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**DANDENONG HIGH SCHOOL**

**DRUG POLICY**

**Preamble**

Dandenong High School aims to create an environment:

* Where students are educated about drugs and drug issues
* Where refusal of illegal or harmful drugs is promoted
* Where authorised drug use takes place in controlled circumstances

This Policy is established in recognition of an existing community problem, which this school is prepared to confront in partnership with parents/guardians and other responsible caring agencies.

The school discourages all drug use that is detrimental to the health and well-being of students and that is not authorised by parents or medical authorities.

The school has adopted the harm minimization approach in line with the Policy adopted by all Australian governments.

This Policy applies to all students under the school’s jurisdiction. The school’s jurisdiction is defined as the school premises, school camps, excursions, activities associated with the school, such as socials and dramatic productions, or any other activity where school staff assume responsibility. It also refers to students on their way to and from school, or when they are in school uniform and are representing the image of the school.

**Definitions** for the purpose of this Policy:

**A drug** is defined as “any substance, with the exception of food and water, which when taken into the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically” [*World Health Organisation*].

**Harm minimisation** is defined by the National Drug Strategy as “involving a range of approaches to prevent and reduce drug-related harm, including prevention, early intervention, specialist treatment, supply control, safer drug use and abstinence”.

**Education Policy**

The school has delegated the major curriculum responsibility for drug education to the Health Education Faculty. Dandenong High School has compulsory Health Education at Years 7, 8 and 10.

Students are encouraged to develop skills in decision making, to value themselves and others, to be self-reliant, to take responsibility for their actions, to have a healthy lifestyle, to be safe and to understand the implications of drug use and misuse.

It is a role of this school to educate students about drug issues. The aim is to ensure students are informed about drugs and related issues; that they understand the possible consequences of drug use; and that they are informed about safety in order to reduce the possibility of harm to themselves and to others in the community.

Drug education is a shared responsibility between home, school and the community.

Health Education will incorporate drug education and will concentrate on the following subject matter and substances at these levels:

* Year 7 health risks and general information regarding drugs. Nicotine and alcohol
* Year 8 classification of drugs. Peer pressure. Nicotine, alcohol and chroming
* Year 9 Legal vs illegal. Types of drugs. Nicotine, alcohol, cannabis and methamphetamine
* Year 10 classification of drugs. Short and long term negative effects. “Party” drugs

**Authorised Drug Use**

*Prescription Medication*

Parents/guardians of students who require long term medication at school must arrange the procedure with the Sick Bay Officer.

Students needing short term prescription medication within school jurisdiction must have written approval of a parent/guardian and have this endorsed by a member of their House Leadership Team. The Sick Bay Officer will provide supervision for the student if the parent/guardian requires this.

*Analgesic Use*

In recent years there has been considerable concern over the high level of analgesic use among Australian school students. Where a child complains of headache or muscular aches, the school **will** **not administer paracetamol or any other painkiller.** Students who wish to bring a maximum of two precautionary analgesics to school must bring a parent/guardian permission note and have this endorsed by a member of their House Leadership Team. Such students must not give analgesics to other students.

*Asthma*

Parents/guardians of students who suffer from asthma are to provide the school office with an Asthma Management Plan filled out by a doctor. Asthmatic students are to carry their own asthma medications with them at all times.

**Unauthorised Drug use**

Tobacco, alcohol, inhalants and illegal drugs are prohibited.

*Tobacco*

This school is a smoke-free environment and students are not permitted to possess or use tobacco products at school, on the way to and from school, or when they are in school uniform and are therefore representing the image of the school.

The range of sanctions include:

* Detention/s, anti-smoking assignment, contact with parents
* Suspension

*Alcohol, inhalants, harmful substances and illegal drugs*

Students are not permitted to:

Possess or consume alcohol, inhale or ingest a solvent or other substance that can seriously alter the mind/body, or possess, consume or supply an illegal drug

The possession, supply or use of an illegal drug is an offence against the law. If a student is found in possession of an illegal drug or under the influence of an illegal drug, their parents/guardian will be informed and the police may be notified.

If a student’s illegal drug activities are reported to the school or the school becomes aware of such activities, the school will appropriately investigate such claims as part of its duty of care.

**Consequences of unauthorised drug use**

Where a student is found to be inappropriately using or is involved with a drug substance, the school will take into account the nature and circumstances of the offence. The physical, mental, emotional health and well-being of a student is of high priority. The school will notify and consult with parents, but may also:

* Need to act to ensure the safety of the student and the whole school community
* Provide counselling for the student
* Refer to an external specialist drug and alcohol counselling agency
* Have particular work requirements for the student
* Enforce detention or loss of privileges
* Suspend a student from school
* Notify police
* Suggest transfer to another school [in the case of serious or repeated offences]
* Expel the student [in the case of serious or repeated offences]

**Where a student is drug affected**

In the event of a student appearing to be under the influence of a drug, the student will generally be removed from class and the school administration will seek medical advice, or request that parents who collect the student seek medical advice. The school will attempt to notify parents/guardians as soon as possible.

**Due process**

In the event of an investigation by the school into suspected or apparent drug use or drug possession, due processes will be followed with as much discretion as is possible in the circumstances.

**Notification of police**

In the event of the notification of police due to a suspected or an apparent drug offence, the school will ensure that any student under investigation will receive due and adequate representation. The parents/guardians of the student in this position will be notified as soon as possible.

**Media enquiries**

All enquiries from external agencies, including media, should be referred to the school administration. Staff and students may/will be briefed at an appropriate time, as determined by the Principal.

**Evaluation:**

**This Policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three year review cycle.**

**School Council Endorsement Date 18th August 2015**