

DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

The Federation of Broughton and West Tytherley
Primary Schools

2026 –2027



Approved by:	FGB	Date: September 2026
Last reviewed on:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

Version Control

Version	Date	Summary of changes	Author / Lead	Approved by
1.0	September 2026	New policy aligned to revised DfE RSHE guidance and current safeguarding expectations.	Headteacher / DSL	Governing Body

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1. Policy Statement

The Federation of Broughton and West Tytherley Primary Schools is committed to providing a safe, healthy, supportive and caring environment in which every child can learn and develop.

The school recognises that children may be affected by drugs and other substances in a variety of ways. Although use or possession by primary-aged children is uncommon, children may be exposed through family circumstances, communities, online environments or older children.

The school therefore takes a preventative, educational and safeguarding-led approach.

2. Aims

The aims are to promote health and safety; provide accurate, age-appropriate information; prevent inappropriate use; provide clear procedures; identify safeguarding concerns; support children and families; ensure proportionate responses; and comply with relevant legislation and DfE guidance.

3. Scope

This policy applies to pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, visitors, contractors and other adults working on behalf of the school. It applies on school premises, during the school day, wraparound care, clubs, educational visits, residentials and school-organised activities away from school.

4. What Do We Mean by Drugs and Substances?

This includes illegal controlled drugs; prescribed and over-the-counter medicines; alcohol; tobacco and nicotine products; vapes and e-cigarettes; psychoactive or other harmful substances; and drug-related paraphernalia. The list is not exhaustive.

5. Education and Prevention

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping education forms part of RSHE and wider PSHE. From 1 September 2026 the revised DfE RSHE statutory guidance applies. Age-appropriate teaching includes illegal drugs and risks, synthetic drugs, illicit vapes, counterfeit medicines, relevant law, alcohol, medicines, smoking and vaping. Teaching focuses on safety, health, risk, decision-making and seeking help.

6. What Pupils Should Understand

Pupils should understand that medicines can be helpful but harmful if misused; some substances are illegal; alcohol and tobacco can damage health; vaping is not harmless; unknown substances must never be taken; pressure can affect choices; and they should tell a trusted adult if worried. Asking for help is encouraged.

7. Safeguarding

Drug and substance misuse may indicate wider safeguarding concerns. Concerns must be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay. The school will consider referral to Children's Services, police, health services or other agencies where required. The child's welfare remains the primary consideration.

8. Confidentiality

Staff must not promise secrecy. Where a disclosure indicates risk of harm, information must be shared with the DSL. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and handled in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

9. Responding to a Drug- or Substance-Related Incident

Incidents may include finding an unknown substance, possession, suspected use or intoxication, supply, reports of offers or pressure, medication misuse, or suspected coercion/exploitation. The school will prioritise safety, safeguarding, medical needs, establishing facts, appropriate communication, proportionate behaviour action and support.

10. If a Pupil Appears to Be Under the Influence

Supervise and keep the pupil safe, inform the Headteacher and DSL, provide first aid where appropriate and seek emergency medical assistance if required. Parents/carers will normally be contacted. If seriously unwell, unconscious, having difficulty breathing, suffering a seizure or otherwise requiring urgent medical attention, call 999. Do not attempt to identify an unknown substance by taste, smell or testing.

11. Unknown Substances Found on School Premises

Keep pupils away, avoid unnecessary handling, inform the Headteacher/DSL, secure safely where appropriate, consider police involvement and record the incident. Treat unknown substances as potentially hazardous.

12. Searching Pupils

Searches will only be undertaken in accordance with legal powers and current DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance. Searches will be safeguarding-led, proportionate, respectful, non-discriminatory and sensitive to age and SEND. Follow the school's separate searching procedures.

13. Confiscation

Prohibited or unauthorised items may be confiscated in accordance with DfE guidance and the Behaviour Policy. Consider the substance, risk, pupil circumstances, possible exploitation and whether police or other agencies should be contacted. Illegal substances will not simply be returned.

14. Police Involvement

Police involvement will be considered where illegal substances are found, supply/dealing is suspected, a pupil brings illegal drugs onto premises, exploitation or coercion is suspected, there is immediate risk, a serious offence may have occurred or police advice is required.

15. Parents and Carers

Parents/carers will normally be informed where their child is involved. Contact may be delayed or managed differently where necessary to safeguard the child or where advised by Children's Services, police or another agency.

16. Supporting Pupils

Support may include pastoral work, DSL support, SENCO input, school nursing or health professionals, Early Help, Children's Services, specialist services, parent/carer support and further education. Consider whether a pupil involved may themselves be experiencing exploitation or coercion.

17. Behaviour and Consequences

Possession, use, distribution or supply of illegal drugs or unauthorised substances on school premises or during school activities is unacceptable. Responses follow the Behaviour Policy and may include parental involvement, restorative work, education, pastoral intervention, external agencies or suspension where appropriate. Responses will be proportionate.

