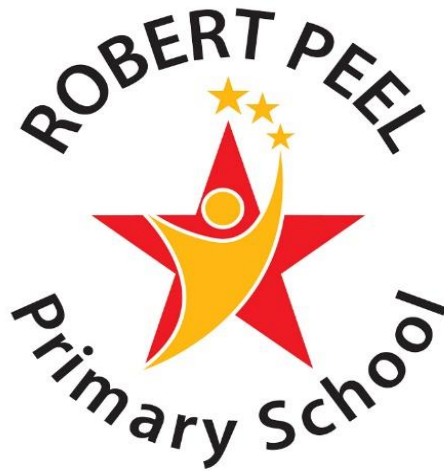


Robert Peel Primary School

Child Drug & Alcohol Policy



Date policy last reviewed: September 2025

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of Governors Date: _____

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Statement of Intent

Robert Peel Primary School is committed to keeping children safe from drugs and alcohol, both on our premises and in the wider community. This policy has been developed in conjunction with DfE guidance to ensure that everyone is aware of the risks posed by the misuse of drugs and alcohol. It outlines the school's approach to supporting children struggling with drugs and alcohol misuse.

The school maintains the view that alcohol and drug use on school premises is entirely unacceptable; however, we recognise that zero-tolerance policies have a disproportionately negative impact on some children, e.g. victims of child criminal exploitation (CCE). For this reason, we aim to foster an approach of supportive discipline, whereby children who are facing issues with drugs and alcohol are aided through both internal and external support, as well as disciplinary measures where appropriate, to make more healthy and positive choices and to reframe their attitudes towards drugs and alcohol.

For the purposes of this policy, a “**drug**” is defined as any substance which, when ingested, alters perception and the way the body works. This definition includes but is not limited to:

- All illegal substances
- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Solvents
- Medicines
- Legal highs

1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2011
- Health Act 2006
- DfE (2012) 'DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2022) 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Administering Medication Policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Mental Health & Well Being Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Sex & Relationships Policy

2. Roles & Responsibilities

The Governing Body will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that effective policies and procedures are in place to make sure that children are kept safe from alcohol and drugs at school.
- Ensuring that this policy is maintained and disseminated to all relevant stakeholders.
- Ensuring that children experiencing difficulties with alcohol and/or drugs can access the support they need.
- Working with the Headteacher, and in liaison with staff, parents, children, health and other professionals, to ensure that the relevant curricula, e.g. SRE and PSHE, addresses the needs of children and the local community, and reflects current trends.
- Ensuring that the designated safeguarding governor reports to the Governing Body concerning drug- and alcohol-related incidents and concerns.

The Headteacher will be responsible for:

- The day-to-day management of this policy.
- Working with governors to ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

- Informing the Governing Body of any issues and developments concerning drugs and alcohol.
- Acting on any concerns arising from children' use of drugs and alcohol.
- Informing parents of any drug- and alcohol-related incidents concerning their child, where appropriate and where doing so will not place the child at risk.
- Inviting the local police and drugs team into school to raise awareness of the risks and issues associated with drugs.
- Informing the police of any drug-or alcohol-related decision, where they deem it appropriate to do so.
- Ensuring a consistent approach to managing drug and alcohol incidents.

The DSL's will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff have the skills to teach and discuss issues relating to drugs and alcohol.
- Ensuring that children experiencing difficulties with drugs or alcohol are provided with appropriate internal support and referred to external support agencies as appropriate.
- Consulting with children to inform provision around drugs and alcohol education.
- Accessing appropriate training to enable them to successfully advise the school on drug and alcohol matters.
- Liaising with local services as necessary to provide support for children.
- Assisting with the monitoring and review of this policy.

Staff will be responsible for:

- Attending scheduled training concerning drugs and alcohol, including how to spot the signs and symptoms of use and dependency, identifying paraphernalia, and how to respond to a drug related incident.
- Reporting concerns regarding children' use of drugs and alcohol to the DSL's.

The Site Manager will be responsible for:

- Regularly checking the school premises for signs of drug and alcohol use and reporting any concerns to the Headteacher/Deputy Head.
- Adhering to the Health and Safety Policy when handling needles or drug paraphernalia found on school premises.

Children will be responsible for:

- Ensuring they do not bring illegal or prohibited drugs or alcohol onto school premises or whilst engaged in any off-site activity representing the school.
- Ensuring they do not take drugs or consume alcohol whilst travelling to or from school.
- Contributing to the development of this policy by providing feedback on the effectiveness of the drugs and alcohol education provided, and on how incidents are managed.

3. Staff Training

The school recognises that early intervention can prevent drug misuse. As such, all staff will receive child protection and safeguarding training in identifying the signs that a child may be at risk, experiencing harm or is struggling upon induction and this will be refreshed regularly. Staff will also receive regular and ongoing training as part of their professional development.

All staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves, or is in a family circumstance presenting challenges that includes drug and alcohol misuse.

4. The Curriculum

All children will receive regular guidance on drugs and alcohol as part of the relationships and health education curriculum, in line with the schools Sex & Relationships Education Policy, Science curriculum and PSHE Policy.

Lessons will be delivered as appropriate to the age and phase of the children and will be differentiated according to individual learning styles.

Information about drugs and alcohol will feature regularly as part of pastoral education in the form of classes and assemblies. Where appropriate, expert visitors and external speakers will be sought to provide classes on drug and alcohol misuse.

5. Specific Types of Legal Drugs

Cigarettes & Vaping

In accordance with part 1 of the Health Act 2006 and the school's Smoke-free Policy, the school is a smoke-free environment – this includes vaping.

Prescribed Medicines

The school recognises that some children may require medications that have been prescribed by a doctor or other health professional. Parents have the primary responsibility for their child's health and the school will request all relevant information about children's medical conditions from parents.

Medicines will only be permitted to be brought onto the premises if it would be detrimental to the child's health if medicines were not administered during their time at the school.

The school will only accept medicines which have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist.

The school will only accept medicines which are provided in the original container as dispensed and include the prescriber's instructions for administration and dosage.

Further guidance can be found in the school's Administering Medication Policy.

Solvents

Children will not be permitted to bring solvent-based products onto the premises including, but not limited to, aerosol deodorants, compressed air and aerosol hairspray.

The school will ensure that potentially hazardous solvents are stored safely, and children will be supervised if they are required to come into contact with them.

6. Children Found to be under the Influence of Drugs or Alcohol

Unless it is a medical emergency, or where there is aggressive or threatening behaviour, children found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst on school premises will be escorted to the Headteacher's office, where they will be assessed.

The school will contact the child's parent or carer and ask that the child is removed from the premises. The child will remain in the Headteacher's office until their parent arrives

If necessary, a search will be conducted in line with the Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.

A referral will be made by the schools DSL's to children's social services and the parents will be informed of this referral.

7. Medical Emergencies

In drug-or alcohol-related medical emergencies, trained first aiders will be summoned and care will be provided in line with the First Aid Policy. An ambulance will be called immediately if the casualty is seriously ill or it is believed their life is at risk. A staff member will remain with the casualty until the trained first aider arrives. Other children will be removed from the immediate area as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Following assessment by the first aider, a decision will be made as to whether an ambulance will be called if the emergency services have not already been contacted. The child's parent will be telephoned and told about the incident. The incident will be reported to children's social services with the parent's being informed of this action.

8. Threatening Behaviour

Aggressive and threatening behaviour by children under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be taken very seriously. Where aggressive and/or threatening behaviour is displayed, the school will contact the police where necessary.

Any child displaying aggressive and/or threatening behaviour will be removed from the premises. If a child displays this kind of behaviour, their parents will be contacted, and sanctions will be implemented in line with the school's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.

A referral will be made to children's social services with the parents being informed of this action.

