

STUDENT ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUG POLICY

**Substance Misuse:
Alcohol/Tobacco/Illicit Drugs**



**St Francis Xavier College
Berwick, Beaconsfield & Officer
Last Reviewed October 2020
Next Review January 2024**

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Francis Xavier College is a Catholic community that is educative and supportive. We have a clear purpose: the development of a person of competence, conscience and compassion formed in the Christian tradition; one who is guided by a sense of hope and self-belief and who will be of service in the world. We recognise God's presence in our lives by celebrating and pursuing personal excellence and by living courageously with optimism and respect for all.

1. PREAMBLE

This policy is based on principles of harm minimisation and emanates from our objective to have students develop a sense of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility in all areas of their lives. It aims to achieve a balance between the individual rights of the students and the welfare of the St Francis Xavier College community.

A harm minimisation policy recognises the need for strategies to reduce the risks and harm to those continuing to use drugs and to the wider community, whilst taking care that such strategies do not encourage or normalise drug use (Drug Issues in Catholic Schools, Catholic Education Office Melbourne, 2009). This is the policy context in which the Catholic Education System seeks to develop an effective response to drug misuse by students in Catholic Schools and is consistent with the National School Drug Education Strategy (DETYA, 1999) and Principles for School Drug Education (DEST, 2004).

2. OBJECTIVES

- To best respond to the interests of the student concerned, while respecting the duty of care to other students and staff;
- To set in place clear guidelines that outline roles and responsibilities for those dealing with issues related to drug/alcohol/tobacco use;
- To develop and document a comprehensive drug policy that addresses both prevention and intervention in order to respond to such incidents in a planned and coordinated manner.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Drug

The World Health Organisation defines a "drug" as any substance which alters the physical and/or psychological function of the body when taken internally, excepting food and water. Examples include, but are not limited to, analgesics, alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, amphetamines, narcotics and solvents. This includes Alcohol. For the purpose of this policy, this does not include prescription or over the counter medications when used as directed.

3.2 The School Setting

"School setting" includes all situations that occur

- during school hours;
- while students are at a school camp or official College activity outside of normal hours; or
- while students are in school uniform.

3.3 The Response Team

The “Response Team” consists of

- Deputy Principal - Head of Campus
- Director of Students
- Head of House
- First Aid Coordinator

4. CONTEXT

St Francis Xavier College does not permit students in a school setting to

- smoke or possess tobacco products or be in the company of persons where tobacco is used;
- deliberately inhale volatile substances (solvents);
- possess, use or provide prescribed drugs for non-medical purposes;
- possess, use or provide illicit drugs;
- possess, use or provide drug related equipment (except in the case of lawful medical use); or
- possess, consume or provide alcohol.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Prevention

The key elements of a comprehensive and coordinated approach to dealing with student welfare regarding alcohol/tobacco/drug related issues include facilitating a health promoting environment, a supportive school administration, an effective drug and health curriculum and identifying students at risk, monitoring, referring and counselling such students.

Drug awareness and prevention is addressed in the Health and Physical Education and Wellbeing Curriculum.

5.2 Immediate response to incidents of drug misuse

When an incident of drug misuse by a student within the school setting is alleged, it is important to be able to identify whether the incident represents a single, one-off event, or an ongoing concern that may form part of addictive behaviour.

All such incidents that occur within the school setting are considered serious, but the appropriate response by the school authorities should be influenced by assessment of the particular circumstances. The College sets very clear boundaries of what is expected and encouraged in terms of student behaviour and performance, but will also work to maintain student engagement when these standards are not met [Jesuit Social Services, “Keeping them connected” (2005), 36]

The staff member first notified of the alleged incident should:

- Establish and respond to the student's and others' immediate safety
- If the student appears under the influence of a drug other than tobacco, organise for the student to attend the First Aid Office. This may involve call a Head of House for support
- If the student is not under the influence of a drug but has been involved in an incident of substance misuse, remove him/her from the company of other students immediately by requesting support from a Head of House

The First Aid Coordinator should:

- Assess the need for First Aid Treatment and act as necessary
- Notify an available Head of House or the Director of Students (if not already done)

The Head of House or Director of Students should:

- Notify parents and ask them to collect their child.

