



BANNED SUBSTANCES POLICY

RATIONALE

At Sacred Heart College, we strive to foster a culture that encourages the development of self-assured, critical thinking young people and a community where relationships are based upon the core Mercy values of compassion, justice and respect. Sacred Heart College is committed to learning, to the care of others, to forming character and to building a supportive community where individuals are accountable for their own behaviour. Partnerships exist and are valued between school, home and the community.

Drug usage, dependency and associated issues and actions can put the individual and our community at risk. We seek to minimize potential or actual drug-related harm through appropriate whole school education, action and response. The use of illegal drugs and the abuse of drugs of any kind are not condoned by the Sacred Heart College Community.

This policy aims to ensure that all members of our College Community adopt a balanced and consistent approach to educating and responding to drug usage by students and drug-related issues.

At all times the College aims to provide care for individual students and protection for all involved in the College Community.

DEFINITIONS

References:

- Catholic Education Melbourne (CEM): Policy 2.3 Drug Issues in Catholic Schools.
- Australian Drug Foundation: DrugInfo (<http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au/drug-facts/drugs-the-facts>)
- Department of Education & Training: School Policy and Advisory Guide
- Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training: Principles for School Drug Education

Drugs: Any substance, with the exception of food and water, which, when taken into the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically. This includes all legal and illegal substances.

Drugs can be broadly defined in four categories:

- Depressants: Sedatives that affect the central nervous system. They slow down nerve messages between the brain and body. Eg. Alcohol, cannabis and opiates.
- Stimulants: These drugs speed up nerve messages between the brain and the body. Eg. Nicotine, caffeine, amphetamines, cocaine and ecstasy.
- Hallucinogens: These drugs have the ability to distort how a person senses their surroundings. Eg. Cannabis, ecstasy and LSD.
- Miscellaneous: This definition includes all drugs of dependence. Eg. Some prescription or over the counter medications, tobacco, steroids, amphetamines as well as solvents, which may be inhaled.

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

Unsanctioned drug: A drug for which use is restricted by law, school authorities and/or school policies/guidelines. The term includes illicit, social and prescription drugs.

Drug-related incident: An occasion involving alcohol, tobacco and/or other illicit or unsanctioned drug use and/or the possession of a drug or drug-related equipment (except for legal medical use).

Drug-related issues: All issues associated with drugs, including those that arise from personal use and use by another person or persons.

Supply: Refers to incidents involving supplying, sharing, distributing or selling of drugs.

School drug education: Refers to and encompasses all policies, practices, programs and initiatives/events in the school connected with the prevention and reduction of drug-related harm.

Prevention: The strategies used to prevent drug use from occurring at all or to delay the onset of use.

Intervention: The strategies implemented when responding to drug related issues.

Possession: Occupying or holding a substance either with or without rights of ownership.

College Environment: The College environment refers to school buildings and grounds and official school activities. This includes renewals, camps and other overnight excursions. Students travelling to and from these venues and/or school activities are expected to observe school policies. College activities do not include any private parties or functions, responsibility for which rests with parents.

Harm Minimisation: Harm minimisation refers to policies and programs aimed at reducing drug-related harm, which includes the promotion of abstinence, prevention of anticipated harm, and reduction of actual harm.

Restorative Practice: Restorative practice is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim/s.

Positive Education: Positive education is an approach to education that draws on positive psychology's emphasis of individual strengths and personal motivation to promote learning. Nurturing a positive climate and relationships across the school community is fundamental to addressing drug-related harm for young people.

POLICY STATEMENT

Sacred Heart College has adopted the principles of the CEOM Policy 2.13.

"The church teaches that parents, social workers, priests, religious and laity are witnesses and the first protagonists in trying to understand, intervene and propose to individuals an alternative to drug dependency. The family is one of the first places for this to happen, however, it cannot do so in isolation from the parish, the community or the work of education."¹

This policy assists Sacred Heart College to comply with this understanding and fulfil its role in reducing the harm that can arise from drug use. All people working in schools have a responsibility to care for children, to promote their well-being and to protect them from any form of harm. In keeping with the CEM guidelines, the College will enact policy and strategies that encompass health promotion initiatives, positive education approaches, age-appropriate drug education programs based on a harm minimisation approach, and agreed and understood procedures for responding to drug related issues.

