

# Formby High School

'Determined to Achieve'



DMA/LFO

July 2019

Dear Parents

I am writing to share with you some important information regarding drugs. In my role as Headteacher, it is becoming increasingly evident to me that illegal drugs are becoming more prevalent and widely used amongst young people in society and this is also true of the local community. It is important that we, as educators and parents, openly acknowledge and understand that drugs are cheap and easily accessible to teenagers, and accept that we have a responsibility to provide as much guidance and support to them to make informed decisions and to prevent the likelihood of them taking drugs. As a school community, we have been directly affected by drugs related issues and it has become apparent to me that we need to review our Drugs Policy and education programme (delivered through the RESPECT curriculum) to ensure a very strong stance is maintained but that they evolve to keep pace with the changing demands and pressures that young people face. Also evident is the need to raise awareness amongst parents to ensure they are well-equipped to support their child(ren), able to identify potential indicators / risk factors and know how to access the appropriate advice and guidance.

Attached to this letter is a '5-minute briefing' that will allow you to quickly read about key information related to drugs. Contained in the briefing are links to nationally recognised organisations that provide excellent support and information to young people and their families regarding drugs. You will also find on the school website an area where other useful links and resources for parents can be accessed. I would ask that you take the time to read the resources signposted above and, although it may be awkward, please do talk openly with your child(ren) about drugs issues.

As the summer holiday fast approaches, we wanted to provide some drugs awareness guidance for students in Years 9 and 10. To this end, we have arranged for a visiting speaker, Shaun Attwood, to deliver a hard-hitting and engaging session to students on Tuesday 16 July. Shaun is a former drugs convict who speaks to audiences across the UK about his prison experience and the consequences he faced by getting involved in drugs and crime.

I am very keen that parents are involved in the process of reviewing the school's Drug Policy. If you would like to contribute to this process please contact Mr Rigby or Mrs Harrison-Forsyth via the following email addresses below to register your interest: [d.rigby@formbyhighschool.com](mailto:d.rigby@formbyhighschool.com) / [a.harrison@formbyhighschool.com](mailto:a.harrison@formbyhighschool.com).

Finally, in the spirit of openness, if you have any concerns or feel you or your child(ren) require support on any of the issues raised in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Blanchard, the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. I am very aware of the need for school to work in partnership with parents to provide the education and awareness our students need to keep them safe, and we will continue to share information with you about drugs and other relevant issues in the future.

Yours sincerely

**D A Mackenzie**  
Headteacher

Headteacher:  
Mr D A Mackenzie  
BA (Hons) NPOH

Freshfield Road  
Formby  
Liverpool  
L37 3HW

01704 873100

enquiries@  
formbyhighschool.com

www.  
formbyhighschool.com

@FormbyHigh



Looking out for the physical symptoms or signs of drug use can be difficult. These symptoms will vary depending on the intensity and type of drugs that have been taken. Typically, it would be easy to smell drugs (such as cannabis) as a tell-tale sign of drug use but this is not always the case. Some other symptoms include:

- Sudden changes in mood/behaviour, unusual outbreaks of temper
- Disregard for physical appearance
- Loss of appetite or increase in consumption of set foods
- Use of deodorant to cover smell of drugs or solvents
- Drowsiness, sleepiness or slurred speech
- Unusual, small stains or marks on clothing, body or around the mouth and nose
- Marked interest in glue or solvent based products
- Soreness or redness around the eyes or mouth
- Flushed face or neck
- Dilated pupils
- Staining on hands
- Unsteady on feet
- Small groups meeting in secretive places

**Please Note:** There are some symptoms that could be confused with signs of innocent behaviour.

There is a large range of equipment associated with drug use:

- Grinders (below)
- Tobacco and paper (skins)
- Small bottles or pillboxes
- Twists of paper
- Small polythene bags with seal (below)
- Containers made from silver foil
- Balloons
- Crackers to open nitrous oxide canisters (below)
- Stash cans disguised as everyday objects
- Empty solvent containers
- Cigarette lighters / matches
- Drinks cans with extra holes



Drugs are becoming a lot cheaper to purchase than previously thought, e.g. £1 for a cannabis infused gummy bear. These, along with other illegal substances (such as psychoactive substances that used to be called legal highs) are now becoming more freely available to students in a variety of ways, most notably on platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram through the chat feature. Keep a lookout for your child having unknown numbers or usernames stored in his/her phone.

