



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 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 a high priority for this school.
- The school will:
 - provide all students with drug education prevention and intervention programs
 - involve parents/carers and the wider school community in drug-related curriculum and wellbeing issues
 - prohibit possession, use, distribution and selling of illicit drugs and unsanctioned licit drugs on school premises or at any function or activity organised by the school
 - develop or review policy to support the management of drug-related incidents
 - make every effort to retain students in the education system because students are often at greater risk if disengaged from school
- 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 and have an incident response strategy.
- 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.

- If a drug-related incident occurs, the immediate response will be to:
 - focus on the safety and welfare of those directly and indirectly involved
 - stay calm
 - gather any:
 - facts
 - relevant information
 - make a first aid assessment (if necessary seek medical support)
 - seek assistance as soon as possible
 - safely collect any suspected drugs and drug paraphernalia
 - inform the school administration
 - isolate the situation from other students, if possible
- Subsequent action when it is safe to do so:
 - inform parents/carers of students involved in incident
 - notify health, community and welfare services, if appropriate
 - contact the police, if required
 - establish a case management team to:
 - gather and verify information
 - allocate tasks and roles
 - document information
 - develop a communication strategy
 - consider interventions
 - consider sanctions in line with student engagement policies
 - monitor, evaluate and reflect
- 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) 8688-7776.
- 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 & First Aid 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 late July 2019).

This update was ratified by School Council 9th December 2019

References:

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/drugprevention.aspx
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/druguse.aspx