

Model School Drug Policy

Recommendations from the MA Drug Recognition Expert

The following school drug policy framework and sample responses to incidents of drug use are fictitious. They are intended as examples only. School communities should develop policy and procedures that are specifically tailored to their local needs.

1. Rationale
2. Prevention of unsafe and unlawful drug use
3. Intervention
4. Identification of drug-related problems
5. Assistance and referral

_____ Senior High School

1. Rationale

The use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs involves complex issues, and problems usually result from a combination of many contributing factors. The response of Indian Ocean Senior High School is therefore as comprehensive as possible.

This school drug policy provides a framework to address alcohol, tobacco and other drug-related problems in a caring and consistent manner within the _____ Senior High School community.

This policy and subsequent procedures have been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents, and have been endorsed by the School Decision-Making Group (or equivalent decision-making body, e.g. school administration, school council or school board).

The _____ Senior High School Drug Policy is binding on all members of the school community while they are on school premises or at a school function or excursion where there are students present. This includes students, parents, staff, volunteer staff, ground staff and other workers. The policy also applies to school visitors and any functions held on school premises, unless otherwise negotiated with the Principal.

This policy aims to:

1. Promote and maintain a health-promoting school environment in which the welfare of all school community members is paramount;
2. Identify the role of the _____ Senior High School community in the prevention of drug-related problems;
3. Document the school community's agreed position on, and accepted procedures for dealing with, drug-related incidents and problems.

2. Prevention of unsafe and unlawful drug use

_____ Senior High School will ensure the following preventative measures are implemented:

1. Every two years, a needs assessment is conducted to determine the issues of greatest prevalence within the school community. Data from this needs assessment are used to plan the school community health and drug education program.
2. This policy supports the _____ Senior High School community in striving toward the achievement _____ (insert school goals/mission statement that are applicable).
3. Health and drug education is taught as part of a comprehensive health education program. The program consists of a balance of utility knowledge, attitudes and values clarification and skill development appropriate to the developmental level of the students. ____ minutes are taught per week from years _____.
4. The health and drug education budget is \$_____ annually. This amount is reviewed each year. Of this budget, _____% is devoted to professional development for teachers of health and drug education.
5. All health education teachers will attend a minimum of _____ days professional development per year.
6. This policy is consistent with the State Government's policy framework in relation to drug use.
7. The contents of this school drug policy are contained in relevant school publications, including student journals/diaries, newsletters, and _____ (insert relevant publications).
8. The _____ Senior High School community is involved in parent and community health education programs wherever possible. This includes the provision of parent awareness programs and ongoing interaction with key community groups. The role/s of specific personnel are outlined in the procedures that accompany this school drug policy.
9. This drug policy is reviewed every _____ years. The school health committee (or insert relevant name) will assume responsibility for the review process. The maintenance of this policy is the responsibility of the school community.

3. Intervention

These intervention procedures are designed to address alcohol, tobacco and other drug-related problems to ensure the health and well-being of all parties concerned are represented. All intervention procedures conform to legal requirements.

_____ Senior High School does not permit students while on school premises, at any school function, excursion or camp to:

- Smoke and/or possess tobacco products;
- Consume and/or possess alcohol;

- Deliberately inhale volatile substances (solvents, aerosols, anesthetic gases, any intoxicating vapors);
- Possess and/or use pharmaceutical drugs for non-medical purposes;
- Possess and/or use illegal drugs in accordance with the MGL C94, S1 et. al; or
- Possess and/or use drug-related equipment, such as syringes, bongs or pipes (except in the case of lawful medical use).

School staff should administer prescribed medication where there is an agreement between staff, parents/guardians/caregivers and the Principal and where written instructions from the prescribing doctor have been provided by the parents/guardians/caregivers. If a student is required to carry and self-administer prescribed medicine while at school, the parent/guardians/caregivers must advise the Principal of all relevant details. For short-term conditions where analgesics are administered by the student, notification of self-medication by the student is not required.

Please refer to the attached Administration of Medicines policy (insert appropriate policy for sector: for example, Education Department Administration of Medicines Policy and Procedures) for more information.

Staff and visitors are not permitted to smoke while on school premises (for example, as stated in Education Department Administrative Circular No. ____ and revised Smoking Policy (1997)). Staff social functions at which alcohol is served will take place at a venue other than on school premises.

Responding to incidents of drug use

The procedures outlined below have been developed with the health and welfare of _____ Senior High School students in mind. They should be followed where possible and any variations should be discussed with the Principal and student services personnel.

