

ILLICIT DRUG USE

POLICY

Rationale:

- Illegal drug use in schools is a social, health and legal problem that needs to be addressed in accordance with protocols established between the Department of Education, and the Victorian Police Force.

Aims:

- To provide a school environment that is free of illicit drugs, and safe for all staff and students.

Implementation:

- As educators we have a legal responsibility to take reasonable measures to protect students in our care from reasonably foreseeable risks of injury, including risks associated with illicit drugs.
- Harm minimisation is the prevailing approach that our school adopts in the implementation of our comprehensive drug education prevention and intervention program for all students.
- It is unacceptable that any student or staff member use, possess, supply or be under the influence of illicit drugs at school, at a school function or in the vicinity of the school or its students.
- Despite the best efforts of our staff, the use of illicit drugs may still impact upon our school.
- It is incumbent upon a school to act whenever cases of drug use or illegal or criminal activity occur, or are suspected to have occurred at school.
- Individuals that appear to be affected by drugs that attend school or are within the vicinity of the school or a school function will be managed in the following way:-
 1. The safety and welfare of the affected person and others directly or indirectly involved will be our primary concern.
 2. The situation will be isolated from other students.
 3. First aid and reassurance will be provided.
 4. Medical assistance and support will be sought.
 5. The school principal will be informed.
 6. Any drugs or paraphernalia that can be easily collected will be safely gathered.
 7. The parents or guardians of the student/s involved will be contacted.
 8. Notify Health or Welfare services if appropriate.
 9. Principal to notify police.
 10. Principal will document the events, develop communication strategies, to coordinate supports and interventions, to consider sanctions, to coordinate an education plan, and to monitor and evaluate the student/s progress and future directions.
- Whether or not the principal informs all parents or students of incidents involving drugs at school is a matter of circumstances and degree, but the principal's legal duty is to ensure that the school environment is, as far as practicable, safe and free from risks.
- Teachers have a duty of care to pass on information to the principal if they have knowledge about illicit drug use by students or members of a student's family irrespective of whether the use is confirmed, suspected or likely to occur, or occurs on or outside school grounds. Under this duty of care staff cannot promise unconditional confidentiality to students.
- Principals must advise the local police contact person when they have knowledge of an alleged criminal offence, including the possession, use and distribution of illicit drugs

- Any student who is absent from school due to drug use or the resultant treatment should be provided with a Student Absence Learning Plan as determined by teachers in consultation with parents/guardians or the school's appointed case manager.
- The principal will inform students and parents via newsletters and the Student Code of Conduct that school lockers and desks are school property and may be searched without notice.
- Students suspected of illicit drugs in school bags or personal clothing are to be separated from other students and supervised while the police are contacted. A teacher or principal can conduct an immediate search of a school bag or clothing in the company of another responsible adult if there is imminent danger that the student is likely to use an illicit drug without warning while the police are contacted – see Student Searches policy.
- School Council approval must be sought regarding the consumption of alcohol at school or school functions.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on....

September 2015