



SIKH ACADEMIES TRUST

Faith Inspired Education

SAT DRUGS POLICY

Date reviewed: Autumn 2025

Date of next review: Autumn 2026

1. Introduction

Schools are required to play a key role in drug education by:

- Providing and developing universal drug education for all young people.
- Meet the RSHE 2025 guidance.
- Identifying vulnerable groups and implementing targeted prevention programmes, which aim to reduce risk-taking behaviour.
- Reducing drug related exclusions.

Having in place an effective Drug Policy that is regularly evaluated and reviewed, is one step towards ensuring a holistic and supportive learning environment for our young people.

2. Rationale

Sikh Academies Trust (SAT) does not condone the misuse of drugs and alcohol or the illegal supply or possession of these substances, by staff or pupils in the Trust. The Trust aims to provide clear guidance to staff, governors, parents, and pupils on its strategy for drug education and prevention and the management of drug-related incidents.

The policy and any sanctions apply to pupils on roll at any schools within the Trust. Any professional misconduct relating to drugs will be dealt with according to the internal rules of the schools, set out by the Headteacher and the Local Governing Body. The Trust acknowledges the importance of its pastoral and safeguarding role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the schools, will seek to persuade pupils in need of support to come forward.

3. Definition of Drugs

The policy is concerned with all legal drugs including alcohol and tobacco (cigarettes, e-cigarettes) and all illegal drugs, psychoactive substances, volatile substances and over the counter prescription medicines.

4. Education and Prevention

Drugs education within the schools of SAT aims for the following:

- To educate all pupils on the issues of drug use and misuse equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be able to make informed decisions about drugs.
- For all pupils to be assertive and know they have a right to say 'no'.
- That non-users are prevented from taking up drug use and that users reduce or eliminate their consumption of the drugs they are using, or to substitute them with less harmful substances, and are aware of how to minimise risks.
- To deliver drugs education through the PD Programme (SMSC, Citizenship), Science, RE and PE where appropriate. In addition, there are opportunities to reinforce learning through drop down sessions.
- To involve outside agencies in the delivery of drug education.

a) What the 2025 RSHE guidance requires (secondary)

By the end of secondary, pupils must be taught:

- Facts on illegal drugs, including the increased risk of potent synthetics being added to illegal drugs, the risks of illicit vapes containing drugs or counterfeit meds, and links to poor mental health.
- The law on supply/possession of illegal substances.
- Risks of alcohol, including what constitutes low-risk adult consumption, legal age of sale, personal safety while drinking (including spiking and methanol poisoning risk).
- Consequences of problem alcohol use (incl. dependency).
- Dangers of prescription/OTC misuse.
- Harms of tobacco, benefits of quitting and how to access support.
- Vaping facts — harms for young people and role of vapes in smoking cessation for adults. GOV.UK

The guidance also highlights co-occurrence of alcohol/drug use with poor mental health and that the relationship is bi-directional. [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-substance-use-guidance)

b) Whole-school policy alignment

- Our RSHE policy is explicit about what's taught and how parents can view materials on RSHE curriculum.

c) Scope & sequence (Years 7–11)

- Health literacy: differentiating medicines vs. drugs; reading labels; safe storage.
- Introduction to law on possession/supply; normative education (most young people don't use).
- Nicotine, tobacco, what vaping is (and why it's not for children).
- Peer influence & refusal skills; how to seek help; trusted adults.
- Alcohol: units, strength, short/long-term effects; personal safety scenarios (spiking, staying with friends, emergency help).
- Online risk: illicit drug supply online, illegal vapes, counterfeit meds; disinformation spotting.
- Bi-directional link of substances with mental health; coping skills vs. self-medication.
- Prescription/OTC misuse: painkillers, benzodiazepines, codeine, antihistamines.
- Cannabis & synthetics: potency variation, contamination risk.
- Party safety: planning, consent, bystander intervention; spiking response; when to call 999; what to say.
- Polydrug risks; methanol danger in counterfeit alcohol.
- Legal consequences: criminal records, county lines grooming indicators.
- Recognising dependence; where to get help; rights and confidentiality (Gillick competence/consent basics).
- Smoking cessation & youth vaping harms; how adults use vapes to quit vs. why under-18s should not vape.

d) Inclusion, SEND & EAL

- Access: visual organisers, chunked text, dual-coding for processes (e.g., "What to do if someone's spiked").
- Language: pre-teach key terms with symbol support; provide glossaries in home languages.
- Assessment flexibility: oral responses, pictorial sequencing instead of essays.
- Trauma-informed practice: offer "step-out" passes; alternative tasks without singling out.

e) Staff training opportunities:

- 60-min CPD: updates from RSHE 2025 with emphasis on substances, spiking, synthetics, illicit vapes; quick tour of FRANK. GOV.UKtalktofrank.com
- Support by senior leaders: non-judgemental questioning; managing “curveball” questions; de-escalation.

5. Responding to Drug-Related Incidents

The management of incidents should always be coordinated through a senior member of staff. Each incident should be assessed individually to ensure the most appropriate response and actions are taken. A member of staff should not act on suspicion, rumour, or hearsay.

In all situations involving drugs the following guidelines apply:

- All situations will be carefully considered before deciding on the response.
- All incidents will be reported to the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Parents / Carers will be informed.
- The involvement of external agencies will be considered.
- Responses may include a variety of sanctions, which could involve a disciplinary and/or a pastoral support approach.
- All incidents will be recorded and held internally.
- Data protection laws apply.

