

Drug Policy (Students)

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to promote a healthy lifestyle amongst members of the Mount Carmel College community by providing and maintaining an environment in which the health and welfare of all members is paramount.

In accordance with legislation and guided by the *Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmanian Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges* (the MOU), the policy of the College is that the possession, use and/or distribution of illicit and other unsanctioned drugs and/or drug paraphernalia while on College property, or at College-related events, is strictly prohibited.

Students are not permitted to be under the influence of illicit drugs while on College property, at College-related events, or when representing the College.

Students will receive age appropriate health and drug education to enable and support them to make informed choices and to minimise the harm associated with drug use. Referrals to counselling and support groups will be provided to students with drug related issues.

This Policy sets out the College's approach to drug education, drug management and the management of drug-related incidents.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of this policy are informed by the *Tasmanian Drug Strategy*, the *Memorandum of Understanding Between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges - Guidelines for Managing Drug-Related Incidents in Tasmanian Schools*, the *National Drug Strategy* and the principles of harm minimisation.

The *Guidelines for Managing Drug-Related Incidents in Tasmanian Schools* complements preventative school-based drug education programs and ensures that, where police intervention is requested or mandated in relation to drug-related incidents in schools, police and individual school responses are planned, structured and consistent with the *National Drug Strategy*.

Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 (Tas) (CYPFA)

The CYPFA makes all people coming into contact with students in a professional role mandatory reporters, including staff and volunteers in Learning Environments. If a student discloses drug use in any circumstances it is considered that the student may be at risk within the framework of this Act and a notification MUST be made.

Definitions

Drug: A substance which produces a psychoactive effect. Within the context of the National Drug Strategy, the term drug is used generically to include tobacco, vaporiser products, alcohol, pharmaceutical drugs and illicit drugs. The National Drug Strategy also includes strategies to address the harmful use of other substances, including inhalants.

Drug related incident: Any occasion involving drug use and/or the possession, distribution or supply of a drug or drug-related equipment. For the purpose of the *Guidelines for Managing Drug-Related Incidents in Tasmanian Schools*, a drug-related incident does not include alcohol or tobacco.

Illicit Drug: A drug for which the production, sale, possession or use is prohibited. An alternative term is 'illegal drug'.

Harm minimisation: Harm minimisation is considered to be the most useful approach to drug-related issues. It aims to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of alcohol, smoking products and other drugs for individuals, their families, friends, and the community. The key concept for this approach is that drug use should be minimised and that harm from drug use and psychoactive substances should be limited. Harm minimisation involves a range of approaches to prevent or reduce drug-related harm, including prevention, early intervention, specialist treatment, supply control, safer drug use and abstinence. It involves a balance between demand reduction, supply reduction and harm reduction strategies aimed at promoting better health, social and economic outcomes for the community and the individual.

Learning Environment: Generally considered to comprise students, Learning Environment staff (for example teachers and other professionals, administrators and other support staff) and parents/guardians and other carers.

Smoking Product: Any product containing one or both: tobacco product or vaping product. It includes: cigarettes, cigars, shisha containing tobacco, products for use with tobacco, packets containing tobacco, products for use with tobacco, packets containing tobacco products, vaping equipment (including spare and second-hand parts), E-cigarettes, e-juices and personal vaping devices.

Policy Framework

The College is committed to providing effective drug education and dealing with drug-related issues in a manner consistent with Gospel values, nationally accepted protocols and the principles of harm minimisation. This involves prevention of potential harm, and reduction of harm and supportive management where serious problems exist.

To implement this Policy the College has prevention and intervention structures and processes to deal with drug and alcohol issues. These assist in providing a safe and supportive environment that encourages the growth of each student as a healthy and responsible individual and maximises educational opportunities.

