



Drug Tests from Preventx are Go in UK Schools

Preventx, September 20, 2005

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Now that the summer holiday period is over and children are returning to school, head teachers are increasingly looking for ways to improve GCSE pass rates, create safer environments and boost student/teacher morale.

Preventx, the leading European supplier of home drug testing kits are reporting an increase in sales to UK schools.

PR9.NET September 20, 2005 - In a bid to address these concerns, some heads are issuing random drug tests to pupils from ages 11 to 16. Using oral swab tests they can check for cannabis, cocaine, amphetamines, tranquilisers, barbiturates and methamphetamines.

Preventx, a leading European supplier, and the first UK company to offer the test has reported a high increase of sales to schools throughout the UK.

Preventx director, Michelle Hart said:

"Over the past year, our distribution to schools in the UK has risen every month. Head teachers are realising that something has to be done about drug abuse among pupils. Statistics show that one in five schools will have to deal with illegal drug use each year."

She added:

The intention of drug testing isn't to shame pupils, but to give help and assistance before it's too late. If usage is detected early enough, support can be provided to show the potential harm they may be doing to themselves and their loved ones."

A recent ICM research poll has shown that 82 per cent of parents and 66 per cent of children favoured drug testing in schools. Out of the 1,000 parents surveyed, 96 per cent said they would want to know if their child was taking drugs.

This comes after Tony Blair gave head teachers the power to introduce testing in schools in an interview with a national newspaper last year.

Mr Blair said:

"Some head teachers may worry that if they go down this path they are declaring there is a problem with their school. But in my view, the local community is probably perfectly fully aware that there is a problem."

One school that is already carrying out random tests on its pupils claims they have had positive results. The Abbey School in Faversham, Kent has been testing pupils since the beginning of 2004 and head teacher Peter Walker believes it has contributed to all time high GCSE pass rates.

Mr Walker said:

"I feel that drug testing has helped people feel much safer.

"It has had an effect on contributions in the class room and on behaviour with far less disruption."

Each week 20 names are randomly selected by computer to have the tests taken.

Mr Walker said he would not expel pupils if test results showed positive, but would interview pupils in the presence of parents where appropriate action would be taken.

He said:

"I can understand that there could be fears about infringing human rights and civil liberties, but we have been very careful about that."

Miss Hart added:

"Mr Walker has appropriate systems in place when testing pupils. The parents and students are fully aware of what the procedure is and if they don't want to take the test, they can refuse to do so."

Recent random tests in American schools have dramatically cut marijuana, cocaine and heroine abuse among pupils. And President Bush has provided extra millions of dollars for the programme as "a tool to save children's lives."

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About Preventx

Preventx is the UK's first and largest distributor of home drug testing kits.

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