.2. Student Release Safeguards: RGS will not release a student into the care of a parent or carer who appears intoxicated or incapacitated. Pastoral staff will arrange safe, alternative transport using the emergency contacts listed on the student's file. If the parent insists on taking custody of the student while incapacitated, or if no safe alternative is available, the DSL will immediately contact local children's social care or the police.

8.1.3. Management of Intoxicated Students: A student suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be immediately isolated in a quiet room under constant staff supervision. The medical team will assess their physical condition, and emergency services will be contacted if there is any threat to life. Parents will be notified immediately to collect their child, and a formal Track 1 investigation will be initiated.

9. Directory of External Support Services

9.1. RGS actively encourages students and families to seek confidential support. The following accredited services are available to our school community:

9.1.1. Switch Bucks (Buckinghamshire Youth Drug and Alcohol Service)

9.1.1.1. *Focus:* Specialized young people's support in Buckinghamshire.

9.1.1.2. *Helpline:* 01494 527000 | *Website:* www.switchbucks.org.uk

9.1.2. FRANK (National Drug Awareness Campaign)

9.1.2.1. *Focus:* Free, confidential national drug advice and information.

9.1.2.2. *Helpline:* 0300 123 6600 | *Website:* www.talktofrank.com

9.1.3. Way In (Local Youth Counseling)

9.1.3.1. *Focus:* Confidential emotional support and counseling for local youth.

9.1.3.2. *Helpline:* 01494 791177 | *Website:* www.wayinyouth.org.uk

- 9.1.4. **ADFAM** (Families Affected by Drugs and Alcohol)
 - 9.1.4.1. *Focus:* National charity offering resources and local support databases for families.
 - 9.1.4.2. *Helpline:* 020 7553 7640 | *Website:* www.adfam.org.uk
- 9.1.5. **We Are With You** (National Drug, Alcohol, and Mental Health Support)
 - 9.1.5.1. *Focus:* Free, confidential support for young people and adults.
 - 9.1.5.2. *Helpline:* 0808 801 0750 | *Website:* www.wearewithyou.org.uk
- 9.1.6. **Drinkline** (National Alcohol Helpline)
 - 9.1.6.1. *Focus:* Free, confidential helpline for concerns regarding alcohol use.
 - 9.1.6.2. *Helpline:* 0800 917 8282 | *Website:* www.drinkaware.co.uk
- 9.1.7. **Nacoa** (National Association for Children of Alcoholics)
 - 9.1.7.1. *Focus:* Support and information for children affected by parental alcohol use.
 - 9.1.7.2. *Helpline:* 0800 358 3456 | *Website:* www.nacoa.org.uk

10. Links to other policies

- 10.1. Behaviour Policy
- 10.2. Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy (KCSIE 2025/26)
- 10.3. Searching, Screening, and Confiscation Policy
- 10.4. Restrictive Interventions Policy
- 10.5. Fraser Youens Medical Policy and Guidelines

This policy statement is reviewed annually by the Headmaster and the Governing Body to ensure compliance with updated statutory guidelines and local safeguarding arrangements.

Appendix 1

