

DOWNSIDE

SCHOOL

ALCOHOL POLICY

In developing its policy towards the use and misuse of alcohol, the School has taken into account the licensing laws of England under which the School is obliged by law to operate, the social norms of our parents and families, emerging scientific information on the physical and social effects of alcohol and the data that show that alcohol abuse among the young is increasing. It is recognized both that alcohol has a more destructive effect on individuals and families than any other drug and, equally, that its consumption, in moderation, is a normal and healthy part of traditional (and Catholic) culture. Downside seeks to adopt, firstly, an educational approach to pupils on the consumption of alcohol and, secondly, a disciplinary policy that seeks to deter alcohol abuse by ensuring that any incident of abuse is fully dealt with in terms of education and correction, that it is properly recorded and that parents are fully informed in writing.

Legal context:

The School appreciates that it is illegal to supply alcohol to anybody under the age of eighteen. The exception to this rule is that a person who is sixteen years or older may be served wine, beer or cider at a "sit down, set meal". Hence, alcohol will only be served to pupils aged eighteen or over and then only in moderation at the discretion of the member of staff in charge at the time. Where a pupil is sixteen years or older he/she may be served alcohol at a meal, provided that this is only wine, beer or cider and only in moderate amounts, at the discretion of the member of staff in charge at the time. The School's catering manager is the designated licensee and she / he should be consulted where there is any query regarding the supply of alcohol.

Educational approach:

Pupils are educated in the physical and social effects of alcohol consumption through the PSHCE programme and through occasional presentations by guest speakers to which parents may be invited. The School aims to ensure that all pupils in the Senior School receive guidance on alcohol every year at an appropriate level. Any pupils breaching the School's regulations on alcohol consumption must attend the Health Centre for one-to-one guidance from a member of the nursing staff.

School Regulations:

1. Pupils must not drink alcohol at any time when they are under School regulations, unless supervised by a member of staff, and with due consideration to the regulations below.
 - The illicit consumption of alcohol is regarded as a serious breach of trust and a potentially dangerous activity
 - Drunkenness is considered a serious offence and, additionally, where pupils have been given permission to consume alcohol in moderation, it is viewed as a breach of trust. Drunkenness is defined as serious physical impairment due to the effects of alcohol, and particularly vomiting or other symptoms requiring confinement to the Health Centre.
2. Pupils may not bring alcohol into the School without the permission of the House Master/Mistress to whom it should be surrendered immediately upon entering the premises.
 - The illicit supply of alcohol is considered a serious offence against the School community since such an action can endanger others.
 - It is recognized, however, that supplying alcohol to others requires the cooperation of those supplied who will by so doing contravene School regulations.

3. No pupil may be served alcohol at any official School function, such as a play or music event, where parents or other visitors are present, unless they are over eighteen.
4. Whenever alcohol is served to a pupil, regardless of age, this must only be done with the permission of the pupil's House Master/Mistress. If there is any doubt, staff will err on the side of caution.
5. School Regulations apply during trips out of School
6. All Public houses are out of bounds to all pupils unless accompanied by a member of staff or parent. Exceptions to this rule are as follows –
 - On Saturday evening, pupils over eighteen years of age may go to The Somerset Wagon, in Chilcompton with the permission of their House Master/Mistress. (All other public houses in the vicinity of the School are out of bounds to all pupils at all times.)
 - **Sixth Form pupils visiting Bath on a Saturday evening may consume alcohol but only within the terms of the licensing laws.** No pupil will be allowed to Bath on Saturday evening until after his/her sixteenth birthday.

Disciplinary process:

The purpose of the School's disciplinary process is to guide pupils in the right approach to alcohol consumption and to reinforce this by the imposition of sanctions for breach of School regulations relating to alcohol. The School makes a distinction between those below the Sixth Form and those in the Sixth Form for whom (provided they are over sixteen) the consumption of alcohol in moderation is legally permitted.

Pupils are required to give a breath sample if asked to do so by their HsM or senior member of staff.

Any pupil found to have been drinking will not be eligible to represent the school at sport during the subsequent week.

Pupils below the Sixth Form:

Pupils in the Fifth Form and below are never permitted to drink alcohol in School, and must observe all other School regulations as above. If a pupil breaches regulations, the following action will be taken:

1st Offence:

- The pupil's HsM will contact parents at the earliest opportunity by telephone and write a letter, if felt appropriate, detailing the incident and subsequent action.
- The pupil will be shown the School's alcohol policy and will discuss it with his/her HsM.
- The pupil will normally be gated to School for a weekend, be given community service duties (such as litter collection) and will be given a two hour detention during which he/she will write an account of the incident.
- In the case of a serious breach of regulations, for example drunkenness, the pupil may be sent on home leave so that parents and son/daughter can discuss the incident. The Director of Pastoral Care will be informed, and a record made of the incident. The pupil will be required to see a nurse in the Health Centre.

