



COLLEGE POLICY ON DRUG ABUSE

At St Joseph's College we recognise that students will in all likelihood be exposed to drugs at some time in their lives and we accept the need to equip our students with the knowledge, skills and strategies to handle this exposure. Drug abuse impinges on students and schools in many ways: from physical effects on individuals, effects on their social interactions, academic and creative performance, to issues surrounding possession of and dealing in drugs. Therefore, in view of this, and in light of the school's responsibilities to parents, students and the community, we have created this College Drug Policy. Drug use and drug abuse are facts of life in Australian society. Adults and young people may use and abuse drugs for a number of reasons, with a range of complex causes and varied consequences.

What is a Drug?

A drug is any substance, with the exception of food and water, which, when taken in to the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically. This includes all drugs of addiction or dependence, such as analgesics, alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, steroids, amphetamines, as well as solvents which may be inhaled, such as glue and petrol.

Illegal Drugs

Any student found supplying illegal drugs is committing an offence against the law and the police will be notified.

TOBACCO

With reference to the use of tobacco, the school encourages its students to be non-users. It should be noted that Federal law prohibits anyone under sixteen years of age from using tobacco in a public place, or purchasing any tobacco product.

ALCOHOL

It is acknowledged that many, if not most, students, will begin to use alcohol during the time when they are enrolled in the school. The following information must be considered when establishing a policy for St. Joseph's College:

In Queensland, it is illegal for anyone under eighteen years of age to purchase, possess or use alcohol, except in a residence or private place, and only if the alcohol has been provided by that youth's parent. This permits parents to serve alcohol only to their own children.

The abuse of alcohol, whether on one occasion, or consistently, constitutes a threat to the user, as well as those around him.

DRUGS

Because our laws and society may make distinctions between alcohol and drug use, and because their dangers are different, a clear distinction between alcohol and drug use is made in the school's policies.

The non-medical use of narcotics and other drugs is not legal in our society. Nevertheless, the non-medical use of drugs has spread rapidly in Australian society in the last twenty to thirty years. Simple possession or use of drugs is a serious criminal offence. In addition, anyone who gives or sells drugs may be guilty of the more serious offence of 'trafficking in narcotics'.

POLICY STATEMENT

The use of tobacco by a student while on school property or at events sanctioned by the school, is prohibited. This includes all time spent on field trips, sporting / cultural trips, dances, camps and school sponsored co curricular activities.

The use, possession, or clearly being under the influence of alcohol by a student while on school property or at events sanctioned by the school, is prohibited. This includes all time spent on field trips, sporting / cultural trips, dances, camps and school sponsored co curricular activities.

The use, possession or being under the influence of illegal drugs is prohibited while on school property or at events sanctioned by the school. This includes all time spent on field trips, sporting

/ cultural trips, dances, camps and school sponsored co curricular activities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

There are five components to the strategy for implementing the school's policy on alcohol and drugs:

1. Communication: Students, parents, and teaching staff are to be fully informed at the beginning of each year of the school's position on drugs.
2. Training: Training will be provided to teaching staff as required. Included each year will be a review of the school's policies. Parents and other community stakeholders (i.e. health and social service agencies) will be encouraged to participate in relevant aspects of the policy's implementation.
3. Prevention through Education: Prevention will be attempted primarily through a comprehensive education curriculum and associated activities at all levels of the school.
4. Identification and Early Intervention: With early identification of a student who is in conflict with the school's to appropriate outside services will also be considered.
5. Disciplinary Policy: The goal of disciplinary action is to protect the health and safety of all students by deterring students from misbehaviour, and effectively and fairly dealing with those violations which do occur, protecting the welfare of the students as much as possible, and the integrity of the school. While exercising this power, the school's response should be fair and equitable, clearly articulated and communicated.

The Principal will have the right to make the final decision in the disciplining of any student at the College, and whether to inform the school community of the action taken and the identity of the student.

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