



Drug Education & Support Policy

1. Preamble

The policy is based on the following principles:

- (a) The fact that alcohol and nicotine are the major causes of drug related harm.
- (b) The Harm Minimisation approach adopted by State and Federal Governments in Australia.
- (c) Catholic Regional College Melton employ staff to implement this policy with care and support for students.
- (d) A well formulated drug program within the Health and Physical Education curriculum and incorporated into other key learning areas.
- (e) That it is a binding policy for the College – students, teachers and parents/guardians.
- (f) There will be ongoing evaluation of this Policy.

2. Reason for Policy

This Policy has been established to:

- Publish guidelines that are relevant to Catholic Regional College Melton.
- Address prevention, intervention and sanctions in regard to drug use.
- Be consistent with State and Federal laws.
- Provide ongoing student educational programs and initiate drug information sessions for staff and parents.

3. Drugs Defined

For the purpose of this policy a drug is defined as “any substance, with the exception of food or water, which when taken into the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically”. This includes all licit and illicit substances that produce psychoactive or physiological effects on the person who consumes the drug

This definition includes all drugs of addiction or dependence, such as analgesics, alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, steroids, amphetamines, as well as solvents which may be inhaled, such as glue and petrol.

4. Harm Minimisation

Harm Minimisation takes into account the relationship between people, their drug use and the environment in which their drug use occurs. A Harm Minimisation approach supports targeted strategies designed to have maximum impact in REDUCING negative effects of drug use. Outcomes may include abstinence or prevention of drug use, reduced or controlled use, and safer administration or reduction of the harmful consequences of drug use for the community.

5. The Health Promotion Plan

5.1 Education

The Drug Education program aims to:

- inform students of the physical, emotional and psychological effects of drugs.
- inform students of the legal implications of drugs and drug use.
- enable students to make informed choices in regard to drugs.
- take account of community attitudes to drugs.
- take account of reasons why students are likely to use drugs.
- recognise beneficial uses of some drugs.
- consider effects of abuse of drugs.
- ensure that the content and strategies taught are meaningful and useful to students.
- ensure that the skills acquired by students can be used beyond the classroom.
- provide students with opportunities to develop skills in communication, assertiveness, stress management, gathering and evaluating information, as well as considering alternatives and consequences.

5.2 Intervention

Intervention procedures are intended to:

- prevent further deterioration in the health of those using drugs inappropriately.

- provide timely referral for those using drugs inappropriately.
- provide care for the individual students and protection for all involved.

Intervention strategies include:

- consultation with parents before intervention strategies are implemented.
- education of staff and parents to help them recognise signs of possible drug use.
- establishment of appropriate referral information and procedures.
- establishment of procedures for dealing with drug use at the College.

5.3 Prevention

The College's major objective is education. The curriculum in Health and Physical Education addresses many issues related to drug use.

1. Facts about drugs – which give accurate information and focus on the benefits as well as the risks.
2. Personal drug use – in which risk-taking is examined in a non-judgmental manner. This approach acknowledges that many young people will use drugs, including tobacco and alcohol at some stages in their lives. However, through appropriate drug use education strategies, they will make informed decisions about their drug use and be able to minimise any harmful effects associated with it.
3. Attitudes in which stereotypes and myths are challenged.
4. Harm Minimisation – this form of education is about drug usage as well as opposition to drug usage.
5. The law and drugs – an examination of the law, its rules, legal rights, and coping with conflict arising.
6. Giving and receiving help – focusing on skills to help oneself and to help others.
7. Parent and Community Workshops – designed to educate parents and other adults.

Appropriate, prescribed medication needs to be monitored with parental support. The College should be notified about any prescribed medication to be taken on College premises. All medication is required to be kept secure in the Administration building.

Clearly, all members of the College community – staff, students and parents – have a responsibility to discourage the use of drugs which are detrimental to the health and well being of individuals.

5.4 Intervention Strategies and Sanctions

5.4.1 Strategies

The intervention strategies are designed to address incidents of drug use in a way that is in the best interest of all parties, while also conforming to legal requirements.

Catholic Regional College Melton does not permit students, while on school premises, to:

1. smoke tobacco
2. consume alcoholic beverages
3. deliberately inhale solvents
4. possess drug-related equipment such as syringes (unless prescribed for medical reasons and with the knowledge of the College staff), bongos, pipes
5. possess or use drugs prohibited in accordance with the 1981 Act.

This includes all occasions when a student is travelling to and from school, or any school camp, excursion or other organised function.

Whatever individuals may think or feel, the law regarding the SALE or POSSESSION of illegal drugs is clear, and penalties are provided for the prosecution of offenders.

Where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion of drug use, the Principal or Deputy Principal, may, in the presence of the student and another teacher, search personal property in accordance with guidelines set down by the Department of Education in Victoria.

Any information provided or discovered will be treated confidentially until a careful investigation has been completed, at which time it may be deemed necessary to reveal such information.

1. In the case of student use, or possession of drugs on the College property, appropriate sanctions will be decided by the College Administration.
2. The College will establish a checklist of short-term actions to be taken by staff upon discovery of drug use, e.g. lines of communication amongst concerned people.
3. The College will maintain a Directory containing local doctors, clinics and agencies to which students with a drug problem can be referred. Access to emergency services will be included. All appropriate staff will have a copy of this directory.
4. Contact will be made with Melton Police Station where students are suspected of possessing, using, distributing or trafficking illicit drugs or drug implements, or are involved in the illegal use of licit substances or drugs.
5. In the event of a student appearing to be under the influence of a drug or drugs, medical advice will be sought. Parents

will be notified; education and counselling will result.

