



**St Peter's  
Woodlands**

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# Drugs Policy

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## 1. Rationale

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St Peter's Woodlands Grammar School recognises that because drug issues exist within the broader community, incidents involving drugs will also occur in schools. There is no place for illicit and unsanctioned drug use at St Peter's Woodlands Grammar School and, in keeping with national and state policy and associated research, the School takes a position of harm minimisation in relation to the management of suspected drug-related incidents.

The School is committed to maintaining a safe, secure and supportive environment for its community; to encouraging healthy lifestyle choices; to modelling appropriate attitudes and responsible behaviours in relation to the sanctioned use of legal drugs.

This policy is part of our Whole School Drug Strategy that includes a range of curriculum, policies and procedures and positive school environment initiatives. The School takes action to prevent drug use by students and to intervene if it occurs by taking a whole of school approach. The use, possession and/or distribution of illicit drugs and the unsanctioned use and distribution of drugs such as alcohol, tobacco and prescription drugs, are not accepted.

The goal of managing any suspected drug-related incident is to ensure the wellbeing and future educational careers of the student/s involved, as well as the wellbeing and educational careers of the whole student community and staff.

The School has a responsibility to ensure that the management of drug incidents is educative whereby students can learn from the consequences of poor decisions and inappropriate behaviour.

This policy is consistent with *Intervention matters: a policy statement and procedural framework for the management of suspected drug-related incidents in schools*, DECS, 2004, and this document is considered a primary resource for the managing of drug-related incidents at St Peter's Woodlands Grammar School.

This policy will apply to all activities sanctioned by the School whether or not they take place at the School i.e. on camps, excursions and other similar activities.

## 2. Definitions

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In the context of this policy a drug is defined as *'any substance which, when taken into the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically'* (World Health Organisation, 1992).

**Illicit drugs** are those drugs for which the production, sale, possession or use is prohibited.

**Legal drugs** are those drugs which are sanctioned by law. They may be readily available (like caffeine and petrol); restricted by age (like tobacco and alcohol); or prescribed for some by medical practitioners (like many pharmaceuticals).

**Unsanctioned drugs** are those drugs whose use is restricted by law, the School's authority and or the School's policies and guidelines. They include illicit, social and prescription drugs when misused.

**Harm minimisation:** The harm minimisation approach assists schools and communities to go beyond punitive measures to drug issues and to develop integrated approaches that focus on policies and procedures to prevent and reduce drug-related harm. This approach is endorsed by state and federal governments. It does not mean not responding to suspected drug-related incidents; it means responding well.

## 3. Scope

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This policy applies to all full-time, part-time, and casual employees, volunteers, visitors, contractors and students when on school premises or at a school-related event.

Where, in the following sections, the word "student" is used, it may also stand for any individual involved in a suspected drug-related incident.



## 4. The School's Position

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The School's position on the use of alcohol and other legal drug use by school staff and/or parents:

- Every staff member has a 'duty of care' towards every student under his or her supervision, by virtue of the conditions of employment and the common law principles of negligence.
- Parents/caregivers who assume supervisory responsibility (for school authorised activities) also owe a duty of care to the students under their control. They are required to use their skills, knowledge and experience in a responsible manner.
- The consumption of alcohol is unsanctioned for any individual employed by or contracted to the school or acting in a volunteer capacity, who is responsible for the supervision of students.
- Many medications have side-effects such as drowsiness or an increased heart rate. Occupational health and safety for self and others in their care should be paramount. Users should notify the relevant coordinator and remove themselves from any position of responsibility.
- Smoking of cigarettes and other tobacco products is unsanctioned anywhere on the premises of St Peter's Woodlands Grammar School (or in view of the school grounds) or by supervisory persons at any other venue where school activities take place.
- The sale or consumption of alcohol at adult functions is sanctioned. The appropriate liquor licence must be obtained in relation to sales of liquor.
- The sale or consumption of alcohol in the presence of children at activities whose primary purpose is to educate or entertain children is unsanctioned.

## 5. Suspected Drug-Related Incidents

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The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will apply in the management of suspected drug-related incidents. These principles are:

- The right of the individual to be informed of the form of proceedings
- The right of the individual to be represented by an advocate of choice
- The right of the individual to know what is alleged
- The right of the individual to be heard and to question evidence
- The right of the individual to impartial adjudication
- The qualified right to privacy for the individual
- The right of the individual to appeal
- The right of the individual to legal representation in instances of potentially very serious incidents involving illicit drugs and/or violent circumstances

Below is a procedural framework for the management of suspected drug-related incidents.

