

## The Hazard - Drugs (Illicit) - Student Use Of

Illegal drug use by students (including the misuse of prescription medication) increases the risk of injury to the students themselves and to others, as well as impairing the ability of students to respond appropriately in an emergency.

## Thomas Carr College's Policy

Thomas Carr College is committed to providing a safe environment for all our students, staff and visitors.

It is our policy that:

- The use, possession and supply of illicit drugs and/or drug paraphernalia (such as pipes or 'bongs') by students is strictly prohibited;
- While on college property, or representing the college in any way, students are not permitted to be under the influence of illicit drugs;
- All students will receive age appropriate health and drug education to enable and support them to make informed choices, and to minimise the harm associated with drug use; and
- Referrals to counselling and support groups will be provided to students with drug related problems.

## Dealing with a Student affected by Drugs

Where a student exhibits obvious signs of drug use a staff member shall provide a response as per the Drug Related Incident Plan

Immediate response:

- Conduct a first aid assessment (if necessary, seek medical support);
- Isolate the student from their peers in a calm and controlled manner (if possible);
- If this is not possible and an impaired student refuses to cooperate and/or becomes agitated, ensure that any other students within the immediate vicinity are removed from harm and attempt to calm the student until such time as other staff members are able to provide assistance;
- A school locker is the property of the College and can be searched if a teacher has reasonable grounds for believing that it contains unsanctioned or illicit drugs. The search can take place without notice and will be conducted by two Year Level Co-ordinators or College Executive members;
- A student's bag is considered his/her personal property. If there is serious concern about what is contained in a student's bag, the Year Level Co-ordinator can ask the student to empty his/her bag for inspection. If the student is not willing to disclose and there is no imminent danger that it will be used, a College Executive member will contact the parents and inform them that unless the student gives consent for a bag search, then the police will be notified. Until such time that a bag search is able to be conducted, the student should be kept under supervision away from others. If, however, there is reasonable suspicion of imminent danger to a student using an illicit drug that he/she is concealing, the Year Level Co-ordinator, in consultation with a College Executive member, should conduct an immediate search to prevent injury to the student before police are called. A College Executive member should immediately notify the parents of the action taken; and
- Teachers and a Year Level Co-ordinator can instruct students to hand over items in their possession, such as cigarettes, illegal drugs and alcohol. In all cases where items are confiscated, the security of those items rests with the College Executive. As soon as is practicable, confiscated items should be given to the parents (eg cigarettes and alcohol) or to the police (eg illegal and unsanctioned drugs).

Subsequent response when safe to do so:

- Ask the student to accompany them to the college administration office;
- Contact the Principal or College Executive Group member to inform them of the situation;
- Any student who is absent from school due to drug use or the resultant treatment, should be provided with a Student Action Plan – Student Absence Learning Plan as determined by teachers in consultation with parents/guardians and the College's appointed case manager;
- Information about detoxification, methadone or alternate pharmacotherapies is a private matter and for confidentiality reasons, will only be shared between students and their parent/guardian, supporting community agency and College designated Student Wellbeing staff. This information may be provided, at the Principal's discretion and only with the student's consent, to staff who have direct responsibility for the student;
- It is recommended that the College consult with Catholic Education Melbourne for advice;

- For the wellbeing of the student, the College reserves the right to discuss with parents the benefits of regular drug testing as a way of ensuring that the child remains drug free. Where a student has been suspended for a drug related incident, the College views favourably the student's consent to undertake a drug test to demonstrate a negative result; and
- An ongoing support structure of counselling by an appropriate professional will be established for any student identified with a drug related issue. This will be the responsibility of the Director of Student Services.

The Principal or Principal's delegate shall then make an assessment of the student's condition and take appropriate action based on the facts. This may include contacting the student's parents/carers to inform them of the incident and requesting that they remove the student from the college grounds, and/or calling the police in the event that the student is acting in an aggressive or threatening manner.

### **Staff Responsibility**

All staff are responsible to ensure that:

- They follow the guidelines set out in this policy when dealing with a student that they believe may be under the influence of illicit drugs;
- All reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety and welfare of students from both known and reasonably foreseeable illicit drug related risks of harm and/or injury;
- The Principal or College Executive Group members are informed if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is involved in illicit drug related behaviour;
- A College Executive member must advise the local police when they have knowledge of an alleged criminal offence, including the possession, use and/or distribution of illicit drugs. This will enable a collaborative approach to ensure appropriate action is taken in response to drug related incidents, with the wellbeing of the young person being the priority;
- All internal procedures and actions undertaken must be documented, along with ongoing monitoring of the behaviour and progress of students involved;
- Prescription drugs are not supplied or administered to students unless following the directions set out in the Medication Administration Policy; and
- Students are asked to display their possessions or contents of their bag and/or locker in the presence of another teacher, where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion that they have illicit drugs in their possession.

### **Implementation**

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- Staff training;
- Student education via ongoing age appropriate drug education programs integrated into classroom learning;
- Development of drug safe culture by promoting student awareness in drug abuse;
- Effective incident notification procedures;
- Effective communication procedures;
- Effective record keeping procedures; and
- Initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

### **Related Policies**

Alcohol (Student Use Of) Policy

Medication Administration Policy

**Policy status:** New

**Key Stakeholders:** College staff, students and parents

**Endorsement Body:** College Executive

**Ratification Body:** College Board Policy

**Author:** Core Wellbeing Team

**Date of Approval:** 2018

Date of Scheduled Review: 2021

**The content of this policy can be changed at the College Board's discretion at any time without notification.**