



# **Elmhurst School For Dance**

## **Drugs Policy**

**Updated July 2010**

# DRUGS POLICY

## 1. Aims

Elmhurst School's Policy on Drugs is to:

- protect the individual;
- maintain a positive school ethos of respect which supports self-esteem, enabling students to respond assertively and knowledgeably to situations involving drug use;
- provide clear and appropriate information to all students which will help them to make decisions about all drug issues and their consequences;
- work closely with parents on all matters to do with drugs, and particularly with regard to circumstances in which their own children are involved or implicated;
- work closely with the Police and all other relevant agencies through drugs education activities and courses, and when dealing with individual cases of drug abuse and misuse discovered at school;
- deal fairly and sensitively with all incidents involving drugs, ensuring that students are not put at risk and that illegal actions are stopped, investigated and resolved quickly and equitably.

We are committed to a comprehensive programme of drugs education in the context of Personal, Social and Health Education. Elmhurst School shares a responsibility to help reduce the harm from drugs by educating students with the facts, so that they can make informed decisions based on sound knowledge. This policy emphasises the School's pastoral role and proactive approach to drugs education.

Elmhurst School takes its lead from the policy in place for Birmingham Royal Ballet does not allow the illegal possession or use of drugs (this includes drugs being brought to, sold, passed on or obtained) on the school premises at any time. This applies to all persons using school facilities, and contravention of this rule is likely to result in disciplinary action, which may include expulsion.

We believe that it is the School's responsibility to help reduce the harm from drugs and to play a role in the prevention of drug misuse. This policy emphasises Elmhurst's pastoral role and proactive approach to drug education and its clear view on handling the problem of drug use within the school.

This policy is part of our commitment to and concern for the health and well-being of the whole school community. Elmhurst always aims to promote a healthy life style, to enable students to perform to a high standard on a daily basis, for professional

employment and for a life time of good health. In line with the approach adopted by elite sports establishments and by Birmingham Royal Ballet, the message we intend to clearly present to students is one of **ZERO TOLERANCE**. **Students should know that any incidents of drug misuse/possession/dealing/selling will be dealt with severely using the school's Expulsion, Removal and Review Policy.**

**Important Note:** Counselling is always available within the school for anyone involved in experimenting with drugs or worried on behalf of themselves or their friends. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the school's PSHE policy, Health and Safety and Use of Medicines policies. If a pupil's safety is considered to be under threat one of the Senior Designated Person (SDP) Mrs J Hinds or Sister A Peavot, will evoke the Safeguarding procedures currently in force.

This Policy has been developed in consultation with representatives of:

- The Senior Management Team (SMT)
- The Governing Body
- Staff with specific responsibilities for drug issues

This Policy reflects the guidance of national bodies, i.e. DfES, SCODA, DoH.

All school personnel, parents and pupils should make themselves familiar with the contents of this policy, and this policy will be displayed at set locations throughout the school, and also displayed on the school web site.

## **2. A Definition of Drugs**

Drugs are substances that alter the mind or the body. This policy is concerned with legal drugs such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents, over the counter and prescribed drugs such as tranquilisers and painkillers, and illegal drugs such as ecstasy, LSD, cannabis, crack/cocaine and heroin, and other illicit drugs young people may use, such as 'poppers'. Illicit or legal drugs which have no legal classification but for which there can be no possible justification for use or presence of within the school will be treated by the school in the same way as serious alcohol abuse.

## **3. Drug Education and Drug Prevention**

DRUG EDUCATION: Curriculum Provision

The overall aim of drug education at Elmhurst is to equip students with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to be in a position to make informed, healthy choices and decisions and to prevent or reduce the harmful consequences of drug misuse.

### **Objectives:**

The School provides drug education within the PSHE curriculum and through discussions and lectures. We educate pupils to understand that the use of illegal drugs is, or may be, a criminal offence; that it may harm their health; that it could damage their opportunities and careers and will damage the society in which they live. We aim to

provide all pupils with up to date, accurate knowledge, and attitudes and skills to be able to make informed decisions about drugs. Drug education also forms part of other curriculum subjects. We respond to pupils' questions and to opportunities to discuss issues concerning drugs as they arise. We believe that a positive school ethos helps pupils to feel valued and part of the wider school community and in so doing helps to foster positive self-images which may help pupils cope better in situations involving drug use.

#### **4. Statement on the Use of Drugs in Elmhurst School for Dance**

This policy applies at all times to the School premises, School visits, trips, fieldwork, performances or other occasions when the School, as opposed to parents, is responsible for pupils.

It is forbidden to buy, sell, possess, deal in and/or use the drugs covered by this policy in a School context, with the exception of medicines for the sole use of particular individuals with the agreement of Houseparent and the Medical Centre, and alcohol in the Upper school at times specifically sanctioned by the Houseparent or Head of Sixth form under strict regulation. Any breach of these rules will result in punishment including permanent exclusion.

If we are, at any time, concerned that illicit substances are within the school, we will conduct a room search. This would be carried out by one senior staff member and one Pastoral staff with the student occupant(s) present. For the purposes of protecting the school community, if the presence of drugs is suspected, but not found during an initial room search, the Principal or other member of the SMT may request support from the Police, who may use a police dog to search the premises.

#### **5. Confidentiality**

The welfare of our students will always be central to our policy and practice. Information about a pupil in relation to drugs will be treated in the same way as all other sensitive information. The Head of Boarding and Pastoral Care and the Medical Centre will be informed and help sought, if appropriate and, where possible, in discussion with the pupil involved. Confidentiality will be maintained beyond certain key people whom it is necessary to involve, which may include the Principal, and Artistic Director.

