



DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY

REFERENCE:	TBS_V01 – 09/2025
OWNERSHIP:	AP Lead
AUTHORISED BY:	Emma Draper (Director)
REVIEW:	Annually – September 2026

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of Churchwood Forest School AP
- Reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of young people and others who use Churchwood Forest School AP
- Clarify the Churchwood Forest School AP approach to drugs for all staff, young people, trustees, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- Give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme
- Enable staff to manage drugs on Churchwood Forest School AP School premises, and any incidents that occur, with confidence and consistency, and in the best interests of those involved
- Ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs complements the overall approach to drug education and the values and ethos of Churchwood Forest School AP
- Provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of Churchwood Forest School AP drug education programme and the management of incidents involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs
- Reinforce the role of Churchwood Forest School AP in contributing to local and national strategies

SCOPE

This policy applies to The Churchwood Forest School AP School (TBS), this includes all employees who work within The Churchwood Forest School AP School as well as contractors, volunteers and visitors.

SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

As an organisation that prioritises the safeguarding of children and all vulnerable people, The Churchwood Forest School AP School is committed to providing a safe environment across all we do by actively adopting strategies that embed a culture of zero tolerance for abuse of any kind.

RESPONSIBILITIES



All members of the school community share responsibility for upholding this policy. The Provision Lead and Education Leadership Team/Directors are accountable for its implementation, ensuring staff training and consistent application. All staff must be vigilant, adhere to reporting procedures, and model responsible behaviour. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policy, making safe choices, and reporting concerns. Parents/carers must support the school's stance, communicate any relevant issues, and reinforce healthy attitudes towards drugs and alcohol at home.

Staff with key responsibility for drugs

- Drugs Education Co-ordinator: Provision Lead
- Management of drug related issues in Churchwood Forest School AP: Provision Lead, with support from Education Leadership Team/Directors.

If any member of staff has concerns about any drug related incident then they should immediately inform a member of the Education Leadership Team/Directors.

DEFINITIONS

The definition of a drug given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is:

A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave.

The term 'drugs' and 'drug education', unless otherwise stated, is used throughout this document to refer to all drugs:

- all illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- all legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), new psychoactive substances (NPS), ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrites (known as poppers)
- all over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

POLICY

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Churchwood Forest School AP stance towards drugs, health and the needs of Young People:

Churchwood Forest School AP has a zero tolerance policy towards the possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs within the Churchwood Forest School AP boundaries.

Responses for managing drug related incidents in the Churchwood Forest School AP centre:

Incident	First Occasion	Second Occasion	Third occasion	Fourth Occasion
Possession of Class C Drugs	Time-limited removal from Churchwood Forest School AP sessions (AP) Substance confiscated. Contact parents/carers/referrers to arrange a meeting. Behaviour assessment; further risk assessment for provision (e.g. to ensure curriculum/pastoral programmes address issues raised). Incident logged as safeguarding concern. Parents/carers and student understand legal position from Provision Lead. Consequences of more offences made clear.	Reassessment of risk <i>after</i> intervention. Incident logged as safeguarding concern.	Reassessment of risk <i>after</i> intervention Incident logged as safeguarding concern.	Incident logged as safeguarding concern. Referral made to Social Services and young persons Drug & Alcohol Team
Possession of Alcohol	Substance confiscated. Parents phoned and letter home Incident logged as safeguarding concern.	Substance confiscated. Parents called to collect student; Risk assessment carried out. Possible behaviour/ health intervention. Contractual agreement with Parent / Carer Incident logged as safeguarding concern.	Further risk assessment and behaviour assessment Continued disregard for provision rules/ intervention programme. Incident logged as safeguarding concern.	Incident logged as safeguarding concern. Referral made to Social Services and young persons Drug & Alcohol Team
Possession of cigarettes	Expectation that cigarettes and lighters are handed in at the start of the day. Make it clear that if they are not handed in that staff will assume you are planning to smoke and will be keeping a watch out and may request you	Removal from the rest of the group, contact parents over a break in contract, risk of place being withdrawn if consistent		

Incident	First Occasion	Second Occasion	Third occasion	Fourth Occasion
	stay inside at breaks. Support and information on giving up smoking is provided to the young person via the NHS Trust Logged as concern.	abuse of trust and breaking of centre rules. If the student is a year 11 young person come to an agreement that they leave site at lunch time to facilitate the need and maintain the relationship and placement. Have you had lessons on smoking cessation? Logged as concern.		
Possession of suspected Class A or B Drug, including Cannabis	Substance confiscated. Parents/referrers and Police contacted. Time-limited removal from Churchwood Forest School AP sessions whilst substance verified / pastoral intervention negotiated. Risk assessment for young person and provision. Substance verified: Incident logged as safeguarding concern.	Referral made to Social Services and young persons Drug & Alcohol Team reassessment of risk <i>after</i> intervention Incident logged as safeguarding concern.		
Social Supply Illegal Drug	Substance confiscated. Parents/referrer contacted and Police, if appropriate. Referral made to Social Services and young persons Drug & Alcohol Team Risk assessment for young people and others in provision. Investigation into any network of illegal drug			Placement pause or end after assessment and investigation.

