

Shrewsbury Partnership in Education Training
Shropshire Secondary Schools
Agreed Drugs Policy

DRUGS IN THE COMMUNITY

It is now unfortunately a fact of life that drugs of all kinds exist in society. Even in rural Shropshire, the chances of your child being exposed to temptation are considerable. There is evidence that young people are being increasingly offered illegal drugs, which have become cheap and readily available. The use of alcohol and tobacco by young people has also shown a marked increase in recent years.

The aim of this leaflet is to outline our schools' and colleges' policy and to give you information about how you can play your part in helping your child to be safe from the dangers, which drugs present.

WHAT WE BELIEVE AND DO

We believe that the increasing availability of drugs to young people is a very disturbing and dangerous development in our society. Student use of drugs is unacceptable in our schools and colleges. This includes alcohol and cigarettes.

Students who bring drugs (other than those prescribed for their own medical use) into school face serious consequences. We include the use of solvents in this general ban.

We also believe that we have a duty to do what we can, to inform young people of the risks of all forms of drugs and especially illegal substances. We aim to provide students with enough awareness and skills to resist any temptations and to make informed choices. We do this throughout the five years education, which they receive at school and college. There is a planned teaching programme, which is part of the schools' delivery under Personal, Social and Health Education. We also take other opportunities through normal school and college life to promote as much knowledge as possible.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THINGS GO WRONG?

If we discover any use of drugs in our schools or colleges, our procedure will be to:

- Investigate the matter thoroughly and establish the full extent of the problem.
- Contact the parents of those involved (where students are under 19).

Currently under review; working party

- Take appropriate disciplinary action. This will depend on the seriousness of the situation, but it is quite likely to involve exclusion, either temporary or permanent. Re-admission, if appropriate, will involve a clear undertaking on the part of all involved to avoid any drug use in the future. If we believe that the substances used are illegal, we will inform the police.

WHAT WE HOPE YOU WILL DO

Your child is part of the youth culture and may have some knowledge of drugs and how they can be obtained.

Before there is any temptation for her/him to experiment with drugs, we strongly urge you to talk about the issue with her/him and how to keep safe.

Be aware of what your daughter or son is doing in the evenings and at weekends.

Make a point of discussing social activities and remember friends' names.

Make clear your own standpoint and reinforce our message that drugs, including alcohol and tobacco are dangerous and can be lethal.

Be honest about the issues involved. Don't avoid the issue - it won't go away. Actually discussing the issue and being open about the risks make a bigger contribution than you might think.

If you suspect your child might actually be misusing a substance, key signs to watch for are the following:

- Unexplained changes in behaviour, such as mood swings, highs and lows, often giggly, flippant or detached.
- Changes in social life and friendship patterns.
- Poor concentration, school work suffering.
- Money disappearing from the house.
- Unusually secretive behaviour and / or defensiveness.
- Foil, syringes, folded pieces of paper.
- Arms bruised or covered up.
- Pale complexion, tiredness, and irritability.
- Spots, sores around the mouth.
- Anti-social behaviour.

If you feel you need more help or information, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Outside help can also be gained from:
Drugs - national, confidential and free helpline 0800 - 776600