



St Patrick's College
LAUNCESTON

ILLICIT DRUGS PROTOCOL

AUGUST 2024 | V2.3



ILLICIT DRUG PROTOCOL

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PURPOSE

St Patrick's College learning and pastoral care programs provide for the holistic development of each student, including their health, wellbeing and general welfare. We strive to foster a learning environment that promotes responsible decision making and action. This involves a comprehensive approach that aims to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors for a range of social and health outcomes, including substance abuse. Misuse of drugs challenges fundamental values affirmed and implied in our Mission Statement: relationships, respect for self and others and development of 'individual best'. As a Catholic College, we will endeavour to be sensitive to individual cases and demonstrate appropriate pastoral care in a spirit of reconciliation. However, in the interests of the broader College community this protocol also takes into consideration our role to educate students in a safe and drug-free environment and therefore sanctions are clearly defined.

Guided by the Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmanian Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges, the stance of the College is that the possession, use and/or distribution of illicit and other unsanctioned drugs is illegal and that any substance use can have a negative impact on physical, social, emotional and spiritual health and development across an individual's life span.

DEFINITIONS

Drug: A substance which produces a psychoactive effect i.e. altering the mind or body in some way. This includes tobacco and herbal cigarettes, alcohol, pharmaceutical drugs, illicit drugs, image and performance enhancing drugs, inhalants and e-cigarettes/vapes.

Drug related incidents: Any occasion involving alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes/vapes and/or other drug use and/or the possession, distribution or supply of a drug or drug related equipment.

Unsanctioned drug: A drug whose use is restricted by law, school authorities and / or school protocols and guidelines. It includes illicit, licit (alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes/vapes) and prescription drugs used inappropriately.



Harm minimisation: Harm minimisation deals with the prevention and reduction of drug-related harm through education and intervention. This approach recognises and acknowledges the presence of drugs in our wider community and seeks to develop resilience and social skills in our students, to encourage abstinence and deal with drug-related issues in a responsible manner. Harm minimisation incorporates strategies such as early intervention and specialist treatment to minimise the related harm that drugs cause.

Reintegration: Procedures for re-engaging, supporting and monitoring students in school following drug related interruption to their involvement in schooling. This involves a re-entry plan for students who have been suspended or who are transferring and ensures support is provided and progress is monitored.

The protocol applies to incidents:

- To have a clear and agreed understanding among members of the College community about the implications and possible consequences of drug use/misuse.
- On school premises during school hours.
- At school functions and activities held on school premises outside school hours.
- At school functions and activities conducted away from College premises, including during travel.
- At functions where students are representing the College wearing the College uniform.

PROTOCOL STATEMENT

The influence and effects of drug use on individuals, families and communities is evident in society.

This protocol aims to:

- Promote a healthy lifestyle amongst members of the St Patrick's College community by providing and maintaining an environment in which the health and welfare of all members is paramount.
- Support the holistic development of each individual
- Reduce the incidence, prevalence and effects of drug and alcohol risk and harm
- Enhance protective factors that minimise drug and alcohol related risk and harm
- Prevent or delay onset of drug use by College students
- Reduce the community impact and harm from drug and alcohol use
- Be consistent with State and Federal laws.
- Respond to drug related incidents as per the Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmanian Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges.

This protocol acknowledges that members of our community may be struggling with, or affected by, their own or someone else's drug and / or alcohol usage. All members of the College community are encouraged to access support. (see Appendix 1)

Implementation

The guiding principles of this protocol are informed by the National School Drug Education Strategy and the principles of harm minimisation. Each incident related to drug use will be dealt with on an individual basis and in a confidential manner.

Prevention

The College is committed to providing:

1. Educational programs in the Health Curriculum, Pastoral Care and College wide initiatives that focus on drug-related harm minimisation. Such education will reflect gospel values, responsible behaviour and respectful decision-making.
2. The creation and maintenance of a safe and supportive environment that aims to develop resilience in our students.

3. Inclusion of tobacco, alcohol and e-cigarettes/vapes in drug prevention and intervention strategies.
4. Protection of the privacy of individuals. Students have a right to privacy but a teacher cannot guarantee total confidentiality because he / she may be bound by mandatory reporting and / or an obligation to minimise harm.
5. Access for students, parents and staff to information and support in the form of counselling and communication.

