

Each day, discovery.



ELTHAM COLLEGE

**Drug Policy: Dealing with Harmful and  
Controlled Substances**

**September 2025**



## Version Control Information

Reason For Amendment	Name	Date	Main changes
Annual review	AMM	01.06.20	Inclusion of support for parents (2d)
Clarification of Section 3	AMM	02.12.20	Further clarification of Headmaster's right to exclude
Annual review	AMM	August 2021	Costs of tests updated
Annual review	Ann Massey	August 2022	Inclusion of a six month hair test
Annual review	Ann Massey	June 2023	No change
Annual review	Ann Massey	July 2024	Updated to reflect changes in external partners
Annual review	Sami Michael	Sept 2025	Added recommended policy wording to Section 1 re: upcoming RSHE. Explicit reference to KCSIE now added. Outlined steps to be taken.

## Other Related Documents

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy (Senior School);
- Sanctions and Support Policy (Senior School);
- Exclusions Procedure;
- Complaints Policy;
- School Rules;
- Parent Contract



## 1 Statement of Intent

This policy is aligned with current national guidance and has been updated to reflect recent changes to safeguarding and curriculum expectations. We recognise the updated *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2025) guidance (effective 1 September 2025) which emphasises the risks of child criminal exploitation (including county-lines and forced involvement in drug distribution), and we will apply the safeguarding and referral arrangements set out in that guidance. We are also preparing to implement the revised Relationships, Sex and Health Education statutory guidance (published July 2025) — which expands the drugs, alcohol and nicotine (including vaping) curriculum and incorporates medicine-safety content including how to report suspected adverse reactions via the MHRA Yellow Card scheme — in full by the statutory implementation date. In practice this means the school will:

- review and update our drugs education and incident response procedures;
- provide staff training and appropriate pastoral support;
- ensure clear arrangements for the safe storage and administration of medicines;
- consult parents/carers about RSHE content where required;
- and work with local safeguarding partners and the police where criminal activity (including dealing or exploitation) is suspected.

In this policy, the term ‘harmful and controlled substances’ is used to refer to any psychoactive or intoxicating agent, drug, or volatile substance, including alcohol and tobacco that if taken inappropriately – like a prescribed drug – would be harmful to the person. Controlled substances are listed under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971).

Eltham College encourages students to adopt the highest standards of behaviour, principles and moral standards. However, we recognise that young people, not least those living in a large and cosmopolitan city, experience pressure to use, or experiment with harmful and controlled substances. At Eltham College we address this pressure and the risks posed to our students through our Wellbeing programme and our work in partnership with various organisations including the Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation and Lewisham Insight. We take seriously the need to educate our students and inform parents about the risks of involvement with drugs (recognising that substance misuse usually takes place when students are outside of the School’s care). We are committed to maintaining an environment free from the risk of harmful and controlled substances. On rare occasions alcohol may be consumed by senior students on school premises or at school events off-site, but only when there are staff present. Smoking and e-cigarettes are prohibited on the school site at all times.

The steps that the School will take on becoming aware that a student has used a harmful or controlled substance or is affected by the use of harmful or controlled substances by others, will be guided by a concern for the health and safety of the community and the pastoral needs of our students.

This policy is informed by:

- ‘DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools. Advice for local authorities, headteachers, school staff and governing bodies’ (September 2012). [Available here](#)
- ‘Searching, screening and confiscation: Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies’ (January 2018). [Available here](#)
- Updated *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2025) requirements, including recognition that children may be coerced into County Lines activity, drug distribution, and/or other child criminal exploitation (CCE). In all such cases, our reporting and multi-agency referral routes are as outlined in our safeguarding policy.



## 2 Aims

This policy sets out the school's stance towards harmful and controlled substances (hereafter referred to as 'drugs').

