

## **PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE POLICY**

### **Rationale**

The Prohibited Substances Policy is framed within our Catholic and Mercy ethos, as well as our obligations under the requirements of the South Australian legal system.

In particular, the College:

- promotes and fosters the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being and growth of young people
- seeks to develop students' decision-making skills that lead to personal growth and the development of personal responsibility
- reinforces students' responsibilities to the wider community with respect to prohibited substances and Civic Law
- respects the rights of individuals and the well being of the College community
- seeks to ensure that natural justice for students is served.

### **Policy Statement**

The College does not permit the possession and use of prohibited substances or the inappropriate use of legal drugs:

- on school premises
- at functions, excursions or camps organised by the school
- when representing the school or wearing the school uniform
- in transit to and from school or school functions.

The school does not permit students:

- the use of prohibited drugs
- the inappropriate use of solvents, inhalants and/or other chemical solvents
- the consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages
- the smoking or possession of tobacco and/or other drugs
- the possession of drug related objects, such as pipes and bongs
- to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

In addition, the College does not permit the possession, sale, supply, exchange of, or negotiation in relation to, any of the above.

### **Prevention**

The College provides support for students in preventing drug abuse through drug education programmes in the R-12 curriculum. All staff have a responsibility to ensure students are provided with relevant information to enable them to make informed choices and to minimise the harm associated with drug use.

### **Management of Drug Related Incidents**

A drug incident occurs when the suspected use of an illegal or unsanctioned substance occurs on the school site or at a supervised school activity. When a drug incident occurs the following principles and procedures apply:

1. The incident will be investigated by the Principal or Head of School.

2. In the process of investigation, the Principal or Head of School may ask a student to display their possessions or contents of their locker or bag. Should such an investigation be necessary, it will occur in the presence of the student concerned and a second, adult witness. All necessary safety precautions will be taken when searching possessions.
3. The School Psychologist will provide support to a student involved in a drug incident.
4. A student/students under investigation have the right to natural justice, including the right to privacy, confidentiality and the right to be heard. They also have the right to an advocate and to support through the process.
5. Parents will be informed of any investigation of a drug incident involving their son/daughter.
6. As required by the Police Drug Diversion Programme in South Australia, the police will be informed of incidents of an illegal nature i.e. the use and possession of illegal drugs and the unsanctioned use of prescribed medications. The police will be asked to seize the items under investigation. Only in the event that the police are unable to respond to a request to seize prohibited items will the investigating staff member, in the presence of an adult witness, place the items in a secure location, with a written record of the seized items.
7. Where a drug related incident occurs during a school activity out of school, the responsible member of staff will take the necessary action to seize and secure the prohibited substance. This will be done in the presence of another adult witness and details of the seized items will be recorded. The items will be handed to the police at the earliest opportunity.

### **Consequences of Drug Incidents**

After the investigation of a drug incident involving all the relevant parties, disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Principal or Head of School will be carried out.

Consequences may include:

- a contract between the student and the College
- detention of the student
- suspension (internal or external)
- expulsion of the student.

When imposing disciplinary action, the Principal or Head of School will consider:

- the nature of the drug incident and its breach of school policy and law
- the circumstances of the incident
- the welfare of the individual, while keeping in mind the welfare and expectations of the general College community.