



## PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH POSSESSION OR CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL

### **BEECHWOOD ALCOHOL POLICY**

It is important that all Beechwood pupils read this policy and understand its consequences. It is available to parents upon request and on our Website.

**The Aim** – The central aims of this Policy are to promote safety and welfare; to promote a mature and moderate approach to the use of alcohol; to reduce the risk of alcohol-induced misconduct in and out of School. This Policy will be driven by means of education, pastoral care, the *Beechwood Code*, detection of unauthorised use of alcohol, and a sanctions policy in accordance with the School's *Behaviour, Rewards and Sanction Policy*, aligned with School's *Exclusions Policy* should it ever need to be invoked.

**The Policy** – Like our *Drugs Policy*, the School forbids the possession or consumption of alcohol by its pupils. We educate pupils to understand the effect and risks associated with alcohol, in relation to their health and well-being, and the law. We educate by means of personal development courses and by example, by discussion, and by authorising moderate alcohol consumption by Sixth Formers under staff supervision at certain times such as the Etiquette Dinner and at the Sixth Form Leavers' Ball.

We encourage students to discuss in confidence any anxieties they may have about use of alcohol with a member of staff or one of the School's counsellors. Matters brought into counselling (or to a member of staff) by a student or his/her parents, in circumstances which are genuine, will be 'ring-fenced' from disciplinary sanctions or adverse report, unless to do so would fail to adequately safeguard other students. A student who contravenes this Policy outside this context will face disciplinary sanctions.

### **Implementation of the Policy –**

- By educating pupils through their curriculum;
- By helping, advising and supporting parents through the use of appropriate outside agencies;
- By frequently reminding the students of the School's disciplinary procedures as specified in the Beechwood Code;
- Through assembly, outside speakers and other media;
- By the application of the School's disciplinary procedures.

### **Procedure -**

- Pupils found in possession of alcohol will be brought before the Head immediately. The alcohol will be confiscated and disposed of safely. The Head will exercise her discretion as to the appropriate sanction. See below. Pupils who have been found either using or distributing alcohol in School can expect a serious sanction such as a fixed-term exclusion or even a permanent exclusion. Pupils who are found to be in the presence of others using or distributing alcohol can expect to be punished.
- The School reserves the right to test pupils when there is suspicion of alcohol consumption. However, in all likelihood, a pupil under the influence of alcohol will have altered behaviour

and their breath and clothing would indicate consumption or intoxication. These factors would be sufficient to serve as grounds for a) contacting parents and, b) to follow the guidelines set out above and as contained in the School's relevant policies.

- If there is suspicion that a boarder has brought alcohol into School, a search will be made using the guidance contained in the document: *Guidance on Carrying Out a Room Search*.

**Sanctions** - A student committing a breach of this Policy will be sanctioned in accordance with the *Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy*.

If the Head's decision, after considering all the material evidence, is that a pupil has breached this Policy, the Head will outline the range of sanctions she is considering and will then, or at a later meeting if requested, hear mitigating circumstances and consider the pupil's academic and disciplinary record and the extent to which s/he has co-operated, before deciding on the sanction.

The Head has discretion to impose an appropriate sanction to reflect the severity of the breach. The nature of the sanction will depend upon the circumstances surrounding the breach.

Following a serious breach of this Policy, or a series of persistent minor breaches, sanctions imposed may include suspension or a requirement that the student leave the School permanently. Any breach involving spirits, 'super-strength' alcoholic drinks or other drinks with a high alcohol content will automatically be viewed as a serious breach.

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