1. Establish and respond to the student's immediate safety. Apply, or organize to apply, first aid where necessary (follow normal school emergency procedures for a medical problem).
2. Accompany the student and take the substances involved immediately to the school administrative block. If in a class send a responsible student to administration to seek assistance. Refer the incident to the Principal/Deputy Principal.
3. The school administration should identify a person to be responsible for managing the incident, to be referred to as the "Incident Manager". The school counsellor (or other appropriate person) should be advised that an incident has occurred and that it may be necessary for the counsellor to become involved as a student or family support person. The selection of a support person should take into account issues including ethnicity, language, culture, background and gender of the student (and family) concerned. The Incident Manager may elect to form a small group of people to assist with the management of the incident.

4. The Incident Manager should establish and validate the facts by interviewing relevant staff and students. Questioning should establish the substance and person involved, and where and when the incident occurred. When questioning, recognize cultural differences, because students from some cultures, such as Australian Aboriginal culture, do not necessarily respond to questioning in the same way as do European Australians.
5. The Incident Manager should report the outcomes of the interview to the Principal and recommend appropriate courses of action.

Once it has been established that a drug-related incident has occurred, a number of actions can be taken. Actions may vary considerably depending on the details of the incident, including the substance involved, the behavioral history of the student identified as having a part in the incident and the impact of other students.

Some suggested actions include:

- **Smoking:** _____ Senior High School views tobacco smoking as a serious offence for a range of reasons. Many adult smokers begin smoking regularly during adolescence. There is a range of serious health-related problems associated with smoking. Students who sell or supply tobacco products to other students are committing an offence. If students are found smoking at school parents/caregivers will be notified by the Deputy Principal/Incident Manager and a letter sent home. Students will be offered counseling and will face disciplinary action in accordance with the school community's Managing Student Behavior or Pastoral Care programs. (Contact Health Promotion Services on _____ for relevant literature for student(s) and/or parents/guardians/caregivers.)
- **Alcohol and solvents:** possession and/or consumption of alcohol or deliberate inhalation of solvents will require the Deputy Principal/Incident Manager to contact parents/caregivers and send a letter home. Students will be offered counseling and will face disciplinary action in accordance with the school community's Managing Student Behavior or Pastoral Care programs.
- **Illicit drugs:** if possession or use of an illicit drug is suspected, the Deputy Principal/Incident Manager will ask students to empty the contents of their school bags, pockets, etc. If students refuse to do so, the police may be called. Searches may be undertaken only when a reasonable suspicion exists. It is recommended that, wherever possible, police officers conduct the search.

If possession, use, sale or supply of a prohibited drug (as defined in the school drug policy) is confirmed, the parent/caregiver will be informed immediately. The Principal will determine if the police will be called. In the absence of a student's parent or caregiver, the student support person or a teacher nominated by the student will always be present at any police interview that takes place on school premises. The student will be offered counseling and will face disciplinary action in accordance with the school community's Managing Student Behavior and/or Pastoral Care programs. If an illicit drug is confiscated, the Principal will call the police to arrange disposal of the drug.

Further action

Where appropriate, counseling will be made available to students by the student services staff. The local Community Drug Service Team may be contacted at this stage. Students will be referred to relevant agencies after discussion between the student, student services personnel, the principal and the parents/caregivers.

Contact Health Promotion Services on _____ for relevant literature for students and/or parents/caregivers.

Confidential written records will be maintained by the school nurse, or other relevant person, about incidents of drug use. If no drug use is detected but strong suspicion exists, it should be reported to the school nurse, who will keep confidential written notes. Only staff members who need to know will be informed of any incidents of drug use and kept up-to-date with the case. However, if suspension results, all staff will be notified verbally by the Principal. All staff should be reminded that they are required to maintain strict confidentiality.

The Appendix includes step charts that outline procedures for various scenarios. These may be a more appropriate way of outlining procedures.

4. Identification of drug-related problems

The existing welfare/pastoral care system of _____ Senior High School community will be used to assist staff members to identify alcohol, tobacco and other drug-related problems and monitor students where necessary.

When drug use is suspected, the incident should be referred to _____ (insert title of appropriate staff member). The procedures for reporting drug-related incidents (attached to this policy) should be applied.

5. Assistance and referral

_____ School community has identified the following organizations as being useful contacts (see [Appendix 6](#)).

e.g. Alcohol and Drug

Information Service (ADIS)

Telephone consultation and drug information (24 hours)

Telephone: 555-555-5555

(Any appropriate drug agency your school system determines)