

29 November 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

**RE: DRUG PREVENTION**

I am writing to you today to outline a new initiative that we have signed up to as part of our Personal Development programme. Under the PSHCE curriculum, drug and alcohol education is an important part of what we teach our young people about the pressures and challenges they will face in the wider world. Many of these issues are significantly worse now than when we were growing up, and young people now unfortunately have much greater access to drugs and alcohol than they would have had previously.

We are determined to do our bit to not only educate your children as to the harms of drug abuse but also make access to these substances far more difficult while young people are in our care. We as a community already know that drugs and alcohol are particularly dangerous substances to our young people and we believe that by working together with students, parents and other agencies we can collectively not only raise awareness of the impact of substance misuse but also put measures in place to stop it from happening in our school.

We continuously work with students to raise their awareness of the impact of substance misuse and as part of this anti-drug strategy, **drug detection dogs** from Dorset Police will periodically be deployed with no notice in all of the schools across the AAT Trust, including here at Oak Academy. The first of these visits will be at some point this half term, before we break up for Christmas.

We wish to reassure you that the dogs will be deployed to search the whole building and not individuals. However, during their search the dogs may detect drugs on students or in property belonging to students. Should that happen, anyone suspected to be in possession of illegal substances may be searched. Police assistance will be provided where necessary and of course parents/carers would be informed at the earliest opportunity. Additionally, students and families affected would be signposted to counselling and family support services. Any student found in possession of illegal substances could be at risk of suspension or face prosecution.

We pride ourselves on Oak Academy being a safe place for all students and we will do everything we can to maintain this. Above all, we shall seek to educate our young people about the dangers of drugs, because prevention is always the best policy. No school can ever claim to be totally drug free but incidences of drug abuse at Oak Academy are incredibly rare, and we will do whatever it takes to ensure that this continues to be the case.

Should you wish to discuss this further, please email [michael.garza@oak-academy.co.uk](mailto:michael.garza@oak-academy.co.uk) with any questions you might have.

Yours sincerely,

**Michael Garza**

Assistant Vice-Principal, DSL

**Oak Academy**

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