



## **DRUG EDUCATION & USE POLICY**

### **Rationale**

- School drug education aims to prevent harmful drug use, illicit drug use, inappropriate alcohol consumption and solvent use.
- School drug education utilises a whole school approach to health promotion, prevention and early intervention to children's wellbeing and engagement, based on the principles of harm minimisation. It aims to promote resilience, and build on knowledge, skills and behaviours to enable children to make responsible, healthy and safe choices. It encompasses all policies, practices, programs and initiatives connected with prevention and reduction of drug-related harm, and the building of resilience in individuals and school communities.
- Schools should implement relevant and comprehensive drug education for all children as an ongoing core component of the curriculum.
- Schools should develop or review policy to support the management of drug-related incidents.
- Schools should make every effort to retain students in the education system because students are often at greater risk if disengaged from school.

### **Purpose**

- To support a whole school approach to reducing drug use and associated harm.
- To provide support for children involved in unsanctioned drug use.
- To ensure Footscray North Primary School complies with legislation and DET policy in relation to drug education.
- To ensure the school complies with the requirements of the Child Safe Standards.

### **Definition**

Harm minimisation refers to policies and programs designed to reduce drug-related harm. Harm minimisation aims to improve health, social and economic outcomes for both the community and the individual and encompasses a wide range of approaches.

Schools use a harm minimisation approach to review and implement school drug education programs and activities that:

- are comprehensive and evidence based
- promote a positive school climate and relationships
- are targeted to needs and contexts identified through consultation with students, staff and parents
- embed timely, developmentally appropriate drug education programs within a curriculum framework that utilises effective pedagogy

### **Implementation**

- The wellbeing of all children is this school's highest priority.
- The school will provide all children with a comprehensive, age appropriate drug education prevention and intervention program embedded across all curriculum areas.
- The school will involve parents/carers and the wider school community in drug-related curriculum and wellbeing issues.
- Staff will be:
  - informed of policies and procedures
  - provided with professional development in responding to drug related incidents.
- The possession, use, distribution or selling of illicit drugs will be prohibited.
- Drug Education will focus on a harm minimisation model i.e. prevent and reduce drug related harm.
- All staff have a duty of care to report to the Principal all cases involving drug and alcohol use, whether self-disclosed, reported or discovered.  
Note: Under this duty of care staff cannot promise unconditional confidentiality to students.
- If a drug-related incident occurs:

- the primary focus will be on child safety and wellbeing including whether the child requires medical attention
- when safe to do so the parent/carer will be advised along with health, community and welfare services and if necessary, the police
- if deemed appropriate and with due regard for the child's privacy, the community may be advised of the incident
- this policy will be reviewed
- A case management team will be established to:
  - monitor and support the child in the longer term
  - ensure relevant information has been collected
  - consider sanctions in line with the Student Engagement Policy
  - monitor, evaluate and reflect
- Staff are expected to:
  - stay calm
  - gather relevant facts and if required, the collect drugs
  - seek assistance as soon as possible
  - inform the school administration
  - isolate the situation from other students if possible
- Teachers have a duty of care to pass on information to the principal if they have knowledge about illicit drug use by students or members of a student's family irrespective of:
  - whether the use:
    - is confirmed, suspected or likely to occur
    - occurs on or outside school grounds
    - the drug used.

Note: Under this duty of care staff cannot promise unconditional confidentiality to students.

- The Principal will:
  - advise the local police contact person (station commander or sub-officer nominee) when they have knowledge of an alleged criminal offence, including the possession, use and distribution of illicit drugs
  - document internal procedures and actions undertaken
- Confidentiality will be ensured and information will be shared only to staff who have direct responsibility for the student.
- Any child who is absent from school due to drug use or the resultant treatment should be provided with a Student Absence Learning Plan as determined by teachers in consultation with parents/carers and the school's appointed case manager.
- The school will have procedures in place for dealing with the media. Principals are responsible for media contact, supported by the regional director and Department Media Unit (03) 9637-2871.
- If deemed appropriate and with due regard for the child's privacy, the community may be advised of the incident.
- No form of drug testing will be used by the school.
- For further information, please refer the websites below.
- Please refer also to the *school's Duty of Care Policy*, the *Information Privacy Policy*, *Banning, Search & Seizure of Harmful Items Policy*, the *Medical Emergencies Policy*, *Relationships with the Media Policy*, *Wellbeing & Learning Policy*, *Student Engagement Policy*, *Smoking Ban Policy* and the Child Safe Standards.

### **Evaluation**

- This policy will be reviewed if a drug-related incident occurs, as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change (latest DET update mid-December 2018).

This policy was ratified by School Council 25/3/2019

References:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/drugprevention.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/drugprevention.aspx)  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/druguse.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/druguse.aspx)