### 5.1. Overview

Involvement with drugs, including illicit and unsanctioned drugs, means that school personnel have reason to believe that:

- Drugs have been or are being used
- Students, or other individuals on school property or at a school event are in possession of drugs or instruments used with drugs
- Students are present when drugs are being used by others

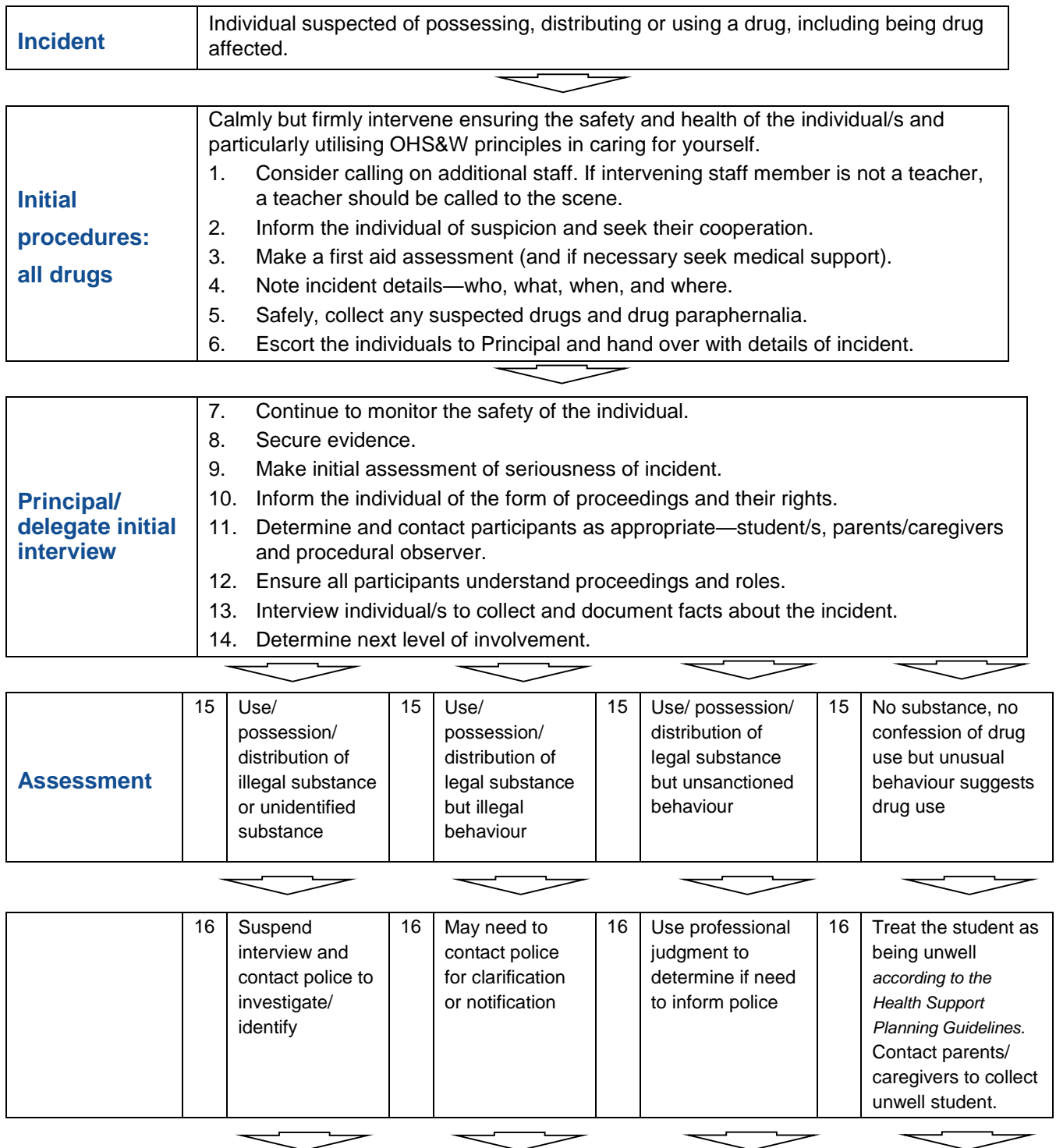
In the event of a suspected drug-related incident:


- The safety and wellbeing of students will be considered paramount: they may need to be treated as unwell in accordance with the School's First Aid and Medical protocols and/or emergency procedures.

