

# Alcohol and Drugs Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bird College (the College) has a legal responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for study and work for all of its students, employees, affiliates, contractors and visitors.
- 1.2 The College recognises that alcohol and drugs will play a part in the lives of some people, however the College is committed to ensuring that this does not have an adverse effect on the teaching, learning and social conditions of students, employees and visitors; and will take appropriate action when the health and safety of those individuals is threatened or compromised.

## 2. Aims of the Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to all students and visitors to the College. The College has a separate policy statement for staff. The statement on Alcohol and Drugs at Work for staff is available in Chapter 8, Code of Conduct and referred to in Chapter 12, Disciplinary Policy and Procedure of the staff handbook.
- 2.2 This policy aims to:
  - 2.2.1 Enable the College to raise awareness of alcohol and drugs issues and act as the framework for providing a caring, healthy and safe environment in accordance with the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) and Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
  - 2.2.2 Encourage students to seek advice and support where they are concerned that their studies may be adversely affected by substance misuse.
  - 2.2.3 Provide appropriate information and advice on the possible actions taken by the College in relation to reports of students, employees or visitors use, possession and selling of illegal drugs on of its premises.

## 3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 The College does not condone the misuse of alcohol or drugs, or possession and selling of illegal drugs on any of its premises, including individual student rooms in the halls of residence of our partners.
- 3.2 The use, possession and sale of illegal drugs is a criminal offence. Accordingly, the College undertakes to deal with students, employees and visitors who commit such offences and who may, by their actions, bring the College into disrepute and put others in danger or at risk. As such, appropriate cases will be reported to the police.
- 3.3 The College acknowledges that it has a duty of care and a responsibility to provide health education and information about the dangers of illicit drug use and will refer those who request and need help to the appropriate support agencies.

#### **4. Definition of Drug Misuse**

- 4.1 Drugs include any substance that it is unlawful to use, possess or sell that results in mental, physical or behavioural changes in the user. This includes controlled prescription drugs where they are used outside of a GP's direction or are knowingly given or sold to another person.
- 4.2 Substance misuse refers to taking drugs or controlled substances intermittently or continuously, thereby interfering with an individual's health, study/work capability or conduct, or which affects the environment of others.

#### **5. Education and Prevention**

- 5.1 The College will aim to increase awareness and understanding about issues related to alcohol and drug misuse. This will include:
  - 5.1.1 Providing access to experienced Counsellors,
  - 5.1.2 Staff training, for example personal tutors and resident assistants, to identify and provide support to students,
  - 5.1.3 Holding Wellbeing events throughout the year for both students and employees,
  - 5.1.4 Displaying publicity material aimed at raising student awareness,
  - 5.1.5 Inviting external organisations, for example FRANK to give talks.

#### **6. Advice and Support**

##### **6.1 Support for Students**

- 6.1.1 Students are encouraged to report any matters of concern about their dependency on alcohol or drugs to their Personal Tutor, Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing), their own GP, or their health care provider.
- 6.1.2 If a student believes that someone else appears to be experiencing difficulties in controlling their use of drugs or alcohol, they should encourage them to seek advice and support. If the student is concerned that they may pose a danger to themselves or others, the student should inform their personal tutor or programme leader, or the Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) at the earliest opportunity.
- 6.1.3 The College will aim to support students to undertake any agreed programme of rehabilitation, where it is clear that the student is making efforts to resolve any difficulties.
- 6.1.4 The student will be required to attend a case management meeting which will include the personal tutor and Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing). Where appropriate, a recommendation would be made that the student is required to seek support from their GP, or health care provider. The student will be required to provide evidence of attendance on a recommended rehabilitation programme, and progress made towards recovery.

- 6.1.5 The College will provide support for students who are undertaking a rehabilitation programme, by ensuring that reasonable adjustments, where appropriate are put in place to support the student during their recovery.
- 6.1.6 The student disclosure and the nature of the subsequent support, or intervention will be confidential and there will be no unnecessary disclosure of information.
- 6.1.7 Where a student fails to follow an agreed programme of rehabilitation and where there is little evidence of the student seeking appropriate support, the matter will be referred under the Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure, or the Student Disciplinary Procedure, whichever is deemed to be appropriate.