¹ Pontifical council for Health Pastoral Care, Church: Drugs and Drug Addiction Pastoral Handbook, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2002, nn. 10-11

- Sacred Heart College requests all staff, parents and visitors to act as role models for our students.
- Smoking is not permitted within the College environment at any time by students, staff, members of the College Community or visitors to our College.
- Students may not be in possession of, under the influence of or consume or supply alcohol to other students within the College environment. Consumption of alcohol at College functions such as Year 12 Valedictory Dinner deems students to be under parental supervision.
- The consumption of alcohol by any other member of the Sacred Heart College Community is permitted within the College environment only in prescribed circumstances as outlined in the SHC Alcohol Policy. The determination as to whether alcohol may be consumed on a particular occasion or at a function is to be made by the Principal.
- The possession of, use of, or dealing in illicit or unsanctioned drugs is not permitted at any time within the College environment by students, staff, parents or any members of the public, including those using/hiring any College facilities.

A. Prevention programs and strategies

A whole school approach to drug education encompasses formal teaching and learning programs, student well-being and pastoral care programs, school ethos and values, interpersonal relationships and effective partnerships with parents and services in the wider community. A whole school approach provides a systematic and practical framework, which the College can use to manage drug related issues and to ensure that the well-being and individual needs of all students is supported.

Harm Minimisation: Harm minimisation programs at Sacred Heart College aim to encourage abstinence, prevent anticipated harm, and promote safer drug use.

The College aims to provide students with a comprehensive education about drug issues. The program aims to ensure that students:

- Are informed about drugs and related issues,
- Understand the implications of drug use,
- Possess the ability to minimise the possibility of harm to themselves, others and the wider community.

The Drug Education Program is cross curricular. Drug issues are addressed in a variety of learning areas with different topics at different Year Levels. Topics are designed to include factual information about drugs, allowing for a discussion of individual and community attitudes to drug use. These classes seek to provide students with sufficient information to make appropriate decisions regarding their health. The Sacred Heart College Drug Education Program encourages the participation of parents and the wider community.

B. Intervention programs and strategies

The College aims to provide a safe environment conducive to individual and/or group education for members of the College Community.

We aim to establish meaningful links with community partners and services to strengthen the College's ability to manage and respond to drug related issues. These may include:

- The Victorian Police,
- Youth Resource Officers,
- Community agencies,
- Local parishes,
- Local health services,
- Individual and family counseling services.

Professional Learning is essential in providing opportunities for school staff to plan and implement appropriate drug education programs and to remain current with knowledge, trends, resources and practices in drug education. It will also assist staff in promoting the well-being of young people and the establishment of appropriate referral information and procedures in managing a drug related incident.

The provision of information to parents about drug related issues is essential in building the relationship between the school and the parent community. This can be achieved through a range of mediums.

C. Management of Drug Related Incidents

The possession, use, distribution or selling of illicit drugs or unsanctioned drugs on school premises at any function or activity organised by the school is prohibited.

In the case of incidents involving illicit or unsanctioned drugs at school or at a school event, initial actions and responses will focus on the safety and well-being of those directly and indirectly involved. Medical assistance will be provided if necessary as a priority.

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Administration of Medication Policy

SHC Student Support Services: Procedures and Policies Manual

SHC Critical Incident Policy

Alcohol Policy

SHC Medical Emergencies Procedures


SHC Record of Interview

School Policy and Advisory Guide, DEECD (2011)

Catholic Education Melbourne: Policy 2.3 Drug Issues in Catholic Schools.

Related Documents

Banned Substance Procedure

Date Ratified:	15 October 2015
Name:	Anna Negro
Signature:	
Date presented at Council Meeting:	15 October 2015
Person Responsible for Implementation:	The Principal
Last amended:	_____
Next Review Date:	2018
Location Checklist:	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Handbook <input type="checkbox"/> Students <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parent Portal <input type="checkbox"/> Website