- Parents/caregivers will be contacted in instances of possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and/or the illegal distribution of unsanctioned drugs.
- Consequences may vary and will depend on the nature of the situation, its potential for harm and the circumstances of the individual students or persons involved. However, for students, they could involve suspension or exclusion.

Follow-up support for student wellbeing will be implemented.

## 5.2. Process Overview



	17. Make decisions about consequences, including educative, punitive and deterrent.
	
<b>Following actions</b>	<p>18. Where necessary, organise and implement student development plans as a part of the consequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ongoing educational support</li> <li>• counselling</li> <li>• re-entry planning if a student has been suspended.</li> </ul> <p>19. Debrief staff and review school policy.</p>

### 5.3. Process Overview

WHAT?	HOW?	WHY?
Keep calm	Keep calm in order to work through the procedures for managing the incident.	<p><b>OHS&amp;W obligations</b></p> <p>Be conscious of safety especially if the incident involves a large group. Consider asking for another staff member of the same gender as the individual (especially if a student) if possible to support you in this intervention.</p> <p><b>Duty of care</b></p> <p>Ensure the individual's health is satisfactory. If the individual's condition appears critical (because s/he is unconscious, struggling to breathe, delirious, etc), do not move him/her but call an ambulance. Police attendance will only be automatic in the case of a fatal overdose or if ambulance officers are threatened with violence.</p> <p>For some individuals, drug use has been connected to a history of mental anguish and self-harm.</p> <p>Compassion and protection need to shape the form of intervention in such cases.</p> <p>Intervention into a suspected drug-related incident is necessary to protect students (whether participants or observers) from foreseeable harm.</p> <p><b>Health Support Planning Guidelines</b></p> <p>Any investigation of the incident may need to be suspended if the individual's physical or mental state appears compromised.</p>
Consider all staff	<p>Decide whether to seek the support of another staff member before intervening.</p> <p>Teaching staff must be involved if the affected individual is a student.</p>	
Inform individual/s	When you intervene, inform the individual/s of your initial suspicions and your concern for their welfare. Seek their cooperation whenever possible.	
Ensure safety of individual/s	Determine the need for First Aid, mental of student/s health support, or physical support. If they appear unwell, uncoordinated or in a daze, immediately follow first aid procedures. If they appear physically well and coherent, continue procedures.	
Get the facts and evidence	<p>Ask the student/s about the identity and evidence of the possible drug and who appears to be involved. Obtain the substance and/or any related paraphernalia for handover to principal. Without evidence, don't make assumptions.</p> <p><b><i>Police are the most appropriate people to engage in searches for drugs.</i></b></p>	

Keep affected individual/s informed	Inform the individual/s of the procedures to follow.	<p>When no drug is present (but the individual seems agitated, un-coordinated or dazed), school staff must treat the individual as unwell, in line with first aid procedures.</p> <p><b>Duty of care</b> A staff member with First Aid training continually supervises the individual.</p> <p><b>Legal obligations, including OHS&amp;W</b> Keep accurate records because any written record about the incident can be subpoenaed. Police have the power to search students and their belongings, including bags and lockers. Principals can search when they are absolutely certain not doing so may put other students at risk, but it is recommended that principals leave searching to police if possible. Police may need information to substantiate a search.</p> <p><b>Natural justice</b> A precisely recorded incident statement is a basis for providing a student/individual with a clear description of what is suspected.  Take measures to ensure that your written record contains an accurate summary of the intervening teacher's observations and interactions.</p>
Escort individual to place of interview	Have the individual/s wait (under adult supervision if students) in as private a place as possible. <i>Most commonly, school-based incidents are formally assessed in an appropriate schoolroom. On school camps, excursions or other school events off site, a judgment will need to be made about available facilities (or the feasibility of returning to school) to conduct interviews in privacy.</i>	
Hand over responsibility to principal or delegate	Inform the principal/ delegate of the suspected drug-related incident. Include who was involved, what you observed and when and where this occurred and your assessment of his/her state of health. Record this information —see example pro forma initial incident record in Appendix A.	

#### 5.4. Initial Procedures – all drugs

Principal/delegate initial interview – all drugs.

WHAT?	HOW?	WHY?
Student safety	Continue to monitor health of student/individual.	<p><b>Legal obligations</b> Any suspected drug or related paraphernalia must be obtained and stored in a locked place which only the principal/delegate has access to, until handed over to the police. Utilise a witness to secure substance. (OHS&amp;W)</p> <p><b>Natural justice</b> It is best practice to utilise natural justice during this phase of the intervention.</p>
Principal receives and secures evidence	The principal/delegate receives any suspected drug and any drug-related paraphernalia and secures it, witnessed by a staff member.	
Initial assessment to determine further proceedings	Make an initial assessment of the potential seriousness of the incident in order to determine the level of subsequent procedures.	



