

# Drug Education Management Policy

## Purpose

MacKillop Catholic College exists to educate and form students in Catholic discipleship: offering them experiences of following Jesus as members of the Catholic community. MacKillop Catholic College operates within a comprehensive, integrated God-centred view of reality, the Catholic worldview. In its education and formation of young people, MacKillop Catholic College actively promotes the Catholic worldview and its understanding of creation. The Catholic worldview affirms every individual person as made in the image of God (Gen 1:27) and encourages all to exercise stewardship of that creation. MacKillop Catholic College seeks to transform the individual through sharing of the Catholic vision and story, and offering its student opportunities to apply that worldview to all aspects of school life, and life outside of school.

Life and physical health are precious gifts entrusted to people by God, and the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 5:19). Accordingly MacKillop Catholic College prohibits all unsanctioned drug use on the school property or at school events. MacKillop Catholic College tries to prevent drug experimentation and use by students. MacKillop Catholic College responds appropriately to the harm that may arise, basing all intervention on the values of the Gospel.

## Policy Framework

MacKillop Catholic College is committed to the development of its learning and work environment as a faith and educational community which:

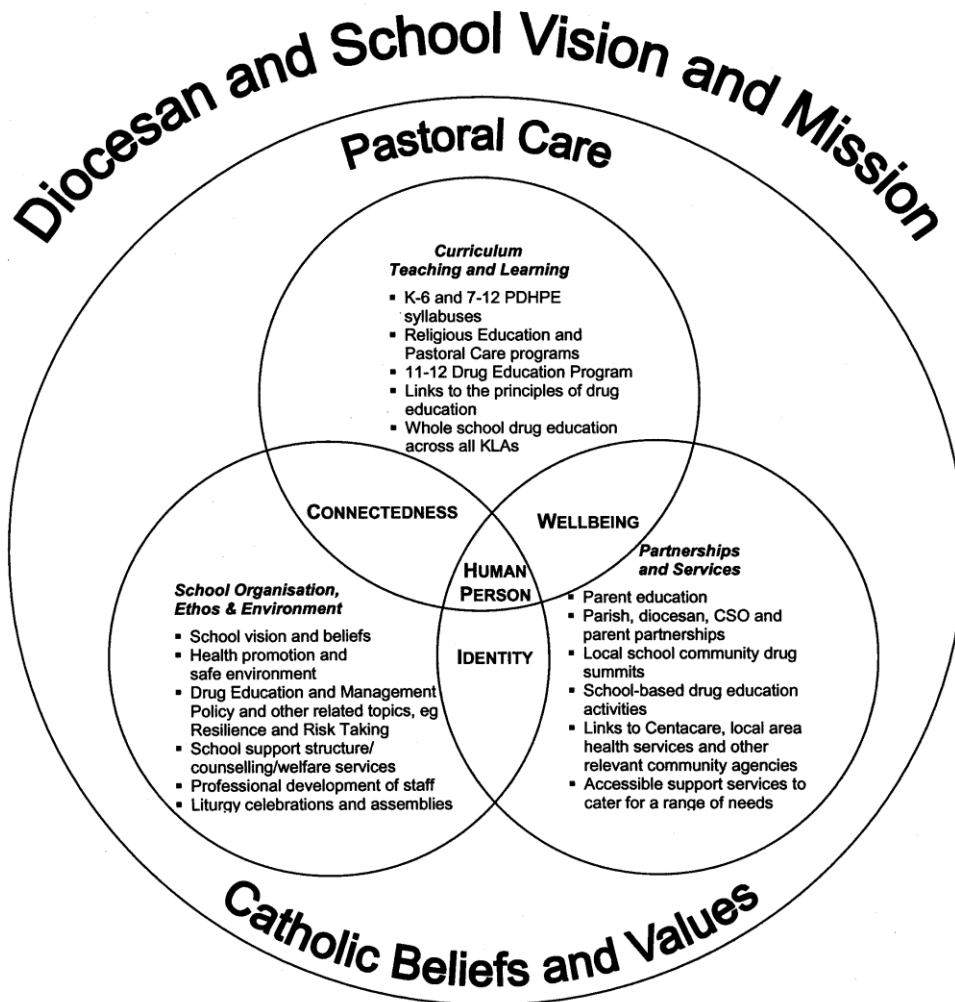
- Takes as its foundation the person and gospel of Jesus Christ;
- educates and forms students in Catholic Discipleship;
- integrates faith with life and contemporary culture;
- fosters the dignity and development of each person.

