



**YOUTH ORGANISATION SINCE 2015**

## **Substance Misuse Policy**

Reviewed: 2026

2025/26

## **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all learners, staff, and visitors by preventing and responding effectively to substance misuse within the Aspire in Arts. The Aspire in Arts is committed to maintaining a safe, supportive, and drug-free learning environment.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all learners, staff, contractors, and visitors while on Aspire in Arts premises or engaged in any off-site activity organised by the Aspire in Arts (including placements, trips, or events).

## **3. Definition of Substance Misuse**

For the purpose of this policy, *substance misuse* refers to the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of:

- Illegal drugs (as defined by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- Misused prescription or over-the-counter medication
- Alcohol (where use is inappropriate or prohibited)
- Solvents, e-cigarettes/vapes containing prohibited substances, or other intoxicating substances

## **4. Policy Statement**

Aspire in Arts:

- Has zero tolerance for the possession, use, or supply of illegal or controlled substances on its premises or during any associated activity.
- Encourages early intervention, education, and support for learners and staff who may be at risk of substance misuse.
- Will handle all incidents involving substance misuse consistently, fairly, and in accordance with safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.
- Works in partnership with parents/carers, referring schools, and external agencies to ensure effective communication, intervention, and rehabilitation.

## **5. Prevention and Education**

Aspire in Arts will:

- Provide education and awareness about the risks associated with substance misuse as part of the curriculum and pastoral programme.

2025/26

- Offer access to counselling, mentoring, or referral to specialist services for learners affected by substance misuse.
- Equip staff with training to identify early signs of misuse and respond appropriately.

## **6. Responsibilities**

### **Senior Leadership Team**

- Ensure implementation, monitoring, and regular review of this policy.
- Liaise with external agencies, referring schools, and support services where required.

### **Staff**

- Remain vigilant and report any concerns about potential substance misuse in line with safeguarding and internal reporting procedures.
- Support learners through early intervention and referral to appropriate services.

### **Learners**

- Must not bring, use, or distribute any prohibited substances on Aspire in Arts premises or during activities.
- Are encouraged to seek support if they or others are affected by substance misuse.

## **7. Procedures for Managing Concerns and Incidents**

If substance misuse or possession is suspected:

1. The learner will be spoken to in a safe, confidential setting.
2. Senior staff will investigate and document the incident.
3. Any concerns relating to a student will be communicated to the referring school and parents/carers in line with reporting procedures.
4. The police may be contacted if illegal substances are involved.
5. All concerns will be responded to through safeguarding procedures, ensuring the learner's safety and wellbeing are prioritised.
6. Disciplinary action may be taken where appropriate, in accordance with Aspire in Arts Behaviour Policy.

2025/26

7. A support plan or referral to specialist services may be offered to address underlying issues.

## **8. Confidentiality and Support**

- Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible; however, safeguarding responsibilities override confidentiality where there is risk of harm.
- Learners or staff seeking help for substance misuse issues will be supported sensitively and without automatic disciplinary action (unless criminal activity is involved).
- Aspire in Arts will work closely with the referring school, parents/carers, and external agencies to ensure a coordinated and supportive response.

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with current legislation and best practice.