2nd Offence:

- The pupil's HsM will contact parents at the earliest opportunity by telephone.
- The pupil will be interviewed by the Director of Pastoral Care in the presence of the pupil's HsM. The School's alcohol policy will again be discussed.
- The pupil will be warned that a further breach of the disciplinary policy will likely result in formal suspension from School.
- The pupil will be required to see a nurse in the Health Centre.

- The pupil will be gated to School for a weekend, as above, and gated to the Old House for a further three days, during which time he/she will perform community service duties.
- In the case of a serious breach of regulations, for example drunkenness, the pupil may be sent on home leave so that parents and son/daughter can discuss the incident.
- The Director of Pastoral Care will write to parents detailing the incident and subsequent action.

3rd Offence:

- The pupil's HsM will contact parents at the earliest opportunity by telephone.
- The pupil will be interviewed by the Deputy Head Master, with the Director of Pastoral Care, in the presence of the pupil's HsM.
- The pupil will be required to see a nurse in the Health Centre.
- At the discretion of the Deputy Head Master, the pupil will be suspended from School for three days, although, if there are sufficient mitigating circumstances, the Deputy Head Master may decide that the matter can be treated internally as in the provisions under 2nd Offence above.
- In the case of suspension, the Deputy Head Master or otherwise the Director of Pastoral Care will write to the pupil's parents detailing the incident and subsequent action taken.
- If suspended from School, the pupil will be required to see the Head Master on his/her return.

Any subsequent offences will be dealt with directly by the Deputy Head Master or Head Master, who will take advice from the pupil's HsM and the Director of Pastoral Care, and who will decide whether any exclusion deemed necessary will be temporary (suspension) or permanent (expulsion or required removal).

Pupils in the Sixth Form:

In general, any breaches of the alcohol policy by a pupil in the lower School will not be considered to be held over once that pupil enters the Sixth Form, when it is legal in certain circumstances to drink alcohol. However, in the event of a serious breach of the school's alcohol policy, where the School may need to resort immediately to temporary or permanent exclusion, the pupil's previous record may be taken into consideration. In any event, the following action will be taken where a Sixth Form pupil is in breach of the alcohol policy:

1st Offence:

- The pupil's HsM will contact parents at the earliest opportunity by telephone and, if felt appropriate, will write a letter detailing the incident and subsequent action.
- The Director of Pastoral Care will be informed, and a record made of the incident.
- The pupil will be shown the School's alcohol policy, and will discuss it with his/her HsM.
- The pupil will be required to see a nurse in the Health Centre.
- The pupil will normally be gated to School for a weekend, be given community service duties (such as litter collection) and will be given a two hour detention during which he/she will write an account of the incident.
- In some circumstances, for example drunkenness, the pupil may be sent on home leave so that parents and son/daughter can discuss the incident.
- The pupil will not be served alcohol in School for a determined period and, where appropriate, permission to visit Bath, the Somerset Wagon at Chilcompton or the Sixth Form Bar will be withdrawn.
- If the pupil is a prefect, the position may be removed temporarily or permanently.

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- The pupil's HsM will contact parents at the earliest opportunity by telephone.
- The Director of Pastoral Care will write to parents detailing the incident and subsequent action.
- The pupil will be interviewed by the Director of Pastoral Care, in the presence of the pupil's HsM. The School's alcohol policy will again be discussed.
- The pupil will be warned that a further breach of the disciplinary policy will likely result in formal suspension from School.

- The pupil will be required to see a nurse in the Health Centre.
- The pupil will be gated to School for a weekend, as above, and additionally gated to the Old House for three days, during which time he/she will perform community service duties.
- In some circumstances, for example drunkenness, the pupil may be sent on home leave, so that parents and son/daughter can discuss the incident.
- The pupil will not be served alcohol in School for a determined period and, where appropriate, permission to visit Bath, the Somerset Wagon at Chilcompton or the Sixth Form Bar will be withdrawn. .
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- The pupil will not be served alcohol in School for a determined period and, where appropriate, permission to visit Bath, the Somerset Wagon at Chilcompton or the Sixth Form Bar will be withdrawn.
- If suspended from School, the pupil will be required to see the Head Master on his/her return.

Any subsequent occasions will be dealt with directly by the Deputy Head Master or Head Master, who will take advice from the pupils' HsM and the Director of Pastoral Care, and who will decide whether any exclusion deemed necessary will be temporary (suspension) or permanent (expulsion or required removal).

Policy reviewed August 2011 and confirmed as the current Policy

Dom Leo Maidlow Davis