Incident	First Occasion	Second Occasion	Third occasion	Fourth Occasion
	use. Placement pause or end (after assessment and investigation. Review process: reassessment of risk <i>after</i> intervention. Incident logged as safeguarding concern.			

Churchwood Forest School AP cannot issue statutory suspensions/exclusions. If there is a decision made to close a placement or for a time-limited removal then Churchwood Forest School AP will notify parents/carers and the commissioner the same day, agree short-term learning/welfare arrangements, and set a reintegration or exit plan as appropriate.

Churchwood Forest School AP recognises that there are instances where other non-controlled drugs may legitimately be in a provision:

- **Medicines**

Some young people may require medicines that have been prescribed for a medical condition during the day. Staffing, administration, storage and record keeping procedures are all clearly set out in the Medicines Policy. The medicines policy also sets out the circumstances in which a young person may take non- prescribed/over-the-counter medicines, such as those providing relief from period pains or hay fever.

Staff do not give non-prescribed medication to students unless supplied with written authorisation by parent/carer.

- **Volatile substances**

Some solvents or hazardous chemicals are legitimately used by Churchwood Forest School AP staff or young people. These substances are stored securely (in line with COSHH regulations) and managed to prevent inappropriate access or use. Arrangements are set out in the Churchwood Forest School AP Health and Safety policy.

- **Alcohol**

Use and consumption of alcohol at Churchwood Forest School AP is never authorised for any staff member.

In keeping with our duty of care, employees are not permitted to consume alcohol during the



working day, or at any time when they will be subsequently supervising young people.

Churchwood Forest School AP recognises that there may be occasions when a member of staff may experience difficulties in relation to alcohol misuse outside Churchwood Forest School AP. Staff are encouraged to discuss this with line managers so that support can be put in place. In addition, an Occupation Health Referral can be actioned if appropriate.

- **Tobacco and e-cigarettes**

Churchwood Forest School AP are non-smoking. Students are required to hand in their cigarettes and e-cigarettes at the beginning of the day and are not permitted to smoke during the day, while under Churchwood Forest School AP supervision.

Drug Education

Drug education is a major component of drug prevention and is an important aspect of the Churchwood Forest School AP curriculum. Its aim is to provide opportunities for young people to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions.

It aims to:

- increase young people's 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
- the prevalence and acceptability of drug use among peers
- the complex moral, social, emotional and political issues surrounding drugs
- develop young people's personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy, including:
 - assessing, avoiding and managing risk
 - communicating effectively
 - resisting pressures
 - finding information, help and advice
 - devising problem-solving and coping strategies
 - developing self-awareness and self-esteem
- *enable young people to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes, and exploring media and social*



influences.

Staff may need to focus more on developing young people's confidence and skills to manage situations, which require making decisions about drugs. This may include developing competence to manage medicines responsibly, staying safe and understanding and managing feelings. Churchwood Forest School AP staff should pay particular attention to enabling students to seek help and support when they need it.

Methodology and resources

Drug education is delivered within a safe, secure and supportive learning environment.

Ground rules are set out, and Churchwood Forest School AP staff and young people's right to privacy is respected. Boundaries of discussions are made clear. In the event of a young person deliberately and regularly making reference to a 'drug habit', the Provision Lead will speak with the young person, offer support and advice and if necessary, involve the parent or carer.

Group agreements are made to help to foster mutual respect and an environment in which young people feel comfortable and ready to listen to and discuss each other's opinions.

Distancing techniques can be adopted through role play/anonymous question boxes.

Staff are advised to sometimes answer difficult questions on an individual basis.

Staff support and training

The launch of this policy involved whole staff continued professional development training and subsequent new staff will be provided with training as part of the new Staff Induction Programme. Advice is also provided through line managers and in house training takes place as and when needed.

Monitoring and reviewing

The teaching of drug education will be monitored and reviewed via the subjects within which it is taught.

Searches

Personal Searches

When a young person is suspected of concealing illegal or other unauthorised drugs staff will not carry out a personal search; this includes the searching of outer clothing and inside pockets. Every



effort will be made to persuade the person to hand over voluntarily any drugs, in the presence of a second adult witness. Where the individual refuses and the drug is believed to be illegal, and Churchwood Forest School AP wishes to proceed along formal lines, then the police will be called.

