Drug and Alcohol Policy

Colegio Internacional Meres

SPAIN

2026

Registered in England & Wales - Cognita Schools Limited No. 02313425
Registered Office: Seebeck House, One Seebeck Place Knowlhill, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK5 8FR

COGNITA

THRIVE IN A RAPIDLY EVOLVING WORLD

1. Introduction

1.1. The aim of this Drug and Alcohol Policy is to acknowledge and clarify the school's role in drug prevention and education, and ensure it is appropriate to meet pupils' needs. This policy provides information about drug education, as well as procedures to respond to any drug-related incident.

1.2. This policy aims to ensure that the approach taken on the issue of drugs is a whole-school one and is part of our commitment to, and concern for, the overall health and well-being of the whole school community. Staff will need to be confident and skilled to teach drug education and pupils need to receive up to date, relevant and accurate information, as well as support.

1.3. This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies and documents listed on the back page of this document.

2. Statutory Duties

2.1. Schools have a statutory duty to promote pupils' wellbeing and hence have a clear role in preventing drug misuse as part of their pastoral care. Although there is no statutory requirement to have a Drug Policy, it is a requirement for all Cognita schools to have a clear procedure for managing any incidents related to drug and/or alcohol misuse. It is essential to protect staff, parents, carers and pupils.

2.2. Spanish legislation *(Ley 28/2005 de 26 de diciembre, as modified by Ley 42/2010 de 30 de diciembre*) prohibits smoking in and around educational establishments. In Spain, it is also illegal to supply or sell alcoholic drinks in schools. This includes offsite trips and visits. Furthermore, practitioners must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substances which may affect their ability to care for pupils as per their Code of Conduct.

3. Application

3.1. This policy applies to all pupils on roll at the school, including those in the Early Years. It applies when being educated in school, when on educational visits, and when off-site at school related events. This policy applies when pupils are travelling to and from school on public transport. Any responsibilities of 'adults' refers to employees and others acting in a supervisory role with pupils.

3.2. This policy also applies to all adults, staff, visitors, volunteers and third-party contractors.

4. Terminology

4.1. 'Drugs' here are taken to mean those that are legal, such as alcohol, tobacco, Vapes/E-cigarettes and solvents, over the counter and prescribed drugs, and illegal drugs such as cannabis (all associated forms, including, but not limited to edibles, THC pens, etc), oral tobacco products e.g. snus, ecstasy, amphetamines, heroin, crack/cocaine, LSD, etc. 'Drugs' also include New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) often referred to as 'Legal Highs'.

5. The School's Stance on Drugs, Health and the Needs of Pupils

5.1. Possession: It is inappropriate and unacceptable for pupils to bring the above drugs into school, have them on their person, consume them before, during and after school and on the way to or from school, including on school visits. Cognita has a strict no smoking policy (including no vaping/e-cigarettes or oral tobacco products) on school sites. The drugs/substances covered by this policy are not to be purchased, sold or otherwise exchanged during the school day between pupils or while pupils are on school visits, or taking part in any school activity.

5.2. Use: The school believes that the use of drugs in school, during the school day, while travelling to/from school or on school trips is inappropriate. Individual exceptions may only be made for pupils who require prescription medicines, where appropriate and with the agreement of the Headteacher/Principal in partnership with the pupil's parents. These arrangements will be recorded on the child's medical Health Care Plan and regularly reviewed.

6. Policy Framework

6.1. Drugs Education

The school provides drug education through PSHE classes in Primary, Secondary and Baccalaureate

The school has a variety of external resources for support and guidance to deliver its drug education program, including law enforcement: Master Plan of the Civil Guard.

6.2. Staff Support and Training

The school is committed to providing drug awareness information and training in line with the annual Training Matrix. All new staff are required to read this policy within their induction.

6.3. Management of an Incident

- Where there is evidence or suspicion that a pupil has drugs in their possession, has used drugs or has passed/sold on drugs to another person, the school will initially seek medical attention for the pupil/s if needed as per 7.2.

- The school will follow its Behaviour Policy and its Suspension, Exclusion and Removal in other Circumstances Policy
- The School may also use its power to search, screen or confiscate items from a pupil (Use of Reasonable Force, Restrictive Interventions, and/or Restraint, incorporating Searching, Screening, and Confiscation Policy). Sanctions will be applied as outlined in the Behaviour Policy and its Suspension, Exclusion and Removal in other Circumstances
- Where it is believed that a parent or carer is under the influence of drugs (including alcohol) on the school premises, they will be asked to leave the school site. If they are due to collect a pupil, and/or are attempting to drive a pupil home, and present as being under the influence of drugs (including alcohol), the pupil will be withheld in school to ensure their safety. If the parent/carer has a vehicle with them, the school will consider informing the Police Pupils will not be allowed to walk home with their parent/carer and/or to be cared for their parent, if there have been concerns that the parent/carer is under the influence of drugs. In all situation, the parent/ carer will be asked to make alternative arrangements for collection and ongoing supervision of their child (ren) in the home.
- If a parent or carer refuses to leave the site, and/or displays verbal or physical behaviour that is aggressive or intimidating, the Headteacher/Principal or their representative will call the Police.
- Where there are serious or ongoing concerns about the parent/carer's presentation and drug use, the school may consider banning them from entering the school site. The school will also consider making a referral to the authorities.

