

Stowe is very aware of the problems caused by alcohol abuse, particularly in relation to young people. Nonetheless, the School recognises that alcohol is an element of social interaction which Stoics will encounter. It therefore has a commitment to educate its pupils to manage their alcohol consumption appropriately and, via the School's PSHE programme, to understand the effects of alcohol and its potential dangers.

Aims

- to ensure that all pupils understand the effects and potential dangers of alcohol
- to inform pupils of the law with regard to alcohol
- to encourage a responsible approach to alcohol consumption
- to ensure that the consumption of alcohol by pupils when they are in the care of the School is limited, regulated and monitored
- to prevent the abuse of alcohol by pupils by means of the School rules, vigilance and disciplinary procedures
- to ensure that School staff are fully informed of reasonable rates of alcohol consumption by young people
- to communicate to parents the School's stance on alcohol

Policy

A. On School Premises:

1. Possession of alcohol by pupils is not allowed under any circumstances, and consumption is only allowed with the School's permission.
2. Alcohol is to be given to pupils only under staff supervision and only with the authorisation of the Houseparent.
3. No alcohol is to be given to pupils below the Sixth Form, unless the pupil's Houseparent is present and agrees.
4. Spirits must never be served to pupils.
5. Non-alcoholic drinks should always be offered as an alternative to alcohol.
6. Houseparents will use their discretion to ensure that Stoics are not served more than a reasonable amount of alcohol within a 24 hour period.

B. Off the School Premises:

1. Only Sixth Form pupils are allowed to drink alcohol off the School premises without adult supervision whilst in the care of the School. They may only do so with the authorisation of the Houseparent, and on the understanding that on their return to School they report in to the Houseparent.
2. In the above circumstances, in order to comply with both the licensing laws and School policy, pupils are not allowed to drink alcohol other than with a meal.

Parents are expected to support the School's alcohol policy when their sons and daughters are in their charge at School events.

ALCOHOL – Basic Facts

Legal Restrictions

- At the age of 14, children may enter licensed premises, but may not drink alcohol there until they are 18.
- 16 year olds may drink beer or cider on licensed premises, but only with a meal that is not served in the bar.
- At the age of 18 a young person can legally buy alcohol in a pub or off-licence.

Alcohol Strength

The following are all approximately equivalent to 1 unit of alcohol:

- 1 glass of wine
- ½ pint of beer or lager (330ml can)*
- 1 small glass of sherry
- 1 single measure of spirits

* There are very wide variations in the strength of beer and lager. Many of the lagers currently available may have anything up to five or six units of alcohol per large can. The beer and lager provided by the School normally contain around 4% alcohol, and staff are expected to regard this as the standard strength used for judging the unit equivalents above.

The Effects of Alcohol

The effects of a drink will depend upon:

- its strength
- how quickly it is drunk
- whether there is food in the stomach
- bodyweight
- personality and surroundings
- whether the drinker is used to alcohol or not

Medical guidelines on “safe” daily levels of alcohol intake are currently set at 3 - 4 units for men and 2 - 3 units for women. It must be remembered that Sixth Form pupils have by no means always reached the physical maturity and bodyweight of men and women, even though they may technically be adults.

Vigilance

Members of staff are expected to be vigilant at all times, especially in Buckingham when pupils may be tempted to try to buy alcohol. Any pupils behaving suspiciously should be challenged, and any evidence that alcohol has been bought or consumed must be reported to the Houseparent as soon as possible.