



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. 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. Any additional costs relating to testing and/or counselling may be passed to families.

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 a member of the School Leadership Team. The investigation is likely to

include questioning a boy and may involve a search of his personal possessions. We will inform parents/carers 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 permanent exclusion. Alternative sanctions, when there are mitigating circumstances, could involve a temporary exclusion and a final warning. Any boy found offering drugs to another pupil will be permanently excluded and the matter may be referred to the police. This is in line with our Discipline and Exclusions Policy.

DRUG TESTING

Drug testing is organised in conjunction with appropriate third party specialist providers.

If a boy is suspected of taking illicit drugs then the School will seek 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.

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/carer.

Depending on the result of a first drug test, and/or the history, 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 Headmaster, informed by the circumstances and any appropriate professional advice.. 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 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 a 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 required to leave the School immediately.

**Reviewed and updated
September 2021**