PROCEDURE

The procedure is designed to address drug use incidents in a way which is in the best interests of all parties, while adhering to legal requirements.

Responses to drug related incidents as outlined in the flowchart below will reflect:

- procedural fairness
- consistency
- the nature of the incident and circumstances of those involved
- consideration of the needs and safety of others
- the importance of maintaining connection to educational and vocational pathways

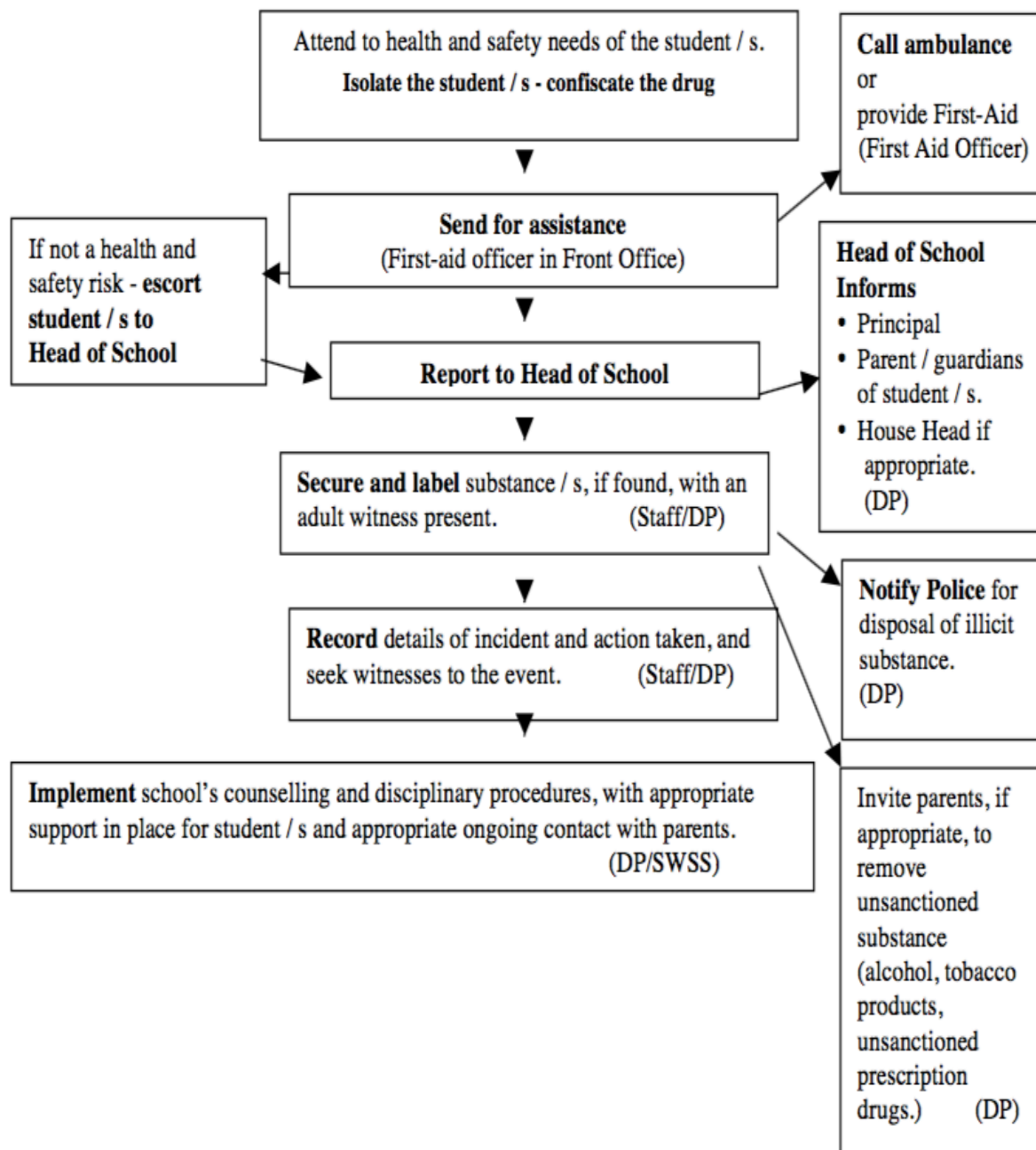
St Patrick's College does not allow students to:

