



September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Joining Forces to Keep Our Young People Safe – Parents/Carers Update

Many of you will be aware of the work we do as parents, carers and teachers to keep children safe and fully prepared for adult life.

Young people today face many new pressures that were not such an issue when we were growing up. One area of concern is access to drugs and the range of substances now available in many of our towns, cities and rural areas.

We are determined to do our bit to not only educate your children to the harms of drug abuse but also make access to these substances far more difficult while young people are in our care.

You are receiving this letter because your son/daughter attends a school or college where we have joined forces on drug prevention and formed a partnership called **Hampshire Safe**. Since 2018 when it was formed, the number of schools and colleges involved is growing and now includes a number around Andover as well as The New Forest.

We believe that by working together we can collectively not only raise awareness of the impact of substance misuse but also put measures in place to stop it from happening at our schools and colleges.

We continuously work with students to raise further their awareness of the impact of substance misuse and as part of this anti-drug strategy, drug detection dogs will periodically be deployed with no notice in participating secondary schools, colleges and pupil referral units to ensure our premises are drugs free.

We wish to reassure you that the dogs will be deployed to search a whole building and not individuals. However, during their search the dogs may detect drugs on students or in property belonging to students.

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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 exclusion or face prosecution. Our schools and colleges are safe places 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. You can assist us and the police in keeping our community safe by reporting any suspicious local activity to Hampshire Police by calling 101.

Should you wish to discuss this further, please contact your school's headteacher or college vice-principal. Thank you for supporting Hampshire Safe.

Yours faithfully



Ms T Wilden
 Headteacher



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