



DRUG POLICY

Rationale

St Patrick's College, in line with its Occupational Health and Safety Policy (OH&S) and Pastoral Care Policy, undertakes to provide students with a safe, supportive and positive school environment. For the purpose of this policy, a drug is defined as any substance, with the exception of food and water, which when taken into the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically. This definition includes analgesics, alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, amphetamines and solvents.

The Drug Policy recognises that the College has a pastoral interest in the health, social, personal and legal wellbeing of its students. It recognises that the use of some drugs can impair the wellbeing of an individual and groups of students and interfere with their ability to learn and function in society.

The College also acknowledges that student drug use, other than for lawful medical use, either on College property or at its events, interferes with the legitimate academic and co-curricular interests of other students and staff and can have a detrimental effect on the tone, morale and reputation of St Patrick's College.

The Drug Policy aims to be comprehensive, combining intervention with prevention and other strategies to dissuade students from experimenting with drugs. This will be achieved through developing a close relationship with parents, enthusiastically attempting to busily involve students in a variety of wholesome and worthwhile co-curricular activities, and trying at all times to develop healthy attitudes, interests and lifestyle habits.

Scriptural Context:

'Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God. You are not your own property; you have been bought and paid for. That is why you should use your body for the glory of God.' 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Policy Statement

St Patrick's College will educate and encourage students to make positive moral and legal choices in relation to drugs. Poor or illegal choices in this area will have appropriate consequences and sanctions applied by the College.

Guidelines

Preventative Framework

The foundation for the Drug Policy is the College's commitment to provide all students with a safe and supportive learning environment. To ensure this the following guidelines shall apply:

The College recognises that the most important agent of education in all social issues, including drug education, is the home. Underpinning this is the need for the College and the home to enjoy a clear understanding of each other's role and form a supportive relationship.

The College provides factual information, and attempts to develop attitudes, values and decision-making which enable students to make appropriate choices.

The College involves the community where appropriate, through the provision of parent awareness programmes and interaction with key community groups or by directing parents to such programmes.

The College recognises the sensitive and demanding nature of drug education programmes and appreciates that such programmes should be delivered by people with appropriate training and experience.

The College will assist by directing students and parents who voluntarily seek help, to appropriate counselling services. Discretion and confidentiality will be observed as requested and required.

The College does not permit students, while in uniform or on the school premises or at or travelling to or from any College sanctioned occasion to:

- possess, supply, trade or smoke tobacco products;
- possess, supply, trade or consume alcoholic beverages;
- deliberately inhale solvents;
- possess, supply or trade drug-related equipment such as syringes, bongs, pipes, inhalers, except in cases of lawful medical use;
- possess, supply, trade or use illegal (prohibited) drugs;
- possess amounts of legal drugs other than for lawful medical use; and
- supply or trade any legal drugs.

Interventions and Sanctions

Any student who breaches this policy and or endangers the wellbeing of any other person as a result of his inappropriate use of drugs may be subject to the sanctions

as set out in this policy which could include the removal and termination of the student from the College or from any College activity.

Any action taken by the College against any student as a result of any breach of this policy will have as its intent the physical health, emotional health and welfare of the student and the general public as its main priority.

Breaches of this policy may result in the following penalties:

1. Any breach of this policy may result in, but not necessarily be limited to; a letter to parents; a meeting with the student's Pastoral Tutor, Head of House and a School Counsellor; attendance at a prescribed detention, community service and the possibility of compulsory attendance at a counselling programme; suspension or expulsion from the College and the student may be required to give a written undertaking that he will avoid any similar breach of the policy.
2. Serious breaches or second offences of minor breaches may result in suspension and may require the student to attend a counselling programme as directed by the College.
3. Breaches that involve illegal drugs, the selling or attempt to sell or deal in drugs to others, or if a student continues to commit breaches of this policy may result in his enrolment being terminated immediately.
4. These penalties may apply if the person has been found guilty of any drug related offence which occurred outside school activities which in the opinion of the Headmaster reflects badly on the College or endangers the wellbeing of other students.
5. Breaches involving any illegal use or dealing in drugs by any student may be reported to the police by the College.
6. All decisions involving what penalty applies to any student for any breach of this policy will be at the sole discretion of the Headmaster.

Status of Policy: Ratified by the College Board June, 2013

Review: 2018