

Beacon Alternative School CIC (and Alternative Provision)

Drug and Alcohol Policy



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Note: Beacon Alternative Provision operates under Beacon Alternative School CIC, which is not currently a registered school but is working toward future registration. This policy applies to all staff working with young people across all Beacon settings.

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1. Introduction

Beacon Alternative School CIC is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and supportive environment for all young people, staff, and visitors. Many young people accessing Beacon provision may be vulnerable, have experienced trauma, or be at increased risk of substance misuse. This policy sets out how Beacon prevents, responds to, and supports issues related to drugs and alcohol.

The policy balances clear boundaries and safeguarding responsibilities with education, early intervention, and appropriate support.

2. Aims and Principles

Beacon's approach to drugs and alcohol aims to:

- Protect the safety and wellbeing of young people and staff
- Provide clear expectations and boundaries
- Respond to incidents consistently and proportionately
- Educate young people about risk, consequences, and informed choices
- Work collaboratively with families and external services

Our approach is underpinned by practices that are:

- Safeguarding-led
- Trauma-informed
- Supportive rather than punitive where possible
- Clear, calm, and proportionate

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All young people attending Beacon provision
- All staff, including temporary and sessional staff
- Volunteers, visitors, and contractors

It applies during:

- On-site provision
- Off-site activities and educational visits
- Travel to and from Beacon where staff responsibility applies

4. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the term “drugs” includes:

- Illegal drugs (e.g. cannabis, ecstasy, cocaine)
- Legal substances that may be misused (e.g. alcohol, tobacco, vapes, solvents)
- Prescription and non-prescription medicines
- New psychoactive substances and so-called “legal highs”

5. Beacon’s Approach to Drugs and Alcohol

Beacon operates a zero-tolerance approach to:

- Bringing drugs or alcohol onto Beacon premises
- Using or supplying drugs or alcohol during provision time
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while attending Beacon

While Beacon prioritises education and support, incidents involving drugs or alcohol are taken seriously due to safeguarding and legal responsibilities.

6. Responding to Drug and Alcohol Incidents

Responses are proportionate and based on risk, safeguarding needs, and the substance involved.

Alcohol

If alcohol is brought onto site or a young person is suspected to be under the influence, alcohol will be confiscated, parents/carers informed, and the incident recorded as a safeguarding concern. Repeated incidents may result in further risk assessment, external referrals, or changes to provision.

Illegal Drugs

Any incident involving suspected Class A or B drugs will result in immediate safeguarding action, removal from provision if necessary, and police involvement where required. Social care and specialist services will be notified as appropriate.

Class C substances or misuse of medication will be addressed through safeguarding procedures, meetings with parents/carers, and referral to appropriate support services.

Smoking and Vaping

Smoking and vaping are not permitted during Beacon provision or on Beacon premises. Items will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day, and support to reduce or stop smoking will be offered.

Dealing or Sharing

Any suspected dealing or sharing of substances will be treated as a serious safeguarding matter, with police and social services involvement and a full risk assessment.

7. Prescription and Medication Management

Young people may take prescribed medication where this has been agreed with parents/carers.

All medication must:

- Be clearly labelled
- Be stored securely
- Be administered or managed according to agreed arrangements

Staff will not administer non-prescribed medication unless written parental consent has been provided.

8. Searching, Confiscation and Safety

Where staff have reasonable grounds to suspect possession of drugs or alcohol, Beacon may:

- Ask to search bags or belongings
- Conduct a search of outer clothing only
- Confiscate substances for safe storage

Intimate searches are never conducted. Parents/carers are usually informed following any search or confiscation.

Illegal substances will be stored securely and passed to the police in line with guidance.

9. Support, Education and Referrals

Beacon recognises the importance of education and early intervention. Young people are supported to understand:

- The risks and effects of drugs and alcohol
- Legal consequences
- Ways to stay safe
- How and where to seek help

Beacon may refer young people and families to external services, including substance misuse teams, health services, or early help support.

10. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Beacon respects confidentiality wherever possible. However, information will be shared without consent where:

- A young person is at risk of harm
- There is a safeguarding concern
- There is a legal obligation to do so

Young people are supported to understand what information may need to be shared and why.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher / Proprietor has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

All staff are responsible for:

- Maintaining clear boundaries
- Following safeguarding procedures
- Reporting concerns promptly
- Supporting young people appropriately

Young people are encouraged to engage safely and responsibly and to seek help when needed.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation, guidance, or Beacon practice.

13. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct