



Alcohol, Smoking & Drugs Policy

Aim

Runnymede College is committed to promoting all aspects of personal development, and we consider it our duty to safeguard both the emotional and physical well-being of every student in our care.

The use or misuse of alcohol and the use of tobacco and drugs or other substances can be very damaging both to individuals and to society. Young people are particularly susceptible to the social pressures associated with these substances, and to those people whether within or from outside, who seek to profit from the supply of substances. Aside from well-documented health implications, involvement in drugs also has far reaching consequences for young people. A criminal conviction, even a caution is sufficient to stop them gaining a student visa, forfeiting a university place, practising law, medicine, engineering etc. Therefore, Runnymede College has established important guidelines and rules in these areas. This policy is aimed at all those within, and associated with, the school community.

Definitions

‘Use’: in this policy includes either deliberate or reckless inhalation, injection or ingestion.

‘Substances’: refers to alcohol, tobacco/nicotine products and drugs as outlined below.

‘Possession’: includes having the drug or substance on one’s person, in one’s clothing, in one’s locker or belongings, although ‘possession’ may also include having knowingly concealed a drug or substance in another location with the intention of retrieving it in the future, including coercing another student to conceal the substance on their behalf.

‘Alcohol’: refers to intoxicating liquor of all descriptions (including beer, cider, wine and spirits) and this policy covers obtaining, possessing, consuming, and supplying alcohol.

‘Smoking’: this policy applies to the use of cigarettes, rolling tobacco, other tobacco and nicotine products such as snus, chewing tobacco, shisha, e-cigarettes and vaping products, including Juul and Heets. This list should be seen as illustrative rather than exhaustive.

‘Drugs’: the school reserves the right to react to the emergence of new substances and changing circumstances as they occur. ‘Drugs’, for the purposes of this policy, means any substance that can be used to modify a chemical process or processes in the body, for example to treat an illness, relieve a symptom, enhance a performance or ability, or to alter states of mind. This policy covers the possession, use and supply of such substances, meaning:

- all illegal drugs, including the paraphernalia of drugs or substances intended to resemble drugs
- all legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances
- all over-the-counter and prescription medicines.
- all performance-enhancing drugs, anabolic steroids, glue, other solvents or aerosols, novel psychoactive substances and all other substances held or supplied in each case for purposes of misuse.

No prescribed or non-prescribed medicines are allowed on the premises unless the school is advised in writing of the medical requirements involved (for more details, see below). Parents must notify the School Nurse of any student with a long-term or new medical condition that may require the administration of medicine during the school day. With regards to authorised medicines, the school operates a system of strict control. Any prescribed or non-prescribed drugs that are required by a student during school hours must be handed into the school office by parents and they will be administered by the school nurse.

If a student requires prescribed or non-prescribed medicines during a school trip, the medicine must be reasonably able to be administered by a non-medical professional. A signed letter from parents explaining the dosage and frequency must be sent to the school before the trip; failure to do so will result in the student not being able to go on the trip. Any medicines must remain with the teacher in charge of the trip for its duration; any incident involving medicines will be reported immediately to the parents of the student in question and the Headmaster.

Education

The school employs a three-pronged approach to smoking, alcohol and drugs. We:

- provide pupils with clear information on the issues and dangers of substance use, as well as places to turn for support, as part of our PSHE curriculum.
- encourage pupils to develop the common sense, responsibility and self-respect to resist peer pressure misuse substances
- have clear sanctions for those who are suspected of, or found to be smoking, using alcohol or drugs

The School reserves the right to inform the police where it reasonably suspects that the law has been broken.

The School is committed to working closely to safeguard children individually and collectively. This includes rehabilitative measures such as liaising with outside agencies, referral to a specialist counselling service or individualised school support system. Information received relating to a situation in which the physical and/or emotional health of a student is threatened will be dealt with in line with the school Safeguarding Policy. If a child is in danger of immediate, serious harm, elements of the procedures outlined in this policy, may not be followed in order to expedite appropriate care for the child.

Staff are expected to act as role models.

Response

The School community extends beyond the campus. Students of Runnymede College may not use, possess or supply these substances at any time; either at School or away from School, including during the holiday periods.

Where there are disciplinary consequences, the school will respond in line with Level 3 or 4 of the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy. Pupils who sell substances, distribute them, or facilitate others' use of them, forfeit their place at Runnymede.

The School will always deal with a case as a disciplinary matter where substance misuse occurs:

- i. on the School's premises or
- ii. under the School's jurisdiction (for example, on School trips or away at sports matches - in which case parents will be informed and required to collect the student(s) involved.) or
- iii. when a pupil is under the influence of drugs in these situations

Where substance misuse occurs in other situations, this policy shall apply to pupils at all times and places including out of school hours and off-school premises in circumstances where failing to apply this policy may:

- affect the health, safety or well-being of a member of the School community or a member of the public;
- have repercussions for the orderly running of the School; or
- bring the School into disrepute

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Preventing Bullying Policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- PSHE & RSE Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Reviewed: August 2024

Next review: August 2025