Before deciding on a response, the schools will consider each incident individually and recognise that a variety of responses will be necessary. The schools will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take. Permanent exclusion will be seriously considered for use or involvement in drug related incidents e.g. the selling of drugs.

Young people are becoming increasingly aware of, and in some cases using, new psychoactive substances. These are designed to mimic the effect of illegal drugs but are structurally different enough to avoid being classified as illegal substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act. Despite being labelled as legal these substances are not always safe to use and often contain controlled drugs making them illegal to possess. New psychoactive substances are included in this policy as unauthorised substances and treated as such. If there is uncertainty about what the substance is, it will be treated as a controlled drug.

6. Procedures for all members of staff

If there is evidence of drug misuse take immediate action to reduce risk of harm to the pupil:

- Isolate the pupil(s) if possible, in separate rooms.
- Inform the designated Head of Year and a member of the Leadership Group.
- If the pupil is behaving erratically and physical intervention is required for their own safety, the safety of other individuals or the safety of the environment, then the school's physical intervention procedures must be followed. The safety of the individual and other students is paramount.
- If there is no evidence of drugs, make a written statement of suspicion and inform the Head of Year and Leadership Group member.

7. Procedures for the Head of Year and the senior member of staff

When discovering any substance that is believed to be illegal to possess, the substance should be seized at the time of discovery. Delay may put pupils / colleagues at risk. The Misuse of Drugs Act allows schools to do this to prevent another person committing an offence in connection with that drug.

The Act also makes it an offence for those managing schools to permit knowingly certain offences to take place on the school site. This includes, for example, the sale of drugs, vaping and the smoking of cannabis. Therefore, the schools have a responsibility to act if aware that such an activity is taking place.

- If a pupil is suspected of concealing a substance, ask them to surrender the substance or to empty their pockets and / or bag(s). A teacher does not have any authority to search the pupil unless they have given permission. Authorised staff have a statutory power to search students or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student may have a prohibited item.
- If the pupil becomes violent, the Headteacher should be informed, and the police may have to be involved.
- If there is evidence, confiscate the substance and store in a secure place. Special consideration should be given to solvents due to the possibility of the emission of powerful fumes; storage in a confined area could therefore create a health and safety risk.
- Ensure there is a written record of the incident, including the name of the individual confiscating the substance and the witness. Note the details of the substance, as well as the date, time, and place of confiscation. This statement should be signed by the person confiscating the substance and all witnesses.

8. Controlled drugs

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected controlled drugs schools are advised to:

- ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout
- seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present
- store it in a secure location, such as a safe or other lockable container with access limited to senior members of staff

Notify the police without delay, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols.

The law does not require a school to divulge to the police the name of the pupil from whom the drugs were taken but it is advisable to do so:

- record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number
- inform parents/carers, unless this is not in the best interests of the pupil
- identify any safeguarding concerns and develop a support and disciplinary response.

9. Analysis and Disposal

Once a substance has been seized it is necessary to identify it before recording the details. If it is not immediately apparent, then the Police should be called for assistance.

Under no circumstances should the substance be tasted.

Once recorded, the substance must be disposed of in such a way that it becomes non-recoverable. In any such incident there must always be a colleague present to act as a witness and any action must be recorded.

10. Confidentiality

Pupils should be made to feel that they can talk in confidence to a member of staff. However, there is a moral and professional duty to pass on confidential information where significant harm may otherwise result. If this is the case it is important that pupils are informed that information will be passed on. Each case should be judged on its individual merits; however, professionals have a duty to inform the appropriate authority in the following circumstances:

- Where there is a child protection issue.
- Where the life or health of the person or other persons is at risk.

SAT will consider the health and safety of the pupil when deciding how to respond to any disclosure about possession, supply, or use of unauthorised drugs. However, it is important that teachers react positively to any expression of trust in order to encourage dialogue between the pupil and member of staff.

11. Police Involvement

Before involving any agency, including the police, the schools will make an assessment of the situation and ensure that any action taken is in the best interest of the individual and the school. The following facts apply to all schools:

- Section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 makes it an offence for the occupier, or someone concerned with the management of premises to knowingly permit the premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug and for the smoking of cannabis.
- The Act allows individuals to take possession of a controlled substance in order to prevent someone else committing an offence, providing they hand it to the police or destroy it.
- Police are legally bound to officially record any incident they are involved with.

Wherever there is police involvement, an appropriate adult will always remain with the pupil. This is usually a member of staff.

12. Defining the Schools Boundaries

During the school day and school term the physical boundaries of the schools and the surrounding areas define the extent of the school's premises. However, school rules and expectations of behaviour extend further during school visits, trips, and residential stays. The actions cited within this policy apply on any school-related excursion.

13. Dealing with the Media

The Headteacher will take responsibility for liaison with the media. As the issue of substance misuse is an emotive one, and is likely to generate interest from the media, the schools will seek external advice if needed.

14. Visitors to the Schools

In every case concerning visitors involved with drug education, the following guidelines will apply:

- The Pastoral Team will work closely with the visitor to ensure that their input supports the overall aims of the Drug Policy and is an integrated element of the curriculum, with appropriate planning, preparatory and follow up work. The presentation will be checked before it is made.
- Visitors will not be left alone with a class or pupils unless they have been DBS checked.
- Classroom teachers will be present during the visitor's input in order to provide follow up work.
- Any issues arising from a visit will be reported to the Headteacher.

15. Procedures for Monitoring and Evaluating

The policy and teaching programme will be reviewed regularly. Governors and senior staff will take a key role in monitoring of the policy. The policy will be reviewed annually and the necessary changes implemented.