DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

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<td>Policy Classification</td>
<td>Board Approved</td>
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<td>Date of Policy</td>
<td>2005</td>
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INTRODUCTION:

Augustine said, "Love your fellow human beings, but fight their errors. Teach them the truth, but without pride". It is within this framework of care for the individual student, that the following guidelines concerning drugs and alcohol are written.

The Policy is based upon the following principles:

- that alcohol and nicotine are a major cause of drug-related harm;
- that the goal of no illicit drugs in schools is a stated goal in Government policies;
- that drug use occurs along a continuum ranging from non-use, experimentation, occasional/situational use, habitual and intensive use and that both prevention and intervention efforts are necessary aspects of an effective drug policy;
- that there is a need for a standardised approach to drug education and welfare procedures to be maintained across year levels;
- that there is a need to ensure that the School staff will implement this Policy with care and support for students;
- that this Policy will have consequences for the whole School community, including students, teachers, and parents/guardians.

DEFINITIONS

(a) College Property
College Property means not only College buildings and the surrounding grounds but also includes out-of-classroom programs, activities and facilities approved of or under the jurisdiction of the College.

(b) Principal
Principal means the Principal of St Augustine's College or his designate.
Parents means a parent or person having legal custody of a student.

Alcohol means liquor as defined in the Liquor Act 1975.

Nicotine in the form of cigarettes, cigars or any other item constituted for the purpose of smoking tobacco in any form.

Drugs include illegal drugs, non-prescription drugs, prescription drugs not used as prescribed, and hydrocarbons, contained in for example petrol and glue, and consumed by inhalation.

Illegal drugs are those defined as “Dangerous Drugs” in the Drugs Misuse Act 1986.

Search of the student’s locker or personal effects means a search of all of a student’s personal belongings found on College property with the student and a witness present.

A smoker is defined as a student who is smoking, or who has implements related to smoking, or who is part of a lookout system protecting smokers, or who obviously has smoke on his breath.

1. DRUGS

- The College recognises that drugs are available in the general community and that some boys may procure drugs for the purpose of experimentation. The College will do all in its power to educate parents and students that the safest use of drugs is no use.
- In adopting a policy of drug prevention/harm prevention in the College’s drug education curriculum, a concerted effort is being made to promote knowledge and skills so that students can make educated and informed decisions about drugs, while fully realising that abstinence is the safest minimum. Every avenue will be taken to dispel the myth that ‘it is fine to take drugs providing one keeps it to a minimum’
- Whatever might be the outcome of debates and passing fashions concerning the legalisation of drugs in the wider community, the College will view providers/suppliers of mood-altering drugs as people who endanger the health and future potential of others and consequently may terminate their membership of the school community. The common good is paramount.
- Despite what one might read about so-called ‘soft’ drugs in the media, the College accepts the common view of research scientists that cannabis
is the single most dangerous illegal substance that is easily and cheaply available to school-aged children. Considerable clinical evidence has demonstrated the physical and psychological harm caused by cannabis which “tiptoes into the brain and snips the wiring.” (Tom Scott, The Great Brain Robbery - What Everyone Should Know About Teenagers and Drugs)

- The College’s principal aim in its drug education prevention courses is to promote abstinence and harm prevention in the student body. The College acknowledges that some students may need specialist intervention and treatment. See section on “Intervention” below.

2. SANCTIONED DRUG USE

Prescribed or Medicinal Drug Use
Students who need to use prescribed and medicinal drugs within the College’s jurisdiction must

- have written approval of one’s parent/guardian, and
- inform an appropriate Staff member (e.g. School Psychologist, Dean of School, Student Formation Leader, Tutor, teacher)

Students who use inhalers are required to carry them at all times. Additional inhalers, i.e. ventolin, will be kept in the Main Offices for emergency use. Students will be required to identify and recognise the inhaler type as appropriate for their use when self-administering an inhaler borrowed from school.

