

TIBSHELF COMMUNITY SCHOOL



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Dear Parents, Carers and Students

I am writing to all parents to raise your awareness of the increasing risks around drug use in our community. This substance misuse involves adults as well as some of our young people and there is a very real danger that this illegal activity could lead to tragic consequences.

It is clear that there are individuals within the village and beyond who are supplying and/or using cannabis, ecstasy (MDMA) and ketamine. As you will be fully aware from the media, the dangers and risks of even **first time use** of any of these substances but particularly ecstasy and ketamine can result in fatalities. In addition, long term use can lead to serious mental health or other health issues, which we have experienced recently with some of our students at Tibshelf School.

The UK is seeing an upsurge in the use of a prescription medication known as Xanax. This substance is being sold and used in our communities in Derbyshire and is accessible to young people. We were contacted following the hospitalisation of several students in other Derbyshire schools recently as a direct result of Xanax use which is highly dangerous.

Xanax:

- Prescribed in cases of anxiety as well as other conditions.
- Has a depressive effect on the central nervous system and renders the user particularly vulnerable to other substances including alcohol.
- Is highly addictive.
- The symptoms of Xanax use, may include difficulties in speaking, which could be mistaken for the impact of alcohol use.
- However, can also move very quickly to **loss of consciousness and unresponsiveness, coma and death.**

Be Aware:

- **Xanax is often referred to as “Red Devils” and used to describe bars or tablets of Xanax and pressed with Xanax across them and are red in colour.**

As a result of this information we will:

- Share information around drug use with the police and local agencies.
- Treat all information we receive with the strictest confidence.
- Work with families and individuals implicated but please be aware The Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy and the potential consequences for any individual supplying, bringing drugs onto or using them on site.



All schools are being asked to raise awareness of parents and carers to alert them to the risks around drug use. This is a national issue and our strength lies in recognising that it can happen to us and having policies and procedures in place to respond should the need arise. There is nothing to be gained and much to lose, including our precious children, by any school denying or failing to be as informed and to inform as widely as possible.

We already liaise with all local agencies including schools, medical practices, pharmacies and the police to support an area wide response to this growing problem and invite you as parents, carers and students to respond. If you feel that you have any information that you wish to share please do not hesitate to contact the police via 101 or 999 as appropriate. In addition you may wish to contact me at: p.kenworthy@tibshelf.derbyshire.sch.uk but please remember that the immediate safety of our young people is of paramount importance and school is not an emergency service so use the police in the first instance.

I would urge you as strongly as I can to discuss this information with your child(ren) in order that they are fully aware of the situation. Young people don't always make the right choices as a result of their age and experience and we must work together if we are to keep our young people safe.

With many thanks for your support and cooperation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Kenworthy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mr P Kenworthy
Deputy Headteacher