6.4. Police and Emergency Involvement

The school will immediately refer illegal incidents to the Police.

- Where it is suspected that substances are being produced, sold or stored on the premises (by pupils or staff), details of those involved, together with as much information as possible, will be automatically passed to the Police (see below).
- See above for involvement of the Police should a parent/carer be under the influence of drugs and has a vehicle
- See above for the involvement of the Police should a parent/carer display verbal or physical behaviour that is aggressive or intimidating
- The Police will not normally need to be involved in incidents involving legal drugs, but the Headteacher/Principal may wish to inform trading standards or Police about the inappropriate sale or supply of tobacco, alcohol, e-cigarettes/vapes, some oral tobacco products, or volatile substances to pupils in the area (see below)
- See Appendix A for guidance on drug situations linked to medical emergencies.

6.5. The Needs of Pupils

The school will exercise its pastoral responsibilities and always look to support pupils and ensure that they have access to appropriate help and guidance.

6.6. Information Sharing

If the school has concerns about a pupil's safety, the school will share information with law enforcement agencies and safeguarding agencies as outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This includes working in partnership with external agencies.

6.7. Involvement of Parent/Carers

The school will inform parents/carers of any drug related incidents involving their own child, unless in very rare circumstances this would heighten the risk to their child.

6.8. Staff Conduct and Drug Use

All staff are required to adhere to this policy and the Staff Code of Conduct. Staff are subject to the Cognita disciplinary and other HR procedures should they breach this policy. Where it is believed that a staff member is under the influence of drugs (including alcohol) on the school premises or during an educational visti, they will be asked to leave the site/location immediately. If a staff member refuses to leave and/or displays verbal or physical behaviour that is aggressive or intimidating, the Headteacher/Principal or their representative will call the Police.

6.9. The Role of the Headteacher/Principal

- The Headteacher/Principal takes overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- The Headteacher/Principal will ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately trained and supported.
- Cognita cannot knowingly allow premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug. Where it is suspected that substances are being produced, sold or stored on the premises (by pupils or staff), details of those involved, together with as much information as possible, will be automatically passed to the police.

7. Implementation of this Policy

7.1. The Headteacher/Principal should ensure that all staff, parents/carers and pupils are reminded of these procedures on an annual basis.

7.2. Situations requiring first aid will be dealt with immediately as per the school's agreed policies and procedures.

7.3. In cases of substance misuse or supply on the premises during the school day or during educational visits, medical attention will first be sought where needed as per clause 7.2. At

an appropriate time, the case will be discussed with the pupil and a written record taken following safeguarding/medical procedures. Parents/carers will be informed by the Headteacher/Principal as soon as possible following an incident. The support of outside agencies will be sought if appropriate, including making referrals to social services if risk of harm or actual harm is identified for the pupil misusing/dealing drugs or unmet need.

7.4. The school may decide to involve the police (unless it is required to do so) at the discretion of the Headteacher/Principal and in consultation with the Regional Safeguarding Lead and Managing Director. The school will consider each incident individually and will employ a range of responses to deal with individual incidents. The Headteacher/Principal will inform the Regional Safeguarding Lead and the Managing Director in relation to all drug-related incidents. A Serious Incident Referral Form is to be completed for all incidents related to illegal drugs on the direction of the RSL/Head of Health and Safety. Other incidents, taken on a case-by-case basis, may also require a SIRF, as directed by the RSL/Head of Health and Safety.

8. Specific Procedures

8.1. Dealing with Information and Confidentiality

- Schools are an important source of support for pupils experiencing problems with drugs and must ensure that all staff (teaching and non-teaching understand the limits of confidentiality, balancing the desire to maintain confidentiality and support the pupil with the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of them and/or other pupils. The school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must be followed. Staff cannot and must not promise confidentiality to the pupil.
- There are important reasons why personal and sensitive information needs to be shared in relation to child protection (e.g., when working with the police, referral to external agencies). Data protection legislation, namely, the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (as amended, extended or re-enacted from time to time) allows personal information to be shared if there is an over-riding public interest in the first instance, or to prevent crime and disorder in the second. However, in assessing the suitability of sharing information, all efforts should be made to encourage the pupil and their parents/carers to give their informed consent. If a decision is taken to share confidential information, a written record of any concerns, including the reasons for breaching a pupil's confidentiality, must be made.
    - The following questions should also be considered:
    - How serious is the situation?
    - What immediate and significant risk does the pupil face?
    - What implications (both positive and negative) could keeping/breaking a confidence have?
    - Could there be a transfer of risk to other pupils?