6. As soon as it is possible, parents will always be informed of any referral to an outside agency and the College will seek permission to proceed with that referral.

5.4.2 Sanctions

Sanctions are the actions that will be taken when the policy has been infringed. Such sanctions are designed to consider the emotional health, physical health and welfare of all students at Catholic Regional College Melton as priorities.

A Cigarettes (or use of Tobacco) and Vaping

Catholic Regional College Melton is a smoke-free College. Students found smoking, in possession of cigarettes or tobacco, supplying to other students, or in the company of other students who are smoking will be liable to a range of sanctions dependent on the circumstances and whether or not previous offences have been recorded. This also applies to any student found vaping

A.1 First Incident

The student will be required to meet with the Year Level Co-ordinator to discuss the incident and to be reminded of College policy on this issue.

The student will be given information on smoking and quitting and asked to undertake an assignment on the issue during an in-house suspension.

The parents will be informed of the action taken.

A.2 Second Incident

The student will be required to meet with the Year Level Co-ordinator who will refer the student to the College Counsellor and the Deputy Principal.

The student will be suspended for one day during which time he/she will do a substantial task related to smoking and quitting.

The College Counsellor will have a follow up interview with the student and continue counselling if necessary.

The student will be required to enter into a formal contract with the College regarding the need to uphold the College rules on smoking.

The parents will be notified of all action taken and will be requested to attend an interview before the suspension takes place.

A.3 Subsequent Incidents

The student will be required to meet with the Deputy Principal and, depending on the circumstances, the time gap between incidents and the reason(s) for the continued violation of the College rules on smoking, consequences may include:

- interview with parents.
- referral to outside agency.
- further suspension from the College.
- at the discretion of the Principal, a negotiated transfer to another school may be an option for repeated serious offences.

B Alcohol

In our College, the use of alcohol by students away from the College at weekends is of concern. Unfortunately, under-age drinking, although illegal, appears to be an accepted part of the culture of some groups in this area. At the College, when a student is travelling to or from the College, or on any College camp, excursion or other organised function, no student is to be in possession of alcohol. A student found drinking or in possession of alcohol or under the influence of alcohol will be liable to a range of sanctions dependent on the circumstances, and whether or not previous offences have occurred.

From 1 November 2011 it is against the law in Victoria to serve alcohol in a private home to anyone under 18, unless their parent or guardian has given permission. Adults who break the law face fines over \$7,000 – the same amount a licensee would be fined for selling alcohol to someone who is underage.

B.1 First offence

The following sanctions will apply:

- informing and consulting parents.
- counselling strategies in harm minimisation.
- suspension for a period of 3–5 days when a student will be set work on this issue, and be asked to complete community work in this time.
- be sent home if it occurs on a College camp – parents will be asked to come and collect the student at the camp.

B.2 Second offence

- informing and consulting parents.
- referral to an outside agency.
- negotiated transfer to another school.

C.1 Illegal Drugs

The possession and/or supply of illegal drugs is an offence and is against the law. The College will view either offence as an

extremely serious matter.

C.1.1 Any student supplying drugs is committing an offence against the law. It is College policy that a student supplying illegal drugs to another student at school, travelling to or from school or at a school function, will be asked to transfer to another school. Contact will be made with Melton Police Station where students are suspected of possessing, using, distributing or trafficking illicit drugs or drug implements, or are involved in the illegal use of licit substances or drugs.

C.1.2 Any student found in possession of illegal drugs, or known to have illegal drugs at school, will be suspended immediately for a period of 5 days, and his/her parents will be notified to begin a consultation process. The police will be informed and subject to and following the police's advice, parents or carers of students involved in the incident will be informed.

During the suspension period the student will be involved in the following:

- at least one session with the College Counsellor or Psychologist
- assigned work on the issue investigating strategies on harm minimisation – referral for counselling if deemed appropriate.
- the entering of a contract regarding his/her upholding the rules of the College on illegal drugs.
- he/she will be encouraged to maintain regular contact with the College Counsellor and the Year Level Co-ordinator.

C.1.3 Any student upon return to school following the suspension period will be required to complete the following:

- A Student Support Safety and return to school plan.
- Collaborate with the local Victoria Police youth services officer if appointed
- Meet with the College Counsellor or psychologists on a fortnightly basis for a period of time as seen fit by counsellor or psychologist.

C.1.4 For a repeated offence, at the discretion of the Principal, the student would be asked to transfer to another school.

D. Solvents

Solvent Abuse, sometimes referred to as 'glue sniffing' or 'chroming', is the use of any solvents for other than their primary use, particularly for the achievement of the state of altered awareness. Students will be liable to a range of sanctions dependent on the circumstances and whether or not previous offences have been recorded.

These sanctions will include:

- informing and consulting parents.
- being sent home if it occurs on a College camp.
- counselling strategies in harm minimisation.
- transfer to another school for a very serious or repeated offence (at the discretion of the Principal).
- community service.
- referral to an outside agency.
- suspension from school.

Note:

1. Home Room teachers will be involved in the counselling of students, where appropriate.
2. Any process involving negotiated transfer of a student to another school will follow guidelines set down by the Catholic Education Melbourne.

Relevant Legislation

Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 (Vic)

Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017 (Vic)

Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)

Children and Young Persons Act 1989 (Vic)

Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)

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