



## INTRODUCTION

At Wandle Valley School we are aware of the barriers that affect learning and prevent pupils from realising their full potential.

One of the areas that worries parent/ carers the most is that of substance use and misuse—whether that be tobacco, alcohol or illegal substances.

This leaflet sets out some of the ways that parents / carers can work with the school to identify, prevent and deal with substance misuse.

### REMEMBER

For most young people illegal drug taking is **not** a normal part of life.

Most people who try drugs do **not** continue using them.



0800 77 66 00 [talktofrank.com](http://talktofrank.com)

Friendly, confidential drugs advice

## SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Many parents / carers worry about their child and drugs. They feel that they don't know enough about drugs to prevent their child from coming to harm.

However, many parents /carers think that getting drunk is just an experience when growing up, but there are serious health and personal safety risks associated with drunkenness and binge drinking, particularly for young people

Why do some young people want to use alcohol and drugs?

- They enjoy the short term effects
- Their friends use them
- They are curious about the effects
- The substances are easily available
- As part of growing up, they just want to “break the rules”

Young people use drugs for different reasons in different situations.

**Experimentation**—when someone takes drugs or alcohol because they are curious about what the effects feel like

**Recreational**—when someone takes drugs or alcohol for pleasure or social reasons, for example when going to a party. Most young people who takes drugs use them in this way.

**Problem drug use**— when drug or alcohol use has a harmful effect on a person's life. They may need to take a drug or drink alcohol just to feel able to cope with normal life

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR CHILD

### About drugs

- The user can never be sure of exactly what they are taking
- The user cannot be sure what effect a drug will have even if they've taken it before
- Not knowing the strength of what has been bought can lead to accidental overdose
- It can be very dangerous to mix different drugs— and this includes taking drugs and alcohol at the same time

### About alcohol

- Binge drinking is especially risky for young people because their bodies are not physically mature and alcohol will have a greater effect on them
- Mixing drinks can be risky at any age
- 1000 young people under the age of 15 are admitted to hospital each year with alcohol poisoning
- After drinking alcohol young people are more likely to have an accident and some are more likely to become involved in a fight and even criminal activity

**All substance use and misuse carries risk to health and well-being**