#### **6. Parental Involvement**

Elmhurst believes that it is important to have the support of parents and representatives of the wider community for its Drug Education programme. Parents will be informed of the drug education curriculum. Parents will have access to this policy when their child enters the school, and this policy will be posted onto the school website. Parents will be contacted if their child is found breaking the rules on drugs.

## **7. Responding to Drug-Related Incidents**

The School Principal takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and for liaison with the Chairman of the Governors (or their nominee), parents and appropriate outside agencies, including the Police. This policy will be reviewed annually.

Mrs. Janet Hinds (Head of Boarding and Pastoral Care) and Sister Anelli Peavot (Senior Nurse) are the school Drug Education/Substance Coordinators.

## **8. Caffeine Drinks**

The possession and use of caffeine drinks such as “Red Bull” and “Relentless” on school premises during the working day is prohibited for all students. The use of “ProPlus” tablets is also not allowed.

## **9. Solvents**

The school recognises that many ordinary substances are open to misuse and therefore need to be carefully stored and managed. Whiteboard markers should be kept secure at all times. There are safe storage facilities for these and solvent substances both in the classrooms and the Science laboratory. They are not permitted in the study bedrooms.

Aerosols – are not permitted on the school premises for Health and Safety reasons. Any student found to be abusing solvents will be subject to the same sanctions as those using illegal drugs.

## **10. Sanctions to be Applied to Smoking Incidents**

Cigarette smoking is not allowed since it is a danger to health, and not conducive to a successful career as a dancer. Punishments will be on a graduated scale including a formal letter to parents, gating, internal suspension and possible external suspension.

Smoking within school buildings will ensure a more severe sanction than smoking on the grounds.

- i. Gating and letter to parents
- ii. Gating, second letter to parents
- iii. Internal Suspension
- iv. External Suspension

Help and guidance is available at all times in the Medical Centre for any pupil concerned with smoking. Persistent and willful breaking of the School’s rules on smoking may result in permanent exclusion.

## 11. Sanctions to be Applied to Incidents Involving Alcohol

The drinking of alcohol is not allowed, except under supervision for Years 11 and upwards, at times authorised and approved by the Houseparent and or the Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form. Parents of Year 11 and Sixth Formers under the age of 18 years are required to return a consent form giving permission for their son/daughter to consume alcohol.

Any medical emergencies arising from the abuse of alcohol will be dealt with by contacting the School Medical Centre. The staff there will carry out a breathalyser test on the student with a member of the House staff present, they will also contact the doctor/ambulance if necessary. If this is not necessary the student will be admitted to the medical centre overnight for observation.

Please note: If a member of Pastoral Staff is concerned about a student's behaviour in any way and feels that it may be due to the effects of alcohol, they will inform the Head of Boarding who would make a decision to carry out a breathalyser test. Parents will be informed before the test is carried out.

1. Purchasing and/or consuming alcohol:
  - i Parents contacted and Internal Suspension
  - ii External suspension
  
2. Any pupil requiring medical supervision following drinking alcohol:
  - i External Suspension for three or more days.

## 12. Principles to be Applied in Situations Involving Illegal or Illicit Drugs

In all situations involving illegal or illicit drugs the following principles apply:

Any medical emergencies will be dealt with by contacting the School Medical Centre. The staff there will contact the doctor/ambulance as necessary. Guidelines are issued for staff.

- **The rules of the School clearly state that anyone found dealing in illegal drugs will be permanently excluded and anyone procuring illegal drugs, in the possession of illegal drugs or using illegal drugs may be permanently excluded.** If exclusion is considered then the procedure for this is put into action by the School Principal.
- Elmhurst will consider each incident individually, and there will always be careful consideration before the response is determined.
- Parents will be informed of an incident as soon as possible and kept informed of developments throughout any investigation.

- Drug testing can be helpful in that negative results provide reassurance for all while positive results alert both School and parents to an urgent problem which needs to be addressed. **The school will carry out regular random drug tests, which will be conducted and monitored by the School Medical Centre. This may include a test on an individual pupil via a urine sample or may involve a search of school premises by a police dog.**
- Care will be taken to explain to a pupil that there is no presumption of guilt and that he/she is invited to clear him/herself by undergoing a test.
- Drug testing will also be used when in the opinion of the senior member of staff investigating an incident/set of circumstances it is likely that a pupil will have used drugs.
- A failure to submit to a drugs test in suspicious circumstances will legitimately lead to inferences being drawn as to why a pupil refuses to submit to such a test.
- Support agencies including the Police will be involved if appropriate. Our Local Community Police Officer will visit regularly and play a major role in assisting Elmhurst in promoting drug awareness and will, if necessary, bring in Police dogs to search the premises for any illegal substances.
- All incidents are written down and the record kept in the Medical Centre and a copy will be sent to Mrs. Janet Hinds, Head of Boarding and Pastoral Care. All such incidents will, as far as possible, be treated as confidential items.
- In all incidents involving drugs, referral for counselling during the investigation will be actively considered.
- Illegal drugs will always be stored/disposed of safely.
- The Principal will take responsibility for liaison with the media, where required.

### **13. DRUG/SUBSTANCE ABUSING PARENTS**

The school recognises that a student may have a parent whose drug use (legal or illegal) is problematic. The student's welfare in this case is paramount and the school will act, within legal limits, to support the student in a variety of ways, practically and emotionally. Key staff involved in such support have received guidance (and training) in this area.

### **14. TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR STAFF**

All staff at the school benefit from a Drugs Education training programme in order to enhance their skills in delivering PSHE. Support for the teaching and understanding of drugs-related issues is also incorporated in our staff INSET programme using the DRED UK Substance Misuse Presentations.

The Head of Boarding and Pastoral Care, supported by the Principal and Governing Body, has responsibility for ensuring that drugs issues are handled in the spirit embodied in this document.