Searches of Churchwood Forest School AP property

Staff may search Churchwood Forest School AP property, for example, young people's lockers, desks or accommodation if they believe drugs to be stored there. Prior consent will be sought, however individuals will be made aware that if consent is refused Churchwood Forest School AP may proceed with a search. Where consent is refused, Churchwood Forest School AP will balance the likelihood that an offence has been committed against the risk of infringing the individual's privacy without just cause.

Searches of personal property

Churchwood Forest School AP uses a consent-based approach. Where a prohibited or unsafe item is suspected, staff request voluntary handover or consent to a proportionate check of bags or outer clothing, with a second adult present. If consent is refused and there is an immediate risk of harm or a suspected offence, staff secure the area and contact the police in line with NPCC "When to call the police". Decisions to involve the police will follow the NPCC "When to call the police" guidance; DSL and the commissioning school/LA are notified the same day. No intimate searches are undertaken.

After any search involving young people, parents/carers/referrers will normally be contacted by Churchwood Forest School AP, regardless of whether the result of the search is positive or negative.

Staff may take *temporary possession* to prevent harm, then *secure and hand over* substances to the police as soon as practicable. Items are sealed and labelled (date/time, staff and witness), stored securely, and recorded with a clear *chain of custody*. Staff do not test or taste unknown substances and do not examine digital content on devices.

Parents/carers and the *commissioning school/LA* are notified the same day; all actions are logged on the safeguarding/incident system.

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs staff 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 Churchwood Forest School AP safe
- without delay notify the police, who will be asked to collect it and then store or dispose of it.

The law does not require Churchwood Forest School AP to divulge to the police the name of the young person from whom the drugs were taken but in the case of an illegal drug will normally do so. Liaison will take place to ensure the safe disposal of any substances.

Where a young person is identified the police will be required to follow set internal procedures

- record full details of the incident, including notes of any discussions with the young person. These should include date, time place and people present. The police incident reference number should also be included.
- Incidents resulting in specified injuries or dangerous occurrences will be assessed for RIDDOR reporting; first-aid and incident logs are maintained.

Staff should not attempt to analyse or taste unknown substances. Police may advise on analysis and formal identification.

If formal action is to be taken against a young person, the police will make arrangements for them to attend a local police station accompanied by an appropriate adult for interview. Only in exceptional circumstances should arrest or interviews take place at Churchwood Forest School AP. An appropriate adult should always be present during interviews, preferably a parent/carer/refer, or duty social worker.

Legal Drugs

The police will not always necessarily be involved in incidents involving legal drugs, but Churchwood Forest School AP will inform trading standards or police about the inappropriate sale or supply of tobacco, alcohol or volatile substances to young people in the local area.

Alcohol

Parents/carers/referrers will be informed and informed that the alcohol has been disposed of. In cases where a disciplinary proceeding is necessary, items will be disposed of, once this has taken place.

Volatile substances

Given the level of danger posed by volatile substances, Churchwood Forest School AP will



arrange for their safe disposal.

Medicines

Parents/carers/referrers will be informed and will be asked to collect and dispose of unused or date-expired medicines. Further details are outlined in the medicines policy.

Disposal of drug paraphernalia

Needles or syringes found on Churchwood Forest School AP premises will be placed in a sturdy, secure container, using gloves. A sharps bin is kept in the main reception for this purpose, out of reach of students. Where disposal is required, staff use approved sharps/secure disposal routes; substances are not destroyed by staff.

Police contact

First point of contact: Local Police non-emergency number.

Referral and external support

Provision Leads are responsible for referral to agencies.

Young people are made aware of the various internal and external support structures via Churchwood Forest School AP staff. Local support services and national helplines/websites are advertised on notice boards, on an information board. Information is available from line managers for individual young people parents or referrers as and when required.



POLICY CONTEXT

AP context: Churchwood Forest School AP operates as a non-school Alternative Provision (AP). Commissioning schools/LAs retain statutory responsibilities for admissions/attendance registers, exclusions and Children Missing Education (CME); Churchwood Forest School AP provides same-day attendance and safeguarding information to enable those duties.

Standards: Churchwood Forest School AP adopts the DfE Non-school alternative provision: voluntary national standards (31 Aug 2025) and prepares for future mandatory status.

Police engagement: As an AP we do not have schools' statutory search powers; we use consent-based checks, de-escalation, and NPCC "When to call the police" thresholds.

Health & Safety: We maintain risk assessments, first-aid & incident logs, RIDDOR reporting where applicable, and fire safety arrangements.

This policy relates to the following legislative requirements, standards and internal documents:

Legislation & Standards	• DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation' (latest) and NPCC 'When to call the police' • Government's Drug Strategy 2010
Related Forms & Documents	• Safeguarding Policy • Behaviour Policy

VERSION CONTROL

We will review our documentation regularly and we reserve the right to amend our policies and procedures at any time.

Version	Date	Change Summary	Author/ Reviewer	Approved by:
1	22/9/25	Initial Version	Mark Wrangles	
2				
3				