



St Thomas More Catholic Academy



St Thomas More Catholic Academy Drugs Policy

(including dealing with banned and/or illegal items)

Role	Name	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs. J. Stubbs	01782 882900
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Mrs. A. Staton. Mrs K Williams	01782 882900
Early Help Champion	Mrs. J. Stubbs	01782 882900
Chair of the Academy Representatives	Mr R Fello	office@stmca.org.uk
Headteacher	Mr. M. Rayner	01782 882900
Advice and Referral Team	Mon – Thurs: 8.30am - 5pm	01782 235100
Emergency Duty Team	Out of hours (above)	01782 234234
Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board	www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk	
Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board Agency Representative	Sangita Mishra	01782 235897
Published – September 2023		
Date for Review – September 2025		

Links to other policies:	Behaviour for Learning Exclusions Policy Supporting Students With Medical Needs e-safety Policy Safeguarding Policy
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St Thomas More Catholic Academy

All Saints Catholic Collegiate

United in Faith, Love and Learning

Mission Statement

Christ is at the heart of our community, where everyone is known and loved.

In fulfilling our mission we are a school of prayer. We live as a community of love, peace and reconciliation, valuing everyone's dignity as a child of God to promote and celebrate the growth and achievement of the whole person.

Policy For Drug Education And The Management Of Drug Related Incidents

This policy applies to all students at St Thomas More Catholic Academy when they are in school, travelling to/from school and taking part in any school activity e.g trips, work experience, sports fixtures etc.

The Aim Of Drug Education

For the purpose of this policy a 'drug' is a substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave. This includes both legal and illegal substances, volatile substances (solvents), alcohol, tobacco and prescribed drugs.

In relation to drugs education, our mission is clear. In particular drug education is a key part of pastoral care in securing a safe environment for our young people to learn and develop.

The aim of drug education:

- To provide the opportunity for students/young people to explore and develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to drugs and drug related issues to enable them to make informed decisions.
- To increase students' knowledge and understanding and clarifies 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, economical and political issues surrounding drugs
- To develop students' personal and social skills in order to make informed decisions to keep themselves safe and healthy, including:
 - To develop confidence regarding assessing, avoiding and managing risk
 - To develop confidence with resisting pressures
 - To inform regarding finding information, help and advice
 - To devise problem-solving and coping strategies
 - To develop self-awareness and self-esteem
 - To enable students to explore their own and other people's attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes and exploring media and social influence.

In practice, drug education within St Thomas More Catholic Academy must:

- Support the ethos of the school
- Be appropriate to the age group of the students
- Identify those students who are vulnerable
- Provide support and refer to appropriate agencies where necessary

Planning And Teaching Drug Education

Drug education will be delivered through the PSHE curriculum, Science curriculum and Acts Of Worship as they all focus on providing students with the opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes.

Drug Education needs to be delivered in a safe, secure and supportive learning environment. Therefore it is essential that clear ground rules are negotiated with students and young people regarding confidentiality,

rights to privacy and respect and boundaries. Young people should be actively encouraged to participate in their own learning and to question and think critically.

A wide range of active learning approaches should be used to ensure that all young people actively participate.

- Delivery should involve a wide range of teaching and learning approaches
- The students should be encouraged to participate actively in their own learning
- The programme should encourage two way dialogue with the students and enable them to speak openly
- Students should be encouraged to question and to think critically for themselves
- Rules regarding confidentiality and boundaries should be clarified and effective ground rules should be negotiated
- Resources should be carefully selected, be up to date and give accurate information Teachers also need to ensure that the resources they use are relevant, up to date and appropriate in order to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Staff Development And Support

All staff should have a general drug awareness and a good understanding of the school's policy for drug education, the management of drug related incidents and any other related policies.

It is essential that all staff involved in the teaching of drug education have the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge to enable them when working with young people to confidently address drugs and drug related issues.

Activities to help their development can include:

- team teaching or teachers observing other skilled staff (e.g specialist outside agencies) with ongoing support from a coach/mentor
- participating in collaborative enquiry and action research supported by teaching networks
- training courses with support to apply learning in the classroom

The role of the Governors (Academy Representatives):

Academy Representatives will:

- Be well informed on drugs issues as they affect the school through liaison between the Headteacher and the Chair of the Academy Representatives.
- Contribute to the development and oversight of the Drugs Policy

Assessment, Monitoring, Evaluation And Reporting

Monitoring and evaluating enables the school to identify the relevance and effectiveness of the drug education programme through the teaching activities and resources used and whether they meet the needs and interests of the young people.

The Pastoral Curriculum is not assessed. However, Form Tutors do add a pastoral comment on the full school report and students complete self-assessment/evaluation documents at the end of each Pastoral session. These are then collated and analysed by the Heads Of Year in order to inform the planning of future Pastoral sessions.

Assessment in Science and RE is part of the National Curriculum

Managing Drug Related Incidents

The primary concern for St Thomas More Catholic Academy is the care and welfare of its students. St Thomas More Catholic Academy will seek to balance the safety and security of students.

Early Intervention

Schools can have a key role in identifying students at risk of drug misuse. The process of identifying needs should aim to distinguish between students who require general information and education, those who could benefit from targeted prevention, and those who require a detailed needs assessment and more intensive support. Misuse of alcohol and other drugs can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation, therefore St Thomas More Catholic Academy will maintain and implement robust safeguarding procedures to ensure that early intervention is implemented for any student where alcohol, drug and/or substance abuse or misuse is suspected, and will investigate whether additional safeguarding risks or concerns are evident.

Students Whose parents/carers or family members misuse drugs

Schools will be alert to behaviour which might indicate that the child is experiencing difficult home circumstances. St Thomas More is pro-active in the early identification of children's and young people's needs and in safeguarding the children in our care. Screening is important in assessing needs. Where problems are observed or suspected, or if a child chooses to disclose that there are difficulties at home and it is not deemed a safeguarding issue, the school will follow the procedures set out in this Drug Policy and within the Safeguarding Policy. This includes protocols for assessing the student's welfare and support needs and when and how to involve other sources of support for the child such as Children's Services, services commissioned by the Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAAT) programmes and, where appropriate, the family.

Smoking / Vaping

The legal minimum age for smoking or vaping is 16 and schools are subject to the same smoke free legislation as other premises.

- The school is a smoke-free site
- Children, young people, staff, parents/carers and governors have been involved in the development and implementation of a smoke-free site;
- The school provides information and support for smokers to quit including referral to the School Nursing Team.

Medical Conditions:

There are a number of students within school and other educational establishments who may require medication to be administered during the school day. Students with medical conditions requiring medication on a regular basis should be made known to all staff and members of the school community:

- All staff are given a list of students with specific medical conditions at start of the academic year
- All medication is kept in the school office
- Supplies are sent with a designated member of staff on all out of school trips.
- Parental consent forms are kept on file.

Drug Incidents:

St Thomas More Catholic Academy states that drug incidents can involve suspicion, observations, disclosures or discoveries of situations involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs.

A drug incident covers a range of situations including:

- Rumours and reports of students using drugs
- Use of drugs by students on the premises or at a school event
- Students bringing drugs onto the premises or to school event
- Students supplying drugs on the premises or at a school event
- Drugs being sold to students by outsiders in the vicinity of the school
- Students disclosing to staff
- Finding drugs on site
- Parents/carers seeking advice from school about possible drug use by a student

Response:

The first response is to ensure the safety of the students involved and the students of St Thomas More Catholic Academy. This will involve seeking medical advice and taking temporary possession of any suspected illegal or unauthorised drugs. If a student is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises, the school must prioritise the safety of the young person and those around them. If necessary it should be dealt with as a medical emergency, administering First Aid and summoning appropriate support. Depending on the circumstances, parents or the police may need to be contacted. If the child is felt to be at risk the Safeguarding Policy will come into effect and social services may need to be contacted.

The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purpose of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug, providing that all responsible steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

St Thomas More operates a zero tolerance policy in relation to drugs/ illegal substances. Students will be permanently excluded for possession, use or distribution of these substances either whilst at school, travelling to/from school, or attending any event as a student of St Thomas More. Drug incidents can involve situations involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs. This includes substances that are believed to be controlled drugs or legal highs.

Possession of, or being under the influence of alcohol within school, travelling to/from school, or at a school event will result in a suspension from school.

Use of cigarettes/smoking materials/vapes within school, travelling to/from school, or at a school event may result in a suspension from school.

Any student caught supplying drugs to another student in school, travelling to/from school, or at a school event may, in addition to exclusion from school, have the matter reported to the police.

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs a member of staff will inform a member of SLT who will then take control of the situation.

The member of SLT 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 a school safe or other lockable container in the Finance Office with access limited to two senior members of staff
- consider without delay, whether to notify the Police, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. The law does not require a school to divulge to the police the name of the student from whom the drugs were taken. Where a student is identified, the Police will be required to follow set internal procedures
- record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number
- inform parents/carers, unless this would jeopardise the safety of the student. School staff should not attempt to analyse or taste unknown substances. Police can advise on analysis and formal identification, although this is normally carried out only if it will be required as evidence within a prosecution.

If formal action is to be taken against a student, the Police should 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 school. An appropriate adult should always be present during interviews, preferably a parent/carer or duty social worker.

School Trips:

If a student breaches the rules regarding drugs/alcohol/illegal substances and is returned home, parents/carers will need to meet the cost of these arrangements. On a trip, it may not be possible for a member of SLT to be present. In this case, the party leader will assume this role.

Personal Searches:

“Searching, screening and confiscation Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies” (July 2022) published by the Department for Education (DFE) stipulates that:

1. Searching can play a critical role in ensuring that schools are safe environments for all pupils and staff. It is a vital measure to safeguard and promote staff and pupil welfare, and to maintain high standards of behaviour through which pupils can learn and thrive.
2. Headteachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item listed in paragraph 3 or any other item that the school rules identify as an item which may be searched for.
3. The list of prohibited items is:
 - knives and weapons;
 - alcohol;
 - illegal drugs;
 - stolen items;
 - any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:
 - to commit an offence, or
 - to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the pupil).