The response team will:

- Advise the Principal that an incident has occurred;
- Establish and validate the facts by interviewing relevant staff and students;
- Where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting drug use or possession, the Principal or Deputy Principal - Head of Campus may, in the presence of the student(s) and another teacher, search the student's locker by asking the student to remove items
- Ensure parents have been informed that an incident has occurred.

Central to a response to an incident of drug misuse within the school setting is an assessment by the Response Team of the significance of the incident in relation to patterns of drug behaviour.

Incidents may include:

- Experimental: constituting single or short-term use
Recreational/Social: controlled use in social settings
Situational: Drugs being used for a specific reason
- Compulsive: Frequently using, possibly daily with capacity for withdrawal if use stops
- Intensive: High doses with capacity for binge taking

Key issues relevant to the decision-making

- context of the drug misuse as defined above;
- balancing between assessment of the health needs of the individual student concerned and the duty of care to other students;
- confidentiality and privacy requirements;
- significant drug misuse by young people is one of the clearest indicators of an underlying mental health disorder (Norden 2001);

5.3 Follow-up procedures to incidents of drug misuse

Incidents relating to alcohol and others drugs are considered serious and potentially criminal behaviour.

All incidents will be dealt with on an individual basis and in line with the College's policies and procedures for:

- Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Support
- Suspension, Negotiated Transfer and Expulsion

Criminal activities (eg: buying, selling and possession of illegal drugs) can also be reported to the Victoria Police.

5.4 Record Keeping

All instances of behaviours that relate to involvement in the misuse of alcohol or other drugs at school must be noted on the student's SIMON Profile.

Responsibilities

Staff Responsibilities

All staff are expected to be familiar with and actively support the College's outlined expectations and response plan for addressing the misuse of alcohol and other drugs at school.

All staff are also expected to maintain their Duty of Care as per the DOSCE Duty of Care Policy and to take reasonable steps to minimise the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm.

Wellbeing Leaders' Responsibilities

All Wellbeing Leaders at the College have an added responsibility to be familiar with and actively support the College's processes and reporting obligations in the support of student behaviour.

Reporting

All staff, and particularly Wellbeing Leaders are expected to be aware of the following related reporting obligations and procedures:

- Whereabouts Unknown Form
- Injury Form
- Restraint and Seclusion Form
- Risk Assessment Tool
- Suspension Procedures
- Expulsion Procedures
- Criminal Activity

Compliance

Implementation

These guidelines are implemented by:

- staff training and professional development opportunities
- communicating these guidelines to the College community
- effective maintenance of student records
- effective incident notification procedures
- monitoring the effectiveness of the guidelines
- reviewing and evaluating the guidelines

Discipline for Breach of Procedures

Where a staff member breaches these procedures St Francis Xavier College may take disciplinary action.

Related legislation

- Privacy and Data Protection Act Vic 2014
- Health Records Act Vic 2001
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act, 2006
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act, 2005 (Vic)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act, 2004 (Vic)

Related DOSCEL Policy

- Student Duty of Care Policy
- Child Protection and Safety Policy
- Student Pastoral Care Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy (May 2020)
- Behaviour Management Policy (May 2020)
- Suspension, Negotiated Transfer and Expulsion Policy and Procedure (May 2020)
- Critical Incident Management Policy

Related College Procedures

- Student Duty of Care Procedure
- Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Support Procedure
- Privacy Procedure
- Child Protection Program
- Wellbeing Guidelines
- Restraint and Seclusion Procedure
- Suspension, Negotiated Transfer and Expulsion Procedure

Other Related

- Keeping them connected: A national study examining how Catholic Schools can best respond to incidents of illicit drug use. Father Peter Norden SJ, 2005.
- Keeping them connected – reducing drug-related harm in Australian schools from a Catholic Perspective. Drug and Alcohol Review. Father Peter Norden, 2008
- National School Drug Education Strategy, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 1999
- Principles for School Drug Education, Department of Education, Science and Training, 2004.

Status of Policy:	
Manager Responsible:	Assistant Principal - Wellbeing
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Approved by:	College Executive 2006