SUBSTANCE MISUSE
This booklet contains general information for parents and carers.

**MEDICINES**

All medicines are drugs, but not all drugs are medicines. This may include things like inhalers, cough mixture or painkillers.

If it is necessary for a student to have medication in school, this must be stored with Matron and accompanied by written parental consent.

Any student carrying their own medication should have prior approval from the school to do so.

Students should never give their medicines to another child.

**DRUGS: STREET NAMES**

People call drugs by lots of different names.

Some of these are listed below, however, it is vital to appreciate that street names are constantly changing.

- Cannabis (pot, skunk, popcorn, weed)
- Speed (whizz, billy, amphetamine, phet)
- Ecstasy (Es, pills, MDMA)
- Acid (trips, tabs, LSD)
- Cocaine (beak, Charlie, toot, coke)
- Heroin (brown, smack, bags)

These substances are all illegal and have legal consequences for possession and supplying, including giving away.

Some substances which have safe and legitimate uses, such as butane gas and glue, can be extremely dangerous and potentially life-threatening if misused.

**NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES**

New psychoactive substances – often incorrectly called legal highs – contain one or more chemical substances which produce similar effects to illegal drugs (such as cocaine, cannabis and ecstasy).

Although some of these so-called ‘legal highs’ have been legal in the past, many are currently illegal due to the Psychoactive Substances Act (May 2016).

NPS are normally sold as powders, pills or capsules. The powders can range from white to brown to yellow in colour and from flour-like to little crystals in consistency. While the pills and capsules can range in size, shape and colour.

The smoking mixtures tend to come in colourful packaging, often with labels describing the contents as incense or herbal smoking mixture, and the contents look like dried herbs or plant cuttings.

Although they look herbal, they are actually plant material sprayed with potent chemicals.

Street names include:
- Spice
- Laughing gas
- MD
- Mary Jane
- Black Mamba
- Clockwork Orange
- Bliss

**PRICE AND AVAILABILITY**

The substances listed above can be purchased for under £5. This is pocket money, and with many of these being readily available in the community, it is essential that we educate our students of the risks involved.

**CONSEQUENCES**

Some drugs can make you feel confused, this means young people may cause accidents or do things that they wouldn’t normally do. Other drugs can make someone scared and paranoid. Ultimately, drugs are dangerous, especially if you take two different drugs at the same time.

In addition, addiction can have social and financial consequences and at some stage will impact on academic achievement.
THE LAW AND SCHOOL RULES

Most drugs are illegal (including NPS), which means the police can arrest young people if they are caught with them.

In school:
- If we have reason to suspect that a student is in possession of drugs, we will exercise our right under the law to search bags and ask students to empty pockets.
- Any confiscated items will be handed to the police.
- Possession of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia will lead to exclusion.

SIGN TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Changes in appetite or sleep patterns
- Becoming more secretive
- Mood swings and lack of concentration
- Finding lighters or smoking paraphernalia

Of course some of the above could be innocent teenage behaviour. You know your child best. If you do have concerns an open conversation with them may be beneficial.

FURTHER SUPPORT, ADVICE AND INFORMATION

Visit our parent’s Aware site (aware.wickersley.net) for links to the following: Talk to Frank, Childline and Know the Score

If you would like more information about this issue, please contact Miss H Drabble, Head of PSHE at hdrabble@wickersley.net