



Berrywood Primary School Drug and Substance Misuse Policy

Date Reviewed: September 2026

Next Review Date: September 2027

Approved by Governors:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Kate Woods

Deputy DSLs: Chris Reilly, Stacey Merrill, Jo Everett, Sarah Dean and Abi Bates

1. Policy Statement

Berrywood Primary School is committed to the health, safety, and wellbeing of all its pupils and staff. This policy aims to set out a clear framework for the prevention of and response to drug and substance misuse within the school community. It is aligned with our **Safeguarding Policy 2026** and is part of our broader commitment to creating a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "drugs and substances" refers to:

- All illegal drugs (including controlled substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes/vapes, solvents, volatile substances, and medicines
- New psychoactive substances ("legal highs") and nitrous oxide

3. Aims and Objectives

- To promote and safeguard the health and wellbeing of pupils and staff.
- To provide accurate and age-appropriate education on drug and substance misuse.
- To clarify the school's legal responsibilities and responses to drug-related incidents.
- To ensure a consistent approach to managing incidents of drug misuse.
- To work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies in response to incidents or concerns.

4. Legal and Government Guidance

This policy is based on: DfE "Searching, screening and confiscation" (2022); DfE and ACMD "Drug Advice for Schools" (2012); *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2025); Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance; Berrywood's *Safeguarding Policy 2025*, Section: "Drugs and substance misuse" and "Parental substance misuse"

5. Prevention and Education

Curriculum Provision

Drug education is delivered through PSHE, science, and assemblies using age-appropriate content. The programme promotes healthy lifestyles, informed decision-making, and awareness of risks. Special attention is given to developing pupils' resilience, refusal skills, and understanding of consequences.

Parental Engagement

Parents are made aware of the school's drug policy and are encouraged to work with the school to support their child's wellbeing. Information sessions or resources may be offered to support parental understanding of substance misuse risks.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff: Must remain vigilant to signs of drug misuse (including parental substance misuse). Should report concerns promptly to the DSL or a Deputy DSL.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Will ensure all concerns are assessed in line with the *Trigger Trio* framework (Domestic abuse, Parental mental health, Parental substance misuse). Will liaise with Children's Social Care where necessary.

Headteacher: Holds overall responsibility for the policy's implementation and responses to drug-related incidents, including exclusion decisions.

7. Managing Drug-Related Incidents

The school will take firm action in response to:

- Possession, use or supply of illegal drugs or unauthorised substances
- Misuse of medicines or volatile substances
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises

All incidents will be managed case-by-case, taking into account:

- Age and understanding of the pupil
- Circumstances of the incident
- Safeguarding concerns
- Potential criminal behaviour

Responses may include:

- Informing parents/carers
- Referral to external agencies (e.g., social care, police, CAMHS)
- Internal behaviour sanctions or temporary exclusion
- Supportive interventions such as mentoring or early help
- Permanent exclusion for serious offences (e.g., supplying drugs)

8. Safeguarding and Child Protection

The *Safeguarding Policy 2026* recognises parental substance misuse as a key risk factor affecting children's safety, development and wellbeing. Indicators may include: poor attendance or late arrival; physical neglect; emotional or behavioural issues; or exposure to drug-related harm or environments

Any safeguarding concerns, including suspected exposure to drugs at home, will be referred to the DSL, and escalated to children's services where appropriate.

9. Storage and Administration of Medicines

Please refer to the **Medical Conditions and Administration of Medicines Policy**. Staff are trained and authorised to administer medication only as per this policy.

10. Searching, Screening and Confiscation

In accordance with DfE guidance: School staff may search a pupil or their possessions if they have reasonable grounds to suspect they may be in possession of a prohibited item, including illegal drugs. Searches will be carried out by authorised staff and in the presence of another adult witness. Items found will be securely stored and may be handed to the police.

11. Confidentiality

Staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality. Information regarding drug or substance misuse must be passed on to the DSL and may result in contact with social care or other agencies where safeguarding concerns are identified.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required, by the DSL and Senior Leadership Team to ensure that it remains in line with national and local guidance.