

# VOLATILE SOLVENTS

## POLICY

### Rationale:

Volatile solvents are very common in our modern lives, but are potentially extremely hazardous to our health. They include glues, petrol, thinners, correction fluids, aerosol sprays and butane gas. In order for staff and students to avoid the potential harms associated with volatile solvents, they must be informed as to the dangers and behave accordingly.

### Aims:

- To ensure that all students are aware of the implications of working in an environment where the use of volatile solvents is part of normal activities.
- To ensure that students have a full understanding of the safety requirements of working with volatile solvents.

### Implementation:

- All staff will be provided with professional development relating to hazardous substances, including volatile solvents.
- The teaching of volatile solvents to students will be conducted within the context of a health-based curriculum.
- Volatile solvents will not be taught as part of the school's drug education program as there is evidence to suggest that in an environment where volatile solvents abuse is not prevalent, bringing the matter to the attention of young people may cause instances of volatile solvent abuse to rise.
- Volatile solvents are seen as a broad range of easily accessible products and both staff and students need to understand the dangers of working with such substances.
- Students will be provided with an opportunity to learn all safety aspects of working with or unintentionally exposing themselves to any substance considered to be volatile eg; glue, paint, petrol, nail polish remover etc. but will not focus on topics such as deliberate 'chroming'.
- In doing so, our school will use appropriate curriculum resources eg: Volatile Solvents
- Volatile solvents used by our school will be stored in a manner consistent with requirements of all hazardous materials eg: small quantities, sealed containers, locked storage facilities, correct signage etc.
- Staff members or students required to use volatile solvents as part of the curriculum or as part of their employment will be provided with the correct safety equipment, training and appropriately ventilated environments.
- Should a solvent emergency occur, staff are advised to stay calm, assess the situation, ensure the safety of all concerned, seek assistance, inform the principal, contact parents/carers, seek medical attention and if necessary, report the incident to the WorkCover Authority.

### Evaluation:

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

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

**March 2015**