

December 2025

Mr A Dryden, Principal

Address: West Denton Way, Newcastle upon Tyne NE5 2SZ

Tel: 0191 4813710

Email: studiowest.admin@northernleaderstrust.org

Dear Parent / Carer

There are increasing concerns about ketamine use by young people and the deaths of Matthew Perry (Friends) and The Vivienne (Drag Race UK) were linked to the use of this drug.

The facts:

- **Rapid increase in use**

-Recreational ketamine use is growing sharply; treatment cases in the UK are up 8 times since 2014.

- **Low Awareness**

- Many young people see ketamine as “low-risk” — 59% report little or no education about its dangers.

- Heavy use can cause bladder damage, stomach pain (“K-cramps”), and memory issues.

- **Mental Health Impact**

-Linked to anxiety, low mood, and dependence — users report cravings and withdrawal.

- **Mixing Drugs:**

Combining ketamine with alcohol or other substances greatly increases overdose risks.

Signs of Ketamine Use

Physical Signs

- Red, blotchy skin, especially around the nose or mouth (from snorting powder)
- Frequent nosebleeds or sniffing without a cold
- Slurred speech, poor coordination, or appearing unsteady / “floaty”
- Dilated pupils, glassy eyes
- Complaints of stomach or bladder pain (“K-cramps” or needing to urinate often)
- Unexplained tiredness or appearing spaced-out

Behavioural Signs

- Sudden changes in mood — from calm or dreamy to agitated or withdrawn
- Seeming detached from reality or describing “out-of-body” sensations
- Secretive behaviour, disappearing at breaks, or avoiding eye contact
- Loss of interest in schoolwork, friends, or hobbies
- Carrying small bags of white powder or unusual containers
- Changes in friendship groups (especially with older students or party scenes)

Psychological Signs

- Confusion or memory lapses
- Poor concentration or appearing “blank”
- Anxiety, low mood, or paranoia after using

Studio West is part of Northern Leaders Trust

Registered Office: Kenton School, Drayton Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3RU

Company Number: 07964133 VAT Number: 138456885

Northern Leaders Trust is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales
Northern Leaders Trust is an exempt charity in accordance with Schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011



Safeguarding Update

Just a reminder, there are a number of ways to report any concerns about a child or to seek support:

- Speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is Laura Bell.
- Speak to reception staff who will give you a paper form on which you can write your concerns
- Email address on the 'Safeguarding' page of the school's website
- Contact children's social services: 0191 2772500

If a child needs support, they can speak to any member of staff in school as all staff complete annual safeguarding training or they can ask to speak to the DSL or Deputy Safeguarding Leads who are: Ms Keegan and Mr Bouleau. They can also use the paper form or email address if they do not feel confident enough to speak to an adult themselves.

If you would like to discuss any of these issues further, please contact the school.

Yours faithfully



Mrs L Bell
Senior Vice Principal & DSL