9. Searching

Under part 2, section 2 of the Education Act 2011, teachers are authorised by the Headteacher to search for any prohibited item including, but not limited to, tobacco, cigarette papers, illegal drugs and alcohol, without the consent of the child, if they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the child is in possession of a prohibited item. Staff members may use common law to search children for any item with their consent.

A staff member carrying out the search can confiscate anything they have reasonable grounds for suspecting is a prohibited item under legislation or school rules. This includes “legal highs” and other potentially harmful materials which cannot immediately be identified. Any staff member may refuse to conduct a search.

All searches will be conducted in line with the Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy, and the Physical Intervention Policy where physical contact with a child is required.

10. Controlled Substances

Where the school is unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it will be treated as a controlled substance. Where a legal drug is identified, the school will consider if it is appropriate to inform trading standards or the police about the inappropriate sale or supply of such substances to children in the area.

Following the identification and confiscation of a controlled substance, a staff member will seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the confiscation or find alongside the name of any witness(es) present. The staff member will store the sample in a secure location with access limited to senior staff.

The incident will be reported immediately to the police, who will collect the sample and then deal with it in line with agreed protocols.

The school is not legally required to give the name of a child from whom drugs have been taken to the police. The school will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether it is appropriate under the child’s specific circumstances to do so. All decisions will be taken with the best interests of the child(s) involved in mind. Generally, names will not be given to the police where the school cannot be certain beyond reasonable doubt that the child in question was the one in possession of the drugs.

A full incident report will be recorded on C-Poms.

Any further measures will be undertaken in line with the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where controlled substances are found on school trips away from the school premises, the parents of the child, as well as local police, will be notified with a referral into children’s social care.

11. Safeguarding

The school understands that the misuse of drugs and alcohol can often be a sign of underlying issues.

Staff members will be aware of the fact that alcohol and drug misuse can be an indicator of a safeguarding concern and is often an indicator of both child criminal and sexual exploitation.

All staff are aware that behaviours linked to issues such as drug and alcohol misuse put children in danger. Staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who is misusing drugs or alcohol, or where it is observed or suspected that their parents or family members misuse drugs.

Children experiencing difficulties with drugs or alcohol will be provided with appropriate internal support and referred to external support agencies as appropriate. Support will be arranged and offered to children in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Mental Health & Well-being Policy.

12. Child criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or threats of violence. CCE can include children being coerced into moving, storing and selling drugs across the country (known as county lines).

Staff will be aware of the indicators that may suggest a child is being criminally exploited through involvement in county lines, including where children:

- Have gone missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home.
- Have been a victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime.
- Have been involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- Are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.
- Are found in accommodation that they have no connection with.
- Owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters.
- Have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Staff will be made aware of the following potential indicators of CCE for children:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education

Staff members will be aware that illegal drug use or possession by children may indicate that they are victims of exploitation, even if it appears that illegal activity regarding drugs is something to which they have consented. The DSL will use their professional judgement to consider CCE as an explanation for a child's drug-related behaviour before pursuing other support and disciplinary procedures, rather than making assumptions about the child's intentions.

Staff will be alert to the indicators above and all concerns relating to CCE will be managed in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

13. Managing Incidents

Instances of children being involved in drug and/or alcohol incidents will be managed in line with the relevant school policies, including the promoting Positive Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and the Social, Mental Health & Well-being Policy.

Following an incident, the Headteacher will work with key members of staff, including the DSLs to assess the child's welfare and support needs and decide on the most appropriate course of action to take. Referrals will be considered to local youth, family or health services, and voluntary organisations, to provide support.

The Headteacher will also be responsible for deciding if it would be appropriate to suspend or exclude the child, following the provisions outlined in the school's Suspension and Exclusion Policy; however, every effort will be taken to support children to adopt more healthy behaviours and choices before resorting to suspension or exclusion. Suspension or exclusion will be avoided wherever possible for children whose parents or carers are known to the school to misuse alcohol and drugs.

Support will be arranged for children involved in any alcohol- or drug-related incidents, in line with relevant school policies.

14. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Headteacher in liaison with the DSLs.

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to staff and all relevant stakeholders.