



# COLLEGE POLICY

## Drugs

### Rationale

St Mary MacKillop College places a great deal of emphasis on the pastoral care of its students. As such it is every student's right to feel safe and free from violence, abuse or any form of intimidation.

### Principle

As a Christian community, this College will always endeavour to be sensitive to individual cases and demonstrate appropriate pastoral care in a spirit of reconciliation. However, in the interests of the wider community, this policy also takes into consideration, the mandate given by parents to educate their children in a drug-free environment and therefore sanctions are clearly defined. Our Drug Policy seeks to:

- Empower students to reach their potential free from the effects of drug use;
- Educate students to make informed choices and to challenge social pressures in matters relating to drug use;
- To assist students to understand the reasons for not taking drugs and to give them strategies to avoid them;
- To teach students that, in the event of drug use, measures can be taken to minimise harm to themselves and/or others;
- Inform St Mary MacKillop College students of the rules regarding drug use and what action will be taken in the event of these rules being broken; and
- To provide a safe, caring and law-abiding environment at St Mary MacKillop College.

These aims are in line with the current SDEP (Student Drug Education Programme) approach to drug education.

### Definition

A drug is defined as 'any substance, which when taken into the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically.'

This definition includes all drugs, e.g. analgesics, alcohol, tobacco, vapes, amphetamines, cannabis, addictive illegal drugs, solvents, glue, acetone, petrol and pressure pack material.

### PREVENTION

St Mary MacKillop College will provide students with knowledge, skills and support to make informed decisions about a range of social issues including drug abuse.

Students will have the opportunity to discuss topics in an educational climate without feeling that they will be misunderstood or reprimanded for their honesty in discussing their values or behaviour.

At St Mary MacKillop College, information relating to drug use will be given across a variety of subject areas, using a combination of factual data, attitude and values clarification and decision-making skills.

From time to time, informational workshops on drug issues will be offered to staff and parents at the College.

### EXPECTATIONS

St Mary MacKillop College does not permit students, regardless of age, whilst on school premises, travelling to or from, or attending school functions to:

- Be in possession of or smoke vape or tobacco products;
- Be in possession of or consume alcoholic beverages;
- Misuse legal drugs or deliberately inhale solvents;
- Possess drug-related equipment such as syringes, bongs, pipes etc.

### Drugs

- Possess or use prohibited drugs in accordance with the 1981 Misuse of Drugs Act;
- Arrange for distribution and/or sale of illegal substances.

Note: 'on school premises or at school functions' means any time a student is under St Mary MacKillop College care, whether in uniform or not, and includes traveling to and from school camps, retreats, excursions, or other College functions such as a school social, Ball, sporting fixture or whilst representing the school in any official capacity.

### CONSEQUENCES

Guiding principles are applied if students are involved with drugs:

- Each instance will be considered according to the given set of circumstances at the time;
- Parents will be kept informed at all times;
- The Leadership Team in consultation with Heads of Year will determine which support services are to be called upon, who is to be informed, and any consequences to be imposed;
- Involvement with drugs may mean referrals to suitable agencies involving both intervention and education programmes.

### VAPES, CIGARETTES, ALCOHOL, SOLVENTS AND OTHER LEGAL DRUGS

The consequences for students found under the influence of, in possession of, or supplying vapes, cigarettes, alcohol, solvents or legal drugs to other students will include:

#### Cyber bullying

- Suspension from the College for a minimum of one day;
- A parent interview with the Principal before the student is re-admitted to school;
- A period of conditional enrolment which will be determined by the Principal;
- Further offences may result in exclusion from the College according to the relevant Catholic Education Commission Policy.

### ILLEGAL DRUGS

The possession and/or sale of illegal drugs is an offence against the law and considered by the College as a very serious matter.

- In all cases relating to illegal drugs, the police may be notified;
- Students with any drug-related equipment will have it immediately confiscated and parents notified;
- Any student found in possession of, supplying or under the influence of illegal drugs will be suspended (the period to be determined by the Principal). During the suspension, a consultation process will occur which may lead to exclusion from the College.

The consultative process will ordinarily consist of the Principal, Parents, Head of Catholic Identity & Mission, Head of Middle School, Head of Senior School, Heads of Year, Homeroom Teacher and College Counsellor.

### PUBLICITY

The College Administration does not inform the wider College community when students are being disciplined over incidents involving drugs. Only the essential elements of incidents are given to students and teachers where appropriate. Where drugs are involved, the ramifications for the individual students and their families are usually quite serious. The privacy of the individuals involved is respected and the College will make no public comment about the matter.