



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 Childhood Development (DEECD), and the Victorian Police Force.

Aim:

- 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 risks of injury that we should have reasonably foreseen, including risks associated with illicit drugs.
- 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.
- Legal issues related to illicit drug use and a school's duty of care to its students is complex. The primary reference for issues relating to illicit drug use in schools is *'Drugs, Legal Issues and Schools – A Guide for Principals of Government Schools – June 2000 edition'*.
- 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. Such action must involve staff members informing the principal who will contact the police as per the 'Protocol between the Victorian Police and DEECD Concerning Criminal Offences', contact parents, arrange counselling or support as necessary, and thereafter following the school's Student Code of Conduct.
- 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.
- The Principal will consult with school council in matters involving significant drug use.
- The school 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 is 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 – Student Searches policy.
- School Council approval must be sought regarding the consumption of alcohol at school or school functions.
- Lessons relating to drug education will form part of the School Council's Individual School Drug Education Strategy (ISDES). Parents will be informed of drug education lesson content.
- We will deliberately access and make use of the latest drug related resources, including utilising the expertise of expert DEECD and community personnel.

Evaluation:

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

This policy was ratified by School Council on December 6 2011.

Signed By:

The Principal _____

School Council President _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____