18. Staff and Other Adults

Smoking and vaping are not permitted on school premises. Adults must not use or possess illegal drugs, supply illegal drugs, give pupils alcohol, tobacco, vapes or unauthorised medicines, or attend work in a condition that places pupils at risk. Safeguarding and employment procedures will be followed for concerns about adults.

19. Medicines

Prescribed and over-the-counter medicines are managed under the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy. Medicines must be supplied and administered according to school procedures. Pupils must not share medication. Prescribed controlled medicines may be legitimately required and are managed as medicines.

20. Educational Visits and Residential Trips

This policy applies to all visits and off-site activities. Risk assessments will consider relevant substance-related risks. Normal safeguarding, behaviour and medical procedures apply.

21. Vaping, Tobacco and Smoking

The school is smoke-free and vape-free. Pupils may not possess, use, sell or distribute cigarettes, tobacco, vapes/e-cigarettes, nicotine products or smoking paraphernalia. Illicit vapes or vapes suspected to contain drugs will be escalated immediately.

22. Drug-Related Paraphernalia

Prevent pupil access, avoid unnecessary handling, inform the Headteacher/DSL, consider health and safety risks, follow appropriate disposal or police procedures and record the incident. Take particular care with sharps.

23. Child-on-Child Concerns

Reports that another child has offered, encouraged, supplied or pressured a pupil to use or carry substances, or threatened them in relation to drugs, will be treated seriously and may be safeguarding concerns. Consider possible exploitation or coercion.

24. Criminal Exploitation

Children may be criminally exploited into carrying, storing, delivering or facilitating drug-related activity. A child involved may be a victim rather than a willing participant. Concerns must be referred to the DSL.

25. Recording Incidents

Significant incidents will be recorded factually, including date/time, location, people involved, observations, substance/item if known, action, medical care, parent contact, safeguarding action, agency involvement, outcome and follow-up support. Safeguarding records will be stored securely.

26. Equality and SEND

The policy will be applied fairly and without discrimination. Pupils with SEND may require adapted teaching, communication support, supervision or reasonable adjustments. Concerns will be considered in the context of individual needs while maintaining safeguarding boundaries.

27. Staff Training

Staff will receive appropriate safeguarding training and be made aware of this policy. The DSL and relevant staff will keep up to date with DfE guidance on safeguarding, drugs, RSHE, searching, exploitation, behaviour and medical needs.

28. Working with Other Agencies

Where appropriate, the school will work with Hampshire County Council, Children's Services, police, health services, Early Help and specialist drug and alcohol services, following local safeguarding arrangements.

29. Curriculum Resources and External Speakers

External organisations and speakers will be appropriately checked and resources reviewed. They must complement the curriculum, provide age-appropriate evidence-based information, follow safeguarding procedures and avoid inappropriate or sensationalised content. The school retains responsibility for education delivered.

30. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and DSL will monitor implementation. The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner following changes in law or guidance, safeguarding procedures, significant incidents or local circumstances.

31. Key Principles for Staff

SAFE: Safeguard – keep the child and others safe. Alert – inform the Headteacher/DSL. First aid – consider medical needs. Escalate – follow safeguarding procedures and contact parents, emergency services, police or other agencies where appropriate.

Do not investigate unknown substances, taste/smell/test them, promise confidentiality, leave a potentially intoxicated child unsupervised, make assumptions about involvement or ignore concerns because a child is very young.

32. Policy Statement for Parents and the School Community

The Federation of Broughton and West Tytherley Primary Schools is committed to helping children grow into healthy, confident and responsible young people. Our approach is based on education, prevention, safeguarding and support. We teach age-appropriate information, encourage safe choices and help children recognise pressure and seek help. Where concerns arise, we respond promptly and proportionately, considering welfare and wider safeguarding concerns.

33. Legislative and Guidance Framework

This policy has regard to DfE Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education statutory guidance for introduction from 1 September 2026; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026; Searching, Screening and Confiscation; Behaviour in Schools; Education Acts; Misuse of Drugs Act 1971; Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974; Medicines Act 1968; and relevant equality, safeguarding and medical guidance.

Appendix 1 – Quick Reference: Drug-Related Incident

STEP	ACTION
1. Keep everyone safe	Prevent children from accessing the substance.
2. Do not investigate it	Do not taste, smell or test it.
3. Inform the Headteacher/DSL	Report the concern immediately.
4. Consider medical needs	Seek emergency assistance where required.
5. Safeguard	Consider vulnerability, exploitation or risk of harm.
6. Consider parents/carers	Normally inform unless safeguarding considerations indicate otherwise.
7. Consider police/other agencies	Headteacher/DSL determines whether external agencies are required.
8. Record	Make a clear factual record.
9. Support	Consider education, pastoral support or intervention.

Appendix 2 – Related School Documents

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- RSHE / PSHE Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Equality Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Complaints Policy

Document note: Review against Hampshire local safeguarding arrangements and school-specific procedures before formal approval.