- possess or smoke tobacco
- possess or consume alcoholic beverages
- possess or use illicit and unsanctioned drugs
- misuse solvents and other chemical agents
- possess drug related objects unless medically authorised
- be in the presence of another College student engaging in the behaviours prohibited in this protocol
- possess or use e-cigarettes/vapes

When:

- at school
- in school uniform
- representing the College
- on any occasion when the College staff have responsibility for an individual student or group of students.

When an illicit or unsanctioned substance is found with a student, or a student is found apparently affected by drug use, or there is evidence of this, or a student is suspected of distributing drugs on College premises, the following steps are to be followed:



Postvention

There will be a coordinated response to a student's drug related behaviour that includes relevant staff, parents / carers, support staff and community agencies. A plan will be developed, considering the student's health and educational needs, to support reintegration where appropriate. Follow-up support will be provided for any others affected by the drug related incident.

Consequences for Students

Consequences for students who do not behave responsibly are consistent with the College Pastoral Care Protocol. These could include:

- contact with parents
- specific drug awareness programs
- referral to school counsellor
- referral to specialist health and / or drug and alcohol services
- inclusion in other school programs and supports
- reporting to police (as required by the Memorandum of Understanding between C.E.O. and State police.)
- reintegration plan if necessary
- disciplinary action - including suspension and expulsion

The Principal retains the right to decide upon appropriate sanctions in all circumstances. An offence involving illicit drug use may jeopardise a student's enrolment.

Responsibilities

For students this protocol means:

1. Being aware of, respecting and complying with the College's protocol and procedures.
2. Ensuring that no illicit or unsanctioned drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, or drug related paraphernalia are brought to, used or distributed at the College.
3. Ensuring they are not under the influence of any illicit or unsanctioned drug (including tobacco and alcohol) while attending the College or a College function.
4. Arranging for appropriate administration of prescribed drugs when necessary through Student Reception. Parental requests for school administration of prescribed drugs must be in writing and authorised by a medical practitioner.

For staff this protocol means:

1. Being familiar with and supporting the College's protocol for managing drug issues and procedures.
2. Being aware of and acting on legal and mandatory reporting obligations i.e. report to the Principal or Child Safety Officer.
3. Being aware that all College events held at the College will be alcohol free.
4. Contributing to the provision of a safe and supportive environment for all members of the College community.
5. Ensuring that all education programs are consistent with this protocol.
6. Ensuring that they do not use nor are under the influence of any illicit or unsanctioned drug (including tobacco, alcohol) while attending College and College activities while students are present.
7. Contributing to the implementation, monitoring and review of this protocol.

For parents/guardians this protocol means:

1. Being aware of and supporting the College's protocol and procedures for managing drug issues.
2. Ensuring that they do not use nor are under the influence of any illicit or unsanctioned drug (including tobacco and alcohol) while attending College and College activities.
3. Contributing to the implementation, monitoring and review of this protocol.
4. Giving serious consideration to the following websites which provide parents with resources and information on how to support your child in making positive choices in relation to alcohol and drugs:

<https://www.parentlink.act.gov.au/parenting-guides/young-people/young-people-and-drugs>

<https://www.police.tas.gov.au/services-online/party-safe/>

Counselling and Support Services - Alcohol and Drugs

Emergencies 000

Launceston General Hospital 63 487 111

Alcohol & Drug Information Services 1800 811 994

Alcohol & Drug Counselling Services 63 365 577

Drug Education Network Inc 63 367 950

Headspace: Youth Health Services 63 344 480

Poison Information Centre 13 11 26

Drug Intelligence Reporting 1800 813 784

Family Drug Support 1300 368 186

General Counselling

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service 6336 2867

Website

www.druginfo.adf.org.au

1300 858 58