<p>Inform student/s and seek cooperation</p>	<p>Inform the student/s/individual/s about the procedures they are about to experience. Seek their voluntary cooperation.</p>	<p>That is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the right to know the procedures</li> <li>• the right to know the allegation</li> <li>• the right to be heard</li> <li>• the right of the student to be represented by an advocate of their choice.</li> </ul> <p>Including an adult advocate for the student (most commonly the student's carer if the student gives permission) will help to ensure the student understands the proceedings and the facts surrounding the alleged incident.</p> <p>Where there are several students involved in an incident, each student will need to be interviewed individually.</p> <p>Avoid blame or negative labelling—the object is to collect and document the facts in order to make a balanced decision about the appropriate courses of action.</p> <p><b>Legal obligations</b></p> <p>It is not within the jurisdiction of schools to investigate incidents (crimes) where illicit drugs are involved until the police have resolved their involvement; hence the obligation to engage police (see next page).</p> <p>If you are unsure about the legal status of a suspected drug, police support will be required.</p> <p><b>Student welfare</b></p> <p>The desired outcomes of this intervention are the continuing education, health and welfare of all students. Ensure the (qualified) right to privacy in an effort not to stigmatise a student.</p>
<p>Determine participants</p>	<p>Depending on the perceived seriousness of the incident, the negotiation of adult advocate and procedural observer may be warranted.</p>	
<p>Contact parents/caregivers</p>	<p>Contact the student's parents/caregivers and arrange with the student to include them if the student chooses, as an advocate in the proceedings. Students 18 years and older may choose not to have their parents informed.</p>	
<p>Involve procedural observer</p>	<p>If a procedural observer is to be utilised, it is recommended that they are an EO trained staff member. They will ensure the rules of procedural fairness are followed in the interview and record the proceedings and facts.</p>	
<p>Clarify purposes and understandings</p>	<p>Ensure the student and parents/caregivers understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the reason for the formal meeting and the possible outcomes</li> <li>• the role of each person in relation to <i>procedural fairness</i>, as well as how special needs will be accommodated if necessary.</li> </ul> <p>In some circumstances, school personnel may need to allocate time for the student and carer to meet privately to discuss issues and return to the interview.</p>	
<p>Review evidence and determine further action</p>	<p>Interview the student to formally ascertain and document the facts. Use the student interview record in</p>	



	<p>Appendix A to document facts and observations.</p> <p>Initially ascertain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the student's involvement in the incident</li> <li>the student's confirmation or denial about the nature of the suspected drug.</li> </ul> <p>In partnership with the student, parents/caregivers if present, and/or advocate, review the evidence and determine if the student's behaviour is related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>illicit drugs</li> <li>legal drugs but illegal or unsanctioned behaviour. Appendix F assists in determining the legal status of behaviour around drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol and cigarettes.</li> </ul> <p>Where a student's unusual behaviour cannot be linked to any drug use, carry out the school's student health management procedures in consultation with parents/caregivers.</p>	
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### 5.5. Drug identified / Secondary Processes

WHAT?	HOW?	WHY?
Drug identified as illicit drug	<p>If confirmation is given that an illicit drug is involved, suspend the interview and call the police—all school investigations into the incident are put on hold until the police investigation is complete.</p> <p>Whenever possible, police should interview students at home in the presence of a responsible adult.</p> <p>If the police are called, inform AISSA</p>	<p><b>Legal obligations, including OHS&amp;W</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principals/delegates managing incidents must be aware of monitoring and caring for their own stress, safety and welfare during incident proceedings.</li> <li>Only the police have the authority to investigate illegal drug incidents, and request laboratory testing to identify a suspected drug.</li> <li>Police should be called if investigating legal or unsanctioned</li> </ul>