3. ALCOHOL

It is an offence under N.S.W. law to obtain alcohol for, or supply alcohol to, young people under 18 years of age. If alcohol is served at a school function or within the College where students are present, a warning concerning this legislation must be issued to adults conducting the function. At any School function where it is proposed that alcohol be served, the Principal shall require those involved in functions to abide by the following conditions. The function organiser is responsible for ensuring that all the following conditions are observed:

- a choice of beverage is to be available for those attending, including an ample supply of non-alcoholic beverages;
- all drinks are to be served in a suitable environment, by responsible persons;
- no student is to serve or be served alcohol;
- any person behaving objectionably will be required to leave the premises.
4. UNSANCTIONED DRUG USE

Save for special circumstances, students are not permitted, when under the College’s jurisdiction, to use, or to be under the influence of, any drug or substance.

The following substances are prohibited:

4.1 Tobacco
The College buildings are tobacco-free zones and students are not permitted to use or possess tobacco products. Staff, parents, visitors and community members will be required to refrain from its use within the College grounds.

4.2 Alcohol
Students are not permitted to possess or consume alcohol.

4.3 Solvents and Industrial Products
Students are not permitted to use inappropriately, solvents, inhalants or other industrial products.

4.4 Illegal Drugs
This policy acknowledges that any drug can be used illegally. Sanctions will result for the inappropriate use of prescribed or over-the-counter medicines.

- Students are not permitted to possess, consume, or supply an illegal drug. The possession, supply, or use of an illegal drug is an offence against the law. In the case of a student being found in the possession of, or under the influence of, an illegal drug, his parents will be informed and the police may be notified.
- Should a student find a needle or syringe on College property, he should not touch it or allow any other person to touch it. He should alert a member of staff, who will arrange for it to be disposed of, in accordance with safe handling procedures.
- Students are not allowed to possess illegal drug-related objects.

4.5 Performance Enhancing Substances
All students and coaches are reminded that those students who compete in State or National competitions may be subject to random drug testing. No performance enhancing substances can be recommended or supplied by College coaches or athletes unless approved by the Principal who consults with appropriate medical advisors. Approval must also be sought from athletes’ parents. ‘Performance enhancing substances’ includes ‘legal’ substances such as creatine, body building powders, vitamin supplements, sodium bicarbonate etc.
5. SANCTIONS

Students who provide/supply mood-altering drugs (regardless of their legality) to others may be asked to leave the St Augustine’s College Community.

The response of the College to other drug-related offences will take into account the nature and circumstances of the offence, and the record of the student. The physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health and well-being of students is the priority.

Sanctions available to the College include:

1. informing and consulting parents
2. providing counselling
3. loss of privileges
4. suspension from school
5. referral to external agencies
6. notification of Police
7. transfer to another school

Sanctions will be taken as appropriate to the individual case. The Principal retains the right to decide upon appropriate sanctions in all circumstances. Any boy who has committed a drug-related offence may be asked to undertake regular drug testing in addition to any other sanction.

6. INTERVENTION

The College will provide an intervention component for those students for whom preventative curriculum efforts have been unsuccessful. Incidents will be dealt with in a positive, supportive manner and in the best interests of the student, staff, College and general College Community.

The identification of problems can occur in three ways:

i) Students may voluntarily approach staff members or one of the College Counsellors.

ii) Students may be identified through action resulting from inappropriate use of drugs.

iii) School staff can approach the Principal, Head of School, Dean of School, Head of Student Welfare, College Psychologist or Student Formation Leader to express concerns about a particular school member.

Judgements can then be made as to whether further action is warranted. If so, a confidential interview can be arranged with the student to attempt to determine whether a problem exists and to select a course of action. If an illegal drug is involved, then the Police may be informed.
7. STUDENT AFFECTED BY A DRUG

In the event of a student appearing to be under the influence of a drug, the College administration will seek medical advice. The College will attempt to notify parents/guardians before any referral to any medical agencies is made, or as soon as is possible.

8. DUE PROCESS

In the event of an investigation by the College staff into suspected or apparent drug use or drug possession, due processes will be followed with as much discretion as is possible in the circumstances. The College Psychologist will be involved from the outset in the interests of providing maximum pastoral care to students and families during a difficult time.

9. NOTIFICATION OF POLICE

In the event of a suspected or apparent drug offence being notified to police, the College will ensure that any student under such investigation will receive due and adequate representation. Student Formation Leaders or other pastoral care teachers may accompany students to any interviews to give background on the student. The parents or guardians of any student so concerned will be notified as soon as possible in this event.

10. MEDIA ENQUIRIES

All enquiries from external persons or agencies, including media, should be referred immediately to the Principal to follow due process in such circumstances.