- an article specified in regulations;
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks; and
- pornographic images.

4. Under common law, school staff have the power to search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees. The member of staff should ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted so that their agreement is informed.

If a pupil refuses to cooperate or consent to being searched and it is suspected that a pupil has a prohibited item, the DSL in conjunction with the Headteacher will assess whether it is appropriate to use reasonable force to conduct the search.

Investigation:

St Thomas More Catholic Academy will conduct a careful investigation to judge the nature and seriousness of each incident. The emphasis should be on listening to what students have to say and asking open-ended questions. St Thomas More Catholic Academy will separate any students involved in the incident and ensure that a second adult witness is present. Issues such as confidentiality, child protection, police intervention and referral to external agencies will be given careful attention to safeguard the needs of those involved and to ensure an appropriate response is taken. Any incident involving the misuse of drugs will take account of:

- the age and maturity of the child or young person
- any previous incidents of drug misuse by the child or young person
- which drug(s) are being used/supplied
- is the drug legal or illegal
- how much is being used and how often
- how they take the drug, where, with whom
- how long has it been going on
- the child's/young person's home circumstances
- student's knowledge and understanding of the School Policy and Rules

Any response should balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider school community, and aim to provide students with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals.

Drug/alcohol related problems are rarely, if ever, isolated and are usually indicative of wider issues in a young person's life. A holistic approach is essential when assessing drug/alcohol use and other factors that are impacting on a young person's life and behaviour.

Circumstances Defining Where parents/carers/other agencies including the police may need to be notified:

The School does not legally have to refer an incident to the Police, if there is deemed to be a good reason not to do so. Each case will be judged individually before a decision to refer is taken. Under normal circumstances, parents will be contacted immediately.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in School is Mrs J Stubbs and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mrs A Staton and Mrs K Williams— please refer to the Safeguarding Policy. The senior member of staff who is responsible for the school's drugs policy (Mrs Stubbs) liaises with the police and agrees a shared approach to dealing with drug-related incidents.

Inclusion in mainstream education provides the structure and stability necessary when drug/alcohol and other problems are evident in a young person's life and contributes to reducing other vulnerabilities.

Where school feels they have no choice but to suspend or permanently exclude students, we will ensure that there are adequate and appropriate care pathways available to the young people and their families/carers through partnership with the local authority

Appendix 1: Useful Organisations

Addaction is one of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. As well as adult services, they provide services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents. The Skills for Life project supports young people with drug misusing parents.

Website: www.addaction.org.uk

- ADFAM offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services.

Tel: 020 7553 7640 Email: admin@adfam.org.uk

Website: www.adfam.org.uk

- Alcohol Concern works to reduce the incidence and costs of alcohol-related harm and to increase the range and quality of services available to people with alcohol-related problems

Tel: 020 7264 0510. Email: contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk

Website: www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

- ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) A campaigning public health charity aiming to reduce the health problems caused by tobacco.

Tel: 020 7739 5902 Email: enquiries@ash.org.uk

Website: www.ash.org.uk

- Children's Legal Centre operates a free and confidential legal advice and information service covering all aspects of law and policy affecting children and young people.

Tel: 01206 877910 Email: clc@essex.ac.uk

Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

- Children's Rights Alliance for England - A charity working to improve the lives and status of all children in England through the fullest implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Email: info@crae.org.uk Website: www.crae.org.uk

- Drinkaware - An independent charity that promotes responsible drinking through innovative ways to challenge the national drinking culture, helping reduce alcohol misuse and minimise alcohol related harm.

Tel: 020 7307 7450 Website: www.drinkaware.co.uk/

- Drinkline - A free and confidential helpline for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking.

Tel: 0800 917 8282 (lines are open 24 hours a day)

- FRANK is the national drugs awareness campaign aiming to raise awareness amongst young people of the risks of illegal drugs, and to provide information and advice. It also provides support to parents/carers, helping to give them the skills and confidence to communicate with their children about drugs.

24 Hour Helpline: 0800 776600 Email: frank@talktofrank.com

Website: www.talktofrank.com

- Mentor UK is a non-government organisation with a focus on protecting the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to their lives.

Tel: 020 7739 8494. Email admin@mentoruk.org

Website: www.mentoruk.org.uk

- National Children's Bureau promotes the interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives.

Tel: 020 7843 6000 Website: www.ncb.org.uk

- Family Lives - A charity offering support and information to anyone parenting a child or teenager. It runs a free-phone helpline and courses for parents, and develops innovative projects.

Tel: 0800 800 2222 Website: <http://familylives.org.uk/>

- Re-Solv (Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse) A national charity providing information for teachers, other professionals, parents and young people.

Tel: 01785 817885 Information line: 01785 810762

Email: information@re-solv.org Website: www.re-solv.org

- Smokefree - NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 169 0 169

Website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk>

- Stars National Initiative offers support for anyone working with children, young people and families affected by parental drug and alcohol misuse.

Website: www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk