

Appendix 1: SCHOOL ALCOHOL POLICY

All schools have an important role in providing young people with information about the risks associated with the misuse of alcohol.

Why an alcohol policy?

Guidance from the Department for Education and the Association of Chief Policy Officers (ACPO) drug advice for schools states:

“School staff are best placed to decide on the most appropriate response to tackling drugs within their school. This is most effective when:

- it is supported by the whole school community;
- drug education is part of a well-planned programme of PSHE education delivered in a supportive environment, where pupils are aware of the school rules, feel able to engage in open discussion and feel confident about asking for help if necessary;
- staff have access to high quality training and support.”

Schools are strongly advised to have a written drugs and alcohol policy to act as a central reference point for all school staff. Schools are encouraged to set out in this policy their role in relation to all related matters, including the content and organisation of PSHE and science education, and the management of alcohol, drugs and medicines within school boundaries and on school trips.

Schools may wish to include more detail incorporating

The Every Child Matters Agenda, The effectiveness and safety of school staff, Health and safety legislation and Litigation.

Statutory duty of the school

The head teacher has overall responsibility for the Alcohol Policy and its implementation, for liaison with the governing body, parents and appropriate outside agencies. The head teacher must ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained.

A school cannot knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug (e.g. the preparation of, or smoking of cannabis). Where it is suspected that substances are being sold on the premises, details regarding those involved, as well as much information as possible, must be passed to the police.

What should schools be aiming for?

A school response should be aiming for an Alcohol Policy that is consistent, safe and promotes the health and well being of the school community. This will require staff, pupils and parents to support a policy which acknowledges that:

- it is not acceptable for staff to be under the influence of alcohol when professionally active and responsible for either pupils, parents, other colleagues and/or school property
- it is not acceptable for staff or pupils to bring alcohol onto the school premises for consumption when the school is operational
- social activities, out of hours but on school premises are planned to ensure they promote sensible drinking
- there are supportive and consistent links to the curriculum
- there is a need for a developmental process of implementation that is sensitive to individual concerns, cultures and behaviours.

Issues to be considered regarding an Alcohol Policy

- It is difficult to imagine any situation for staff who are professionally responsible for young people, where it would be acceptable to drink alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol.
- Social occasions arranged by/in school should have at the very least non-alcoholic drinks available.
- School trips and holidays are particularly difficult - Provide clear guidance to staff, parents and pupils for school trips (particularly abroad).
- Procedures regarding staff drinking both before and during times when they are professionally responsible.
- Access to support for staff and pupils if drinking is a problem.
- Promotion of information about the impact of drinking.
- Links to the formal planned curriculum.

Sources of further information

The 2012 DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools: gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools

Department for Education: [Keeping children safe in education Statutory guidance for schools and colleges September 2023](#)