MacKillop Catholic College takes a whole school approach to managing drug related issues and focuses on:

- **promotion** of a positive, hope-filled understanding of the human person, graced by God with free will, capable of taking moral responsibility for actions and guided by a sense of meaning and purpose in life;
- **prevention** through drug education and a safe and supportive school environment;
- **intervention** through appropriate procedures for dealing with drug related incidents at school and support for students and families who may be involved. Drug issues are approached within the context of the pastoral care policy and the school's student management policy. These provide a systematic and practical framework within which MacKillop Catholic College can manage drug related issues.

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The whole school approach to pastoral care taken at MacKillop Catholic College has enabled the College to develop, implement and review effective preventative drug education programs and practices for managing drug related incidents. This approach is summarised below:



## Curriculum and Teaching and Learning

Drug education at MacKillop Catholic College is provided within the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) syllabus. Other opportunities and specific programmes are initiated in relation to drug education to provide students with an opportunity to gain knowledge and skills and to develop chosen attitudes and values that enable them to make informed decisions relating to drug use.

Drug education programs used at MacKillop Catholic College are based on:

- providing clear information on and the advocacy of Catholic Church teaching
- developing student self-esteem, sense of belonging, decision-making skills and resilience
- a harm minimisation approach which focuses on messages of abstinence when dealing with all forms of drug use with the exception of medication
- increasing student awareness and understanding of the consequences of drug use and their ability to respond in situations of risk.

## Pastoral Care Programmes

A positive school climate is fundamental to providing an environment where students' physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs are met. Such a climate is nurtured at MacKillop Catholic College through shared spiritual values and beliefs, justice and compassion, belonging and connectedness, and success at school.

MacKillop Catholic College:

- fosters an inclusive school environment in which its pastoral care program builds a sense of achievement and belonging for all students and provides monitoring and support for students at risk
- incorporates policy and procedures for illicit and other unsanctioned drug use into the school's student management policy:
  - clear rules about drugs in school and procedures to address drug related incidents are made known to students, parents and school staff;
  - procedures that may need to encompass a range of incidents such as smoking at school, drinking on a school excursion and possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs at school.

## Partnerships and Services

Drug use is an issue for the whole community. MacKillop Catholic College needs to work collaboratively with parents, the church, the Catholic Schools Office and community agencies, to maximise its effectiveness in preventative drug education and practices for managing drug related incidents.

MacKillop Catholic College has a significant role to play in providing information to parents about drug related issues through strategies such as parent information forums, a school counsellor forum and school newsletters. The school and community cannot address the issue of student drug use without parental support. It is essential that the messages for positive health behaviours are consistent at school and at home. The parent/guardian should:

- be informed about, participate in the development of and actively support the school drug education and management policy
- be prepared to attend a drug education program for parents to assist them to better deal with the issue of young people and drug use
- acknowledge that the school alone cannot solve or prevent problems and therefore needs parental support.

It is essential for MacKillop Catholic College to establish meaningful links with community agencies, especially the local area health services, the Catholic Schools Office and the NSW Police Service to strengthen the schools' ability to manage and respond to drug related issues. Students involved in drug related issues may need to be referred to outside agencies for professional assessment or treatment. The school can play a critical role in referring students and their families to those agencies qualified to provide the necessary support and advice. During a student's treatment, the school can offer support and assist in planning for a return to school life.

## Policy Content

### Definition

"A drug is any substance which, when taken into the body, alters its physical or psychological function excluding food, water or air." - World Health Organisation.

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## Illicit (or Illegal) Drugs

Illicit substances are not permitted on the school premises or at school sanctioned events. The following drugs are illicit in NSW: cannabis, hallucinogens (LSD, mescaline, ketamine), heroin, cocaine, ecstasy and amphetamines.