- Could significant harm result from keeping the pupil's disclosure confidential?
- If a confidence needs to be broken, the school should explain to the pupil (and parents/carers as appropriate): why the confidence was broken, who will be/has been informed, what will be/was disclosed, how the information will be used and that their privacy will be respected.

8.2. Parental Substance Misuse

- children and young people.
- Substance use in itself is not a reason for considering a child to be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, although it may be a contributing factor.
- The Child Protection and Wellbeing Coordinator or Headteacher/Principal will liaise with the police and/or external agencies where required (see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

8.3. Legal Drugs

The police will not normally need to be involved in incidents involving legal drugs, but the Headteacher/Principal may wish to inform local police about the inappropriate sale or supply of tobacco, alcohol, e-cigarettes/vapes, some oral tobacco products or volatile substances to pupils in the area.

8.4. Controlled Drugs (including New Psychoactive Substances)

In taking temporary possession (confiscation) of suspected controlled drugs, the school will:

- Ensure that a second staff witness is present throughout;
- Seal the substance in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and the witness present;
- Store it in a secure location, such as a safe or other lockable container with access limited to senior members of staff. **NOT dispose of the substance**.
- Notify the police without delay, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols and legal regulations;
- Record full details of the incident, using Appendix A in the Use of Reasonable Force, Restrictive Intervention, and/or Restraint, incorporating Searching, Screening and Confiscation policy including the police incident reference number if they are involved;
- Inform parents/carers,
- Identify any safeguarding concerns and respond appropriately; and
- If there is a significant seizure of a suspected illegal substance, nform the police at an early stage and take steps to minimise handling to aid future forensic investigations.

8.5. Searching and Confiscation

School staff can search a pupil for any item only if the pupil gives express consent, noting that the ability to give consent may be influenced by the pupil's age or other factors. The

Headteacher/Principal and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions without consent only in very rare scenarios, such as where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil has infringed school or legal regulations, such as holding alcohol and illegal drugs.

8.6. Use of External Input

- See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for more information.
- Pupils often find visitors to school a useful and informative part of their learning, but equally research suggests that for visits to be successful there should be a shared understanding about the nature and content of the session/s. Schools should exercise caution with the use of visitors as there is some evidence that particular messages can have a detrimental impact on young people's intentions to resist using drugs including alcohol. Particular caution should be used when visitors have had first-hand experience of problematic drug use.
- All visiting speakers must be agreed with the Headteacher/Principal
- Due diligence must be undertaken. Schools should ensure that visitors are appropriately qualified and trained to deliver work with pupils in a school setting. They should also be aware of good practice that recommends the avoidance of shocking images and inappropriate descriptions of or approaches towards drug use, have a clear understanding of the aims and objectives of the session and have seen and understood this policy.
- Visitors must be briefed on any particular sensitivities that there may be in the pupil group – these may include identified drug issues by particular pupils or their families – as well as any broader needs within the group. Staff should negotiate the content of the session which is linked to the broader drug education and RSE/PSHE delivered by the school and relevant to the identified needs of the pupils. Visitors should be made aware of the school's protocols for dealing with any disclosures or distress shown by pupils during the session.
- Members of staff should be present at all times when such a visitor is in the class and be ready to be an active participant in these sessions. They should ensure that they reflect on the learning from particular sessions with pupils and visitors, assessing the learning, and building skills to support and enable pupils to make healthy choices and to avoid risk-taking behaviour. Staff should follow-up any unresolved issues or concerns and extend the learning begun by the visitor, liaising with the CPC where relevant.
- The Visiting Speaker's form must be completed prior to any visitor running a session. This enables the school to undertake and have a record of their due diligence. Any concerns that arise must be discussed with the visiting speaker prior to the final booking.

Version control:

Ownership and consultation	
Document Sponsor	Director of Education, Europe & USA
Document Author / Reviewer	Regional Safeguarding Lead, Europe & USA (RSL) RSL reviewed June 2023 RSL reviewed June 2024 RSL reviewed May 2025 RSL reviewed June 2026
Consultation & Specialist Advice	Ashursts (Spain) Sept 2023 Consultation with the following schools: Downsend Epsom Pre-Prep School, Breaside Prep School, Hendon Prep School, Salcombe Prep School, North Bridge House Canonbury School, Huddersfield Grammar School, Hastings School Madrid and El Limonar Villamartin. Education Team representative: DE
Document application and publication	
England	Yes, adapted
Spain	Yes, adapted
Italy	Yes, adapted
Greece	Yes, adapted
Switzerland	Yes, adapted
Austria	Yes, adapted
USA	Yes, adapted
Version control	
Current Review Date	June 2026
Next Review Date	June 2027
Related documentation	
Related documentation	Safeguarding and Pupil Protection Policy Behaviour Policy Suspension, Expulsion and Removal in Other Circumstances Policy SEND Policy Complaint Procedure Educational Visits Policy Health and Safety Policy RSE Policy

	Curriculum Policy, including PSHEE Code of Conduct Use of Reasonable Force, Restrictive Intervention, and/or Restraint, incorporating Screening, Searching and Confiscation Policy