- We provide students with accurate and age-appropriate information about drugs, including legal highs, prescription medication and other harmful substances, and make them aware of the possible consequences of their use;
- We provide students with accurate and age-appropriate information about the consequences of supplying drugs to other individuals;
- Through our Wellbeing programme and work with the Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation and Lewisham Insight we encourage each individual to develop strategies to resist social pressure and to make up his or her own mind about drug use;
- We work with Lewisham Insight to provide free confidential advice about drugs and substances to students who wish to receive one to one support;
- We treat knowledge of a student's misuse of drugs or other harmful substances – whether outside school or not – as a matter of serious concern, that will be addressed within the School's disciplinary and pastoral frameworks;
- We consider the bringing of drugs or harmful substances onto the School site as a serious matter of disciplinary concern; such substances could put the safety of other pupils at risk. The Headmaster reserves the right to temporarily or permanently exclude any student known to have brought such substances onto the School premises;
- We work with parents to provide:
  - a) a clear statement of our position on these matters;
  - b) opportunities to articulate our shared concern about the dangers that can arise;
  - c) opportunities for parents to understand the facts about drugs, recognising that this will help parents communicate with their child(ren) and to inform them of the risks and help them stay safe
  - d) a random drugs testing regime (urine test administered at school) after the establishment of a drugs contract, signed by the student and his or her parents or carers, that can act as a deterrent and as an incentive to healthy habits and decision making;
  - e) a drugs test on a sample of hair (administered at school and sent to a laboratory) that is conducted after an interval of at least six months from the start of the drugs contract. This is intended to act as a further deterrent and as an incentive to healthy habits and decision making;
  - f) pastoral care for any student in need including the offering of counselling and guidance;
- We expect the agreement, support and co-operation of parents with the aims and implementation of this policy.
- This policy and its terms applies at all times, even when students are not directly under the care of the School. This is necessary to safeguard the welfare of all our students and ensure the good reputation of the School.

## 3 Action

If, outside the forum of confidential counselling, the School becomes aware or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is using or experimenting with drugs outside of school, pastoral support will be provided to the students. The Deputy Head Pastoral will invite parents into school to discuss the nature of the concerns. Sources of information will not be disclosed. The student will be signposted towards



confidential support outside of school and pastoral support within school will be provided, including access to the school counsellor, if appropriate. We recognise that a range of complex factors usually trigger such behaviour and as such, each incident will be treated individually, and the support adjusted accordingly.

Alongside the provision of pastoral support, the student and parents will be asked to sign a drugs contract. This agreement sets out an expectation that, for the remainder of the time that the student is at Eltham College, the Deputy Head Pastoral can, without prior notice, test the student for drugs. The drugs contract is an act of targeted prevention and a deterrent against future misuse of drugs. The student will be asked to provide a urine sample (tested on site). Parents will be asked to contribute £50 towards the cost of each urine test. These urine tests may be repeated at regular intervals.

After a period of at least six months from the initial urine test has elapsed, a sample of hair will be taken and sent to a laboratory for professional drugs testing. Parents will be asked to contribute to the cost of the hair test, up to the sum of £300.

The contract will be treated as confidential; access to the data is restricted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Head Pastoral, and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. Refusal to agree to the conditions of the drugs contract will be considered a serious breach of the School rules. The Headmaster will use his discretion and respond accordingly.

If a test indicates that a student has continued to misuse drugs whilst under the drugs contract, the School will consider this to be a serious disciplinary incident. The Headmaster will reserve the right to exclude the student.

Where an individual's behaviour raises serious concern about the safety and welfare not only of that student, but that of other students in the school, the Headmaster will reserve the right to exclude the student if drugs are reasonably suspected to contribute to this behaviour. Where a student brings drugs into school, incites others to do so, or attempts to share or sell drugs while under the responsibility of the School (whether on or off the school site), the Headmaster similarly reserves the right to exclude the student.

## **4 Search and Confiscation**

The Deputy Head Pastoral or other staff under the direction of the Headmaster, may search a student and/or his/her possessions if they have reasonable grounds to do so. In carrying out the search and confiscating any items subsequently found, the Deputy Head Pastoral will be guided by, and act in accordance with the DoF publication: *'Searching, screening and confiscation: Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies'* (January 2018). There is no requirement to gain parental consent prior to carrying out a search, but the Deputy Head Pastoral will contact parents as soon as practically possible.

## **5 Complaints**

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about the operation of our Harmful and Controlled Substances Policy, and that any difficulty can be sensitively and efficiently handled before it reaches the complaints stage. Copies of the School's complaints procedure are available on the school website and from the Headmaster's Assistant. We undertake to investigate all complaints and to notify



you of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. We maintain records of complaints for three years after your child has left our school.