This policy acknowledges that members of our community may be struggling with, or affected by, their own or someone else's drug and / or alcohol usage. All members of the College community are encouraged to access support. (see Appendix 1)

Policy Content

Prevention:

The College is committed to providing:

- Educational programs in the Health Curriculum, Pastoral Care and RE program and College wide initiatives that focus on drug-related harm minimisation. Such education will reflect gospel values, responsible behaviour and respectful decision-making.
- The creation and maintenance of a safe and supportive environment that aims to develop resilience in our students.
- Clear communication and awareness raising of policies and procedures for the College community in a culturally inclusive way.
- Inclusion of smoking products and alcohol use in drug prevention and intervention strategies.
- Protection of the privacy of individuals. Students have a right to privacy but a teacher cannot guarantee total confidentiality because he / she may be bound by mandatory reporting and / or an obligation to minimise harm.
- Access for students, parents and staff to information and support in the form of counselling and communication.

Intervention:

The intervention procedure is designed to address drug use incidents in a way which is in the best interests of all parties, while adhering to legal requirements.

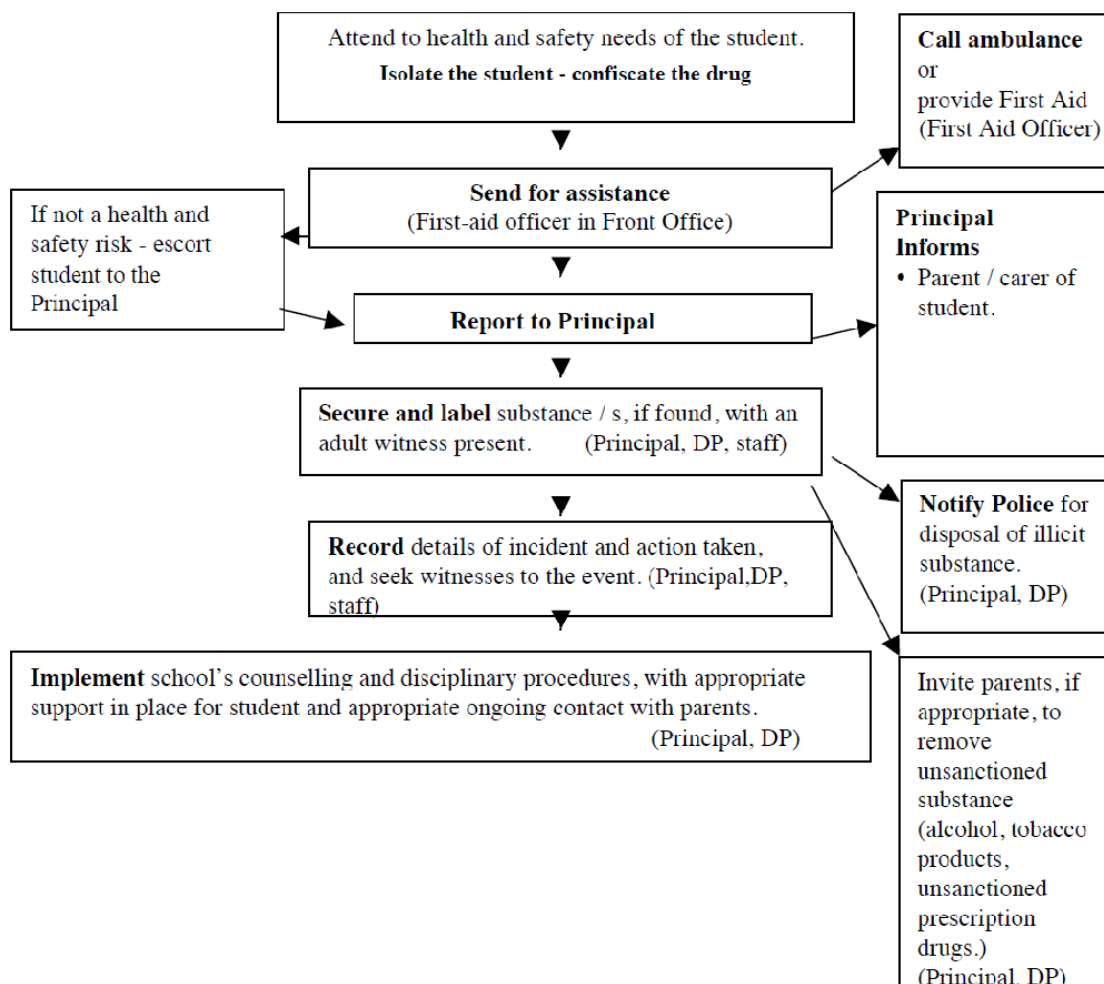
Responses to drug related incidents as outlined in the flowchart below will reflect:

- procedural fairness;
- consistency;
- the nature of the incident and circumstances of those involved;
- consideration of the needs and safety of others;
- the importance of maintaining connection to educational and vocational pathways;
- adherence to relevant legislation and CECT and College policies, including the CECT Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Policy and Procedures.

When

- a student is found apparently affected by illicit drug use or there is evidence of this; or
- a student is reasonably suspected of distributing drugs; or
- a student is reasonably suspected of being in possession of or using illicit drugs or there is evidence of this; or
- a student is reasonably suspected of having been in possession of illicit drugs or affected by drug use at any earlier time, or there is evidence of this;

some or all of the following steps are to be followed, depending on the circumstances. These steps are to be followed in conjunction with the College's behaviour management and pastoral care policies and procedures.



The Police will be informed as required by law and in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding Between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges.

(*DP means Deputy Principal)

The Principal shall make an assessment of the student's condition and take appropriate action based on the facts. This may include contacting the student's parents/carers to inform them of the incident and requesting that they remove the student from the college grounds, and/or calling the police in the event that the student is acting in an aggressive or threatening manner. The Principal will meet with the student to discuss the drug-related incident in the presence of the student's parents/carers/guardians wherever practically possible. This may include by phone or video call.

Postvention:

There will be a coordinated response to a student's drug related behaviour that includes relevant staff, parents / carers, support staff and community agencies. A plan will be developed, considering

the student's health and educational needs, to support reintegration where appropriate. Follow-up support will be provided for any others affected by the drug related incident.

Workers' Responsibilities:

All workers are responsible to ensure that:

- They follow the guidelines set out in this policy when dealing with a student that they believe may be under the influence of illicit drugs;
- All reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety and welfare of students from both known and reasonably foreseeable illicit drug related risks of harm and/or injury;
- The Principal or other senior staff members are informed if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is involved in illicit drug related behaviour;
- Prescription drugs are not supplied or administered to students unless in accordance with the Medication Administration Policy; and
- Students are asked to display their possessions or contents of their bag in the presence of two staff members, where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion that they have illicit drugs in their possession.

[Supporting and Related Documents](#)

MCC Behaviour Co-Management Policy

National Drug Strategy

Memorandum of Understanding Between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges - Guidelines for Managing Drug-Related Incidents in Tasmanian Schools between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges.

All CET policies, including:

Mandatory Reporting Policy

Pastoral Care Policy

Privacy Policy

Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Policy

Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Procedure

[Legislation](#)

Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (Tas)

Misuse of Drugs Act 2001

Crimes Act 1914

Criminal Code Act 1924

Criminal Code Act 1995 and Regulations 2001

Children, Young Persons and Families Act 1997

Public Health Act 1997

Poisons Act 1971

Policy Review

This Policy shall be reviewed every three years, unless legislative or organisational change warrants a review at an earlier time.

Policy Dates

Reviewed	November 2024
Next Review Due	November 2027

Policy Authorisation

Megan Richardson
Principal

Kate Bentley
Chair of the Board

APPENDIX 1

COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICES - (Alcohol and Drugs)

Emergencies 000

Launceston General Hospital 63 487 111

Alcohol & Drug Information Services 1800 811 994

Alcohol & Drug Counselling Services 63 365 577

Drug Education Network Inc 63 367 950

Headspace: Youth Health Services 63 344 480

Poison Information Centre 13 11 26

Drug Intelligence Reporting 1800 813 784

Family Drug Support 1300 368 186

General Counselling

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service 6336 2867