**Below are common 'street' names for different types of drugs:**

**Cocaine:** Coke; Blow; Rock; Crack; Sniff; White; Beak.

**Ecstasy:** X; Molly; E; Rolls; Candy; MDMA.

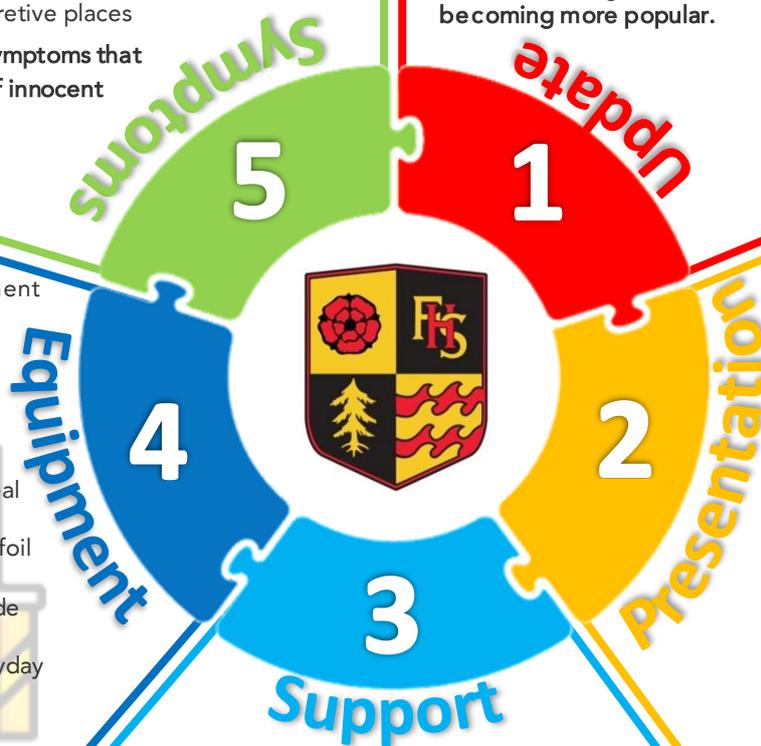
**Heroin:** Smack; Dope; Horse; Junk; Scag.

**Marijuana:** Weed; Pot; Hash; Green; Bud; Grass; Ganja; Dope; Spice; Skunk; Spliff; Poly.

**Psychoactive Substances:** Spice; Balloons; MKat; Meow meow; Bubble; Bounce.

**Ketamine:** Mandy; Ket; Special K; Jet; Super acid.

**Please Note:** Edibles (cannabis infused foods such as gummy bears) and e-cigarettes which include liquid cannabis are becoming more popular.



When drugs are consumed, it is likely that a user's presentation and appearances will change. Here are some things to look out for:

- Keeping away from other students
- Being the subject of a 'drug' rumour
- Use of drug slang
- Excessive spending or borrowing
- Loss of money or belongings
- Perpetual stealing of money or goods that are then sold
- Changes in school attendance
- Lack of participation in activities
- Loss of interest in a hobby
- Sudden changes in friendships
- Decline in school performance
- Strangers around home or school

**Police (101)**

Report any non-emergencies to the Police by phoning 101. This will allow you to report any suspicious activity.

**External Support**

There are a variety of support options via the Internet that will help you to identify if drugs are being used or taken by anyone that you know. Links can be found below.

**School Support**

There is support available from school should you need it. Please contact the Pastoral Support Team or Mrs Blanchard (Designated Safeguarding Lead).



# 5 Minute Briefing

Information on drugs awareness at Formby High School

**add** Addaction [addaction.org.uk](http://addaction.org.uk)  
Services for people who are dependent on drugs and their families.

**FRANK** Frank [talktofrank.com](http://talktofrank.com)  
Information about recreational drugs, and free 24-hour helpline.

**Adfam** Adfam [adfam.org.uk](http://adfam.org.uk)  
Support and information for family and friends of people with drug problems.

**DrugWise** DrugWise [drugwise.org.uk](http://drugwise.org.uk)  
Information about drugs.