

Banned Substances in School

1. Definitions

- 1.1 **CEDP** means the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta.
- 1.2 **Banned substances** means any substance that has been prohibited by the school.
- 1.3 **Illegal substances** means any substance that is expressly forbidden at law, including but not limited to criminal law.
- 1.4 **Possession of Banned Substances** means having a banned substance on one's person or in one's personal effects, for example bag, locker, pockets etc
- 1.5 **Use of Banned Substances** means the taking of banned substances into the body.
- 1.6 **Distribution of Banned Substances** means the passing on of banned substances by a student(s) to other student(s).

2. Context

- 2.1 This procedure covers the possession, use and distribution of alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs or other banned substances, and the misuse of over-the-counter and prescribed medications, including the supply of banned or illegal substances on school premises. These are referred to collectively as 'banned substances' in this procedure.
- 2.2 CEDP is committed to maintaining a safe, secure and supportive environment for all students, and acts to ensure that schools are places that are free of banned substances.
- 2.3 Management of any suspected banned substance-related incident will ensure that the immediate wellbeing and educational needs of the student(s) involved are balanced with the wellbeing and educational interests of the broader student community.
- 2.4 Schools will manage disciplinary matters involving suspected banned substances with reference to the school-based pastoral care and student management procedures and the CEDP Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures.

3. Ensuring a safe and secure environment

- 3.1 CEDP schools must be places that are free from the possession, use or distribution of banned substances within their communities, on their premises, and/or during school events.
- 3.2 Where a school becomes aware of a serious out-of-school hours incident, parents/carers will be notified and the policy or other appropriate authority notified as required.
- 3.3 The principal is responsible for the implementation of this procedure, and for ensuring that this procedure is communicated clearly to students, staff and parents.

4. Prevention

- 4.1 Each school will have in place appropriate strategies to assist the education of students and parents in the prevention and misuse of banned substances.
- 4.2 Schools should have a holistic pastoral care and student management procedure which includes support of at-risk students, in partnership with parents, counsellors and other external agencies.
- 4.3 Positive links with external agencies are established and used to strengthen the capacity of the school to educate young people and parents, and to respond to issues. This includes working with policy youth liaison officers on a range of intervention and response strategies.

5. Categories of banned substances

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- 5.1 While each issue must be dealt with on its individual merits, the following categories and responses generally apply where there is a reasonable belief of student use, possession or distribution of banned substances:
- 5.1.1 **Category A** - Use of alcohol and tobacco and misuse of prescribed medications: the misuse of prescribed medications, over-the-counter medications, inhalants and solvents, and the use of alcohol and tobacco would be managed primarily as a student health and welfare issue. Individual circumstances may require action in accordance with the CEDP Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures. Principals would use their discretion in deciding whether a suspension is necessary.
- 5.1.2 **Category B** - Supply of alcohol, tobacco and prescribed medications: supply of alcohol, tobacco and prescribed medications would be managed in accordance with the CEDP Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures. In considering whether a transfer or exclusion is warranted, a principal will take into account any prior behaviour of the student, the circumstances of the incident, whether the interests of the student are served by remaining within the same school community and whether there are broader implications for the school community as a whole.
- 5.1.3 **Category C** - Use illegal substances: the use of illegal substances would be managed in accordance with the CEDP Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures. These matters would also be reported to the police. In considering whether a transfer or exclusion is warranted, a principal will take into account any prior behaviour of the student, the circumstances of the incident, whether the interests of the student are served by remaining within the same school community and whether there are broader implications for the school community as a whole.
- 5.1.4 **Category D** - Supply of illegal substances would be managed in accordance with the CEDP Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures. These matters would also be reported to the police. In considering whether a transfer or exclusion is warranted, a principal will take into account any prior behaviour of the student, the circumstances of the incident, whether the interests of the student are served by remaining within the same school community and whether there are broader implications for the school community as a whole.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1 The principals must:
- 6.1.1 implement these procedures at their school
- 6.1.2 ensure that the school community is educated with regards to this procedure
- 6.1.3 manage any allegations or evidence of student use, possession or distribution of banned substances in accordance with the school-based pastoral care and well being procedures and the CEDP Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures.
- 6.2 School staff must:
- 6.2.1 support the implementation of this procedure
- 6.2.2 adhere to the Guidelines for Professional Conduct
- 6.2.3 inform the principal if they are aware of any instances of student use, possession or distribution of banned substances.
- 6.3 Students must:
- 6.3.1 not use, possess or distribute banned or illegal substances.

7. Responding to use, possession or distribution of banned or illegal substances, or misuse of prescribed medications

- 7.1 If there a student is suspected of use, possession or distribution of banned substances, the immediate priority is to ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff.
- 7.2 Where drug-taking is suspected, the immediate priority is to try and establish what type of drug was taken, how much and whether first aid or emergency aid is required.



- 7.3 Where a Category A and/or Category B breach is suspected, principals will use their discretion in contacting the police in consultation with their Director Performance. The student's parent/carer must also be contacted.
- 7.4 The principal may carry out an interview to ascertain facts and give the student the opportunity to respond.
- 7.5 If there is a reasonable belief that a student has been involved in illegal activity (Category C and/or D) the police should be contacted. The principal must also contact the Director Performance and the student's parent/carer.
- 7.6 The principal should inform the Director Performance if the police have been notified about suspected banned substance use or possession. The principal and the Director Performance will decide if the incident constitutes a critical incident. If so, principals should refer to the Critical Incident Management procedures.
- 7.7 Once police have been contacted, the principal should defer to the instructions of the police in relation to further interviews or investigation.
- 7.8 Any searches of students' bags and possessions should be carried out by police.
- 7.9 If the school is contacted by the media, the principal should contact the Head Executive Office and Communications.

8. Outcomes of use, possession or distribution of banned substances

- 8.1 In accordance with the CEDP Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures and the school's pastoral care and student management procedures, there is a range of consequences that may occur following the use, possession or distribution of banned substances.
- 8.2 The purpose of any outcome will be to ensure that:
- 8.2.1 the student is supported in continuing his/her education
 - 8.2.2 the student is assisted in overcoming any problem regarding use of banned substances
 - 8.2.3 the student and school community are safe.
- 8.3 In all instances, in determining a response to the incident, the principal will consider the severity of the incident, whether there are any mitigating factors and the impact on the school community.
- 8.4 The outcomes considered will depend on whether it is a Category A, B or C breach.
- 8.5 Generally, Category A incidents may be dealt with by way of suspension, at the principal's discretion.
- 8.6 Other actions the principal may take include:
- 8.6.1 speaking to a student about concerns and continuing to monitor student behaviour
 - 8.6.2 referring the student to a counsellor or other support
 - 8.6.3 assisting the student and their family with access to external agency support, as required.
- 8.7 Category B and C incidents may be dealt with by suspension. Depending on the severity and frequency of Category C incidents, it may also necessitate a transfer or exclusion in line with the CEDP Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures.
- 8.8 Category D incidents may be dealt with by suspension or exclusion. Depending on the intent, the frequency and severity of the incident, the likelihood of exclusion is increased.
- 8.9 For the avoidance of doubt, if a suspension, transfer or exclusion is warranted principals must refer to and follow the CEDP Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures.

9. Related documents

- 9.1 CEDP Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures
- 9.2 CEDP Procedural Fairness Guidelines

10. Related legislation

- 10.1 *Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 (NSW)*
- 10.2 *Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1986 (NSW)*