	<p>The police may determine the need to search students' and school property (or camp site, etc).</p> <p>Depending on the circumstances, the police may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>divert the student through the Police Drug Diversion Initiative</li> <li>formally caution the student.</li> </ul> <p>On being satisfied that the evidence demonstrates an illegal drug-related incident has occurred, a professional judgment about consequent actions to take is determined in partnership with the student and caregivers, with paramount concern for student welfare.</p>	<p>drug incidents (eg distributing prescription drugs).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <i>Summary Offences Act</i> prescribes that police may not interview a child without a responsible adult present to represent the child.</li> </ul> <p><b>Police Drug Diversion Initiative</b></p> <p>All students in possession of or using illicit drugs, including illegally possessing or using prescription drugs, will be diverted to assessment and counselling.</p> <p><b>Procedures for Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion (SEE)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disciplinary actions are determined for inappropriate behaviour(s), rather than for the drugs in the incident.</li> <li>Disciplinary actions may include suspensions and exclusions (with notice in writing).</li> <li>Disciplinary actions that include suspensions or exclusions are arranged in accordance with the SEE procedures in the School Discipline Policy.</li> </ul>
<p>Legal drug but illegal or unsanctioned behaviour</p>	<p>If it is established that a legal drug has been used in an illegal manner, the principal/delegate may need to contact police for clarification of the level of police involvement required. District directors should be notified if police are to be involved.</p> <p>DECD policy dictates no smoking on school sites. Smoking at school, where no cigarettes have been distributed, is therefore legal but unsanctioned.</p>	<p><b>Student welfare</b></p> <p>Decision making processes necessitate <i>professional judgment</i> about the range of educational, welfare and disciplinary actions to take. Issues to influence decision making are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an abiding concern for the continuing education of the student (and of all students)</li> <li>the good order and reputation of the school</li> <li>maintaining the school as a safe environment.</li> </ul>
<p>Consequences</p>	<p>Consequences may be determined by applying natural justice principles, together with the school discipline policy. This may include the SEE procedures from the DECS School Discipline Policy. If cigarette dependency is an issue, teachers could suggest students contact the Quitline on 13 18 48.</p>	<p>If a student under the age of compulsion is suspended or excluded, the school is mandated to support their continuing education while they are off-site. This may mean organising for an alternative education provider during the period away from school.</p> <p><b>Natural justice</b></p>
<p>Drug not identified</p>	<p>If, by the end of the interview, the identity of a suspect drug has not been confirmed by a</p>	<p>Law and principles of natural justice dictate that the student should be informed of any decision and have the</p>

	student, the police must be called to investigate.	right to appeal if appropriate. If necessary, this may mean working with multicultural, refugee or Aboriginal support personnel or engaging interpreters. See support services at the end of this book for contact details.
No drug found but unusual behaviour suggests drug use	Following Health Support Planning guidelines, students should be treated as unwell and parents should be contacted to collect them.	
Decision	Student informed of decision and any appeal/review process.	

### 5.6. Assessment to Determine Consequences

Following the above processes:

WHAT?	HOW?	WHY?
Student development plan	<p>Appoint a member of staff to plan, monitor and facilitate a student development plan.</p> <p>Student development plans can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>suggesting counselling options, which may include a school support person as well as outside agencies</li> <li>organising continuing education support</li> <li>preparing school re-entry procedures.</li> </ul> <p>Student development plans need also to include procedures which preserve the dignity of the student/s by respecting their privacy.</p>	<p>Negotiate and reflect upon workloads in the process of managing incidents through the student development plan phase.</p> <p><b>Student welfare</b></p> <p>Student development plans are a significant example of how a school demonstrates its concern for students at risk.</p> <p>The student development plan may involve formal contact with community agencies, with the agreement of the student, eg DASC. However, schools have no authority to enforce student attendance at such agencies.</p> <p>Privacy issues for excluded students are continuously of concern, particularly relating to student development planning at the point of re-entry. The principle concerns here are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the stigmatising of a student</li> <li>the continuing reputation of the school as a protective institution.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunity to reflect upon practice</b></p> <p>In relation to the events (not the students) surrounding the incident, a staff meeting is ideal for clarifying the integrity of school philosophy and operating procedures around intervention into suspected drug related incidents.</p>
Staff review	<p>Following the resolution of a drug incident, provide an opportunity with all staff to review the integrity of the school policy and organisation for handling such incidents effectively.</p> <p>Aspects of school policy that could be addressed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>harm minimisation and student welfare</li> <li>the procedural values underpinning intervention practices</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• school/parents or caregivers/police partnerships</li><li>• professional judgment in relation to educative and punitive determinations</li><li>• student development planning principles,</li><li>• planning and facilitation</li><li>• inter-related aspects of the school's overall drug strategy.</li></ul>	
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## 6. Further Information

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Further information regarding this policy is available from any member of the Executive Leadership Team.

### Relevant Legislation

None

### Related Policies

None

### Related Procedures & Standard Operating