## Restricted Legal Drugs

- Tobacco  
The sale of tobacco products to people under the age of 18 is prohibited. No tobacco usage is permitted within school grounds or at school sanctioned events. Staff, parents, visitors and community members are required to refrain from its use on school premises.
- Alcohol  
Alcohol must not be consumed on or brought to school premises during school hours. If alcohol is served at any school function or within the school outside school hours, prior permission must be obtained from the principal. Any use of alcohol is subject to the laws and regulations regarding the supply, serving and consumption of alcohol.

## Legal Drugs and Substances

- Dispensing Medication  
Arising from the duty of care that schools owe to their students, there will be occasions when the administration of medication is necessary to support students during the course of a normal school day or outside of normal school hours. Once it has been established that a student has a need for medication, it is important that school personnel authorised to administer medication do so in accordance with the College's Work Health and Safety Policy and the Guidelines for Administering Medication in Schools.

## Inhalants (Volatile Substances)

Volatile substances are compounds that give off vapours and fumes at room temperature. Volatile substances are known as solvents and inhalants. They are not classified as a drug. Research suggests that teaching about inhalants as drugs is inappropriate; rather, they should be referred to as 'poisons'. Inhaling volatile substances is not illegal but can cause serious harm and their use should be taken seriously because of the potential dangers to those involved. They include butane gas, aerosol sprays, petrol, glue, correction fluids, paint thinners, and cartridge bulbs for whipped cream dispensers. The Principal must ensure that cleaning staff are responsible for the correct storage of all cleaning substances.

## Policy Responsibility

The Principal is responsible for the implementation of the College's drug education and management policy and will take appropriate steps to ensure that the school community is regularly made aware of the policy and procedures that are in place. Principals have a responsibility to ensure that all staff members have a copy of or easy access to the Drug Education and Management Policy and related documentation.

This policy establishes the framework for educating and managing drug related issues within the College. Specific responsibilities include:

- guide all teachers and parents of the school and wider community in their responsibilities as drug educators;
- develop, implement and monitor a school-based drug education program which is compliant with PDHPE syllabus requirements;
- respond to any drug related incident in ways that embody pastoral care principles;
- involve parents and the community in the drug education program;

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- implement the Principles for Drug Education in Schools (Appendix 6: Guidelines for the Management of Drug Related Incidents in Schools) when planning the drug education curriculum; advise students, parents and staff of school rules, consequences and procedures for responding to unsanctioned drug use or drug-related incidents;
- identify specific support services/networks available to students, parents and staff;
- monitor and support students at risk;
- ensure the ongoing professional development of all staff;
- establish ongoing processes for staff, parents and students to gain an understanding and ownership of the policy;
- regularly monitor and evaluate the school's drug education and management policy;

## Related Legislation, Policies and Guidelines

- Broken Bay Diocesan Schools System:
  - Handbook for Diocesan Systemic Schools
  - First Aid Policy
  - Guidelines for the Management of Drug Related Incidents in Schools
  - Guidelines for Administering Medication in Schools
  - Occupational Health and Safety Policy
  - Pastoral Care Policy
  - No Smoking Policy
- Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985 (NSW)
- Customs Act 1901 (Cth)
- Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 (NSW)
- Liquor Act 1982 (NSW)
- Summary Offences Act 1988 (NSW)
- Public Health Act 1991 (NSW)
- Police Act 1990 (NSW)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- Crimes Act 1901 (NSW)
- Education Act 1990 (NSW)
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- Freedom of Information Act 1989 (NSW)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- NSW Department of Education and Training Privacy Code of Practice
- NSW Police Privacy Code of Practice
- Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1989 (NSW)
- Websites:
  - [www.adf.org.au](http://www.adf.org.au) – Australian Drug Foundation (ADF)
  - [www.adin.com.au](http://www.adin.com.au) – Australian Drug Information Network (ADIN)
  - [www.nsdcs.nsw.edu.au](http://www.nsdcs.nsw.edu.au) – The National School Drug Education Strategy (NSDES) NSW
  - [www.dgr.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dgr.nsw.gov.au) – NSW Department of Gaming and Racing
  - [www.druginfo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.druginfo.nsw.gov.au) – NSW Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy

## Policy Review

The Policy shall be reviewed every three (3) years, or in the event of any information, incident, injury, or illness that would demonstrate the need for a review, or resulting from any legislative or organisational change that would warrant a review.