



DRUGS AND DRUG TESTING POLICY

Newcastle School for Boys is committed to promoting a healthy, safe environment in which good citizenship and respect for the law can flourish. We believe that it is important to deliver a clear, consistent moral framework that promotes the integrity of our community, and gives all of our boys the understanding and self-confidence to reject illegal drugs and substances.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

Newcastle School for Boys has extensive health education and PSHE programmes that focus upon the potential short-term and long-term risks to health from drug and substance abuse. As with our related programmes concerning alcohol and tobacco, they concentrate on teaching the importance of young people making healthy, informed choices. However, they also include an ethical dimension, designed to instil an understanding of the importance of complying with the criminal law. Our programmes guide boys towards making the correct choices towards healthy lifestyles from Infants and continue throughout the boys' time at the School. They extend across the curriculum, involving PSHE and Science lessons. We also have assemblies on the topic, talks from the police and periodically make use of external specialists to cover the serious risks from abuse of illegal substances and from alcohol and tobacco.

SUPPORT

If a boy comes forward and voluntarily identifies himself as a drug user and asks for help, or, if his parents or friends ask for help on his behalf, the School may, depending upon the circumstances and, at the discretion of the Headmaster, offer him the opportunity to reform his habit with the support of a drug testing and counselling programme at the parents' expense.

INVESTIGATION

Where there are reasonable grounds to do so, the School will always investigate boys' suspected involvement in drugs and substance abuse. The investigation will usually be undertaken by the Headmaster and/or other members of the School Leadership Team as appropriate. The investigation is likely to include questioning a boy and searching his personal possessions. We will inform parents and guardians as a matter of urgency and invite them into the School to discuss the matter.

SANCTIONS

The normal sanction for possession or involvement with drugs is expulsion. Alternative sanctions, when there are mitigating circumstances, could involve suspension and a final warning. Any boy found offering drugs to another pupil will be expelled and the matter may be referred to the police.

DRUG TESTING

Drug testing is organised in conjunction with the School's Medical Officer.

If a boy is suspected of taking illicit drugs then the School will ask its Medical Officer to undertake appropriate drug testing. What is deemed "appropriate" will depend on the context of the concern and other factors that from time to time may vary.

The Medical Officer will interview the parent(s)/guardian and the boy and full informed consent for testing will be requested. The School would expect that this request would not be unreasonably withheld. There may be a charge for the drug testing and its analysis. This cost would be borne by the parent/guardian.

Depending on the result of the first drug test, and/or the history obtained by the Medical Officer, it may be the case that further drug testing at an appropriate time is needed. The decision to carry out further testing would rest with the Medical Officer. Again, full informed consent would be sought and the School would expect that this would not be withheld unreasonably.

If a boy fails his first drugs test, he will only be allowed to remain at the school on the condition that the Medical Officer and the Headmaster (or

in his absence, his Deputy) feel that the circumstances are appropriate and conditional on agreement to further drug testing.

However, it should also be noted that depending on the circumstances/background of the ongoing investigation, even if the boy's first drug test is negative for the illicit drugs, or if a drugs test was not performed for the fact that informed consent was withheld, he may still be asked to leave the school with immediate effect.

If a second test for illicit drugs is positive or if there is evidence that a sample has been tampered with in any way then the boy will be asked to leave the School immediately.