## **6.2 Support for Employees**

- 6.2.1 The College's Staff Handbook has a published policy statement on alcohol and drugs within the workplace.

## **7. Legal actions and Disciplinary Measures**

- 7.1 The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, states that it is an offence for the occupier, or someone concerned in the management of any premises knowingly to permit or suffer on those premises the smoking of cannabis; or the production, attempted production, supply, attempted supply, or offering to supply of any controlled drug.
- 7.2 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires that the college takes reasonable steps to protect the health and safety of employees, students and visitors. Substance misuse can have an adverse impact upon other people, for example students who live in shared accommodation.
- 7.3 The use of illicit substances is considered as a major offence under the College's Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures. Where students contravene the legislation and College regulations, they may be subject to disciplinary action. Incidents may also be reported to the Police.
- 7.4 With regard to students who live in, or visit University Halls, the University Accommodation Regulations section 6.5 states that possession and/or use of illegal drugs is prohibited and will be dealt with under the College's disciplinary procedures, which could result in the termination of the licence agreement, or other sanctions.

## **8. Implementation and Review**

- 8.1 The Policy is implemented through student training, workshops and awareness raising events.
- 8.2 The use and effectiveness of the Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 8.3 Review date: July 2021

### **Linked Policies:**

Student Disciplinary Procedure

Fitness to Study Policy

## 9. Appendices

### Appendix A: Table of Illegal Drugs

Substances within the context of this policy include but are not limited to:

Class	Drug	Possession	Supply and production
A	Crack cocaine, cocaine, ecstasy (MDMA), heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, methadone, methamphetamine (crystal meth)	Up to 7 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to life in prison, an unlimited fine or both
B	Amphetamines, barbiturates, cannabis, codeine, gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), ketamine, methylphenidate (Ritalin), synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones (eg mephedrone, methoxetamine)	Up to 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both
C	Anabolic steroids, benzodiazepines (diazepam), khat, nitrous oxide (laughing gas), piperazines (BZP)	Up to 2 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both
Temporary	None*	None, but police can take away a suspected temporary class drug	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both

\*The Home Office can ban new drugs for 1 year under a 'temporary banning order' while they decide how the drugs should be classified.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing>

## Appendix B: Sources of external support

### Young Peoples' Services – drugs and alcohol

Bexley NHS

[Bexley Drug and Alcohol Services, The Pier Road Project | Bexley Care Services and Resources](#)

The Pier Road Project (Bexley), for over 18-year olds

<https://prpbexley.org.uk/>

01322 357 940

[Addaction](#)

[Home - With You \(wearewithyou.org.uk\)](http://wearewithyou.org.uk)

Drug and Alcohol Service for London on 020 8257 3068.

<https://www.talktofrank.com>

FRANK (National) - 0300 1236600

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/alcohol-misuse>

[www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)

## **Appendix C: Guidance on how to recognise substance misuse**

In many cases of substance misuse there are 'warning signs' to indicate a potential problem. These signs may appear singly or in combination, and in varying degrees. It is important to recognise however that these signs can have more innocent explanations too, for example, a diabetic who has not taken their insulin, or an individual with a mental or emotional disorder.

Below is a list of some of the potential warning signs:

### **1. Study Patterns**

Inconsistency in quality of work  
Lapses in concentration  
Missed deadlines  
Difficulty in recalling instructions  
Taking more time to complete work

### **2. Absenteeism**

High rate of absenteeism  
Frequent lateness  
Unusually high incidence of colds, flu, upset stomach, headaches  
Leaving classrooms more than necessary (e.g. frequent trips to the toilet)

### **3. Accidents**

Taking of needless risks  
Disregard for safety of others

When he/she has caused an accident and considers it "no big deal"

### **4. Behaviour**

Frequent mood swings  
Appearing anxious or depressed  
Irritable  
Behaving in a way you find suspicious  
Withdrawn or inappropriately talkative

### **5. Physical signs**

Weariness, exhaustion  
Untidiness  
Yawning excessively  
Blank stare  
Slurred speech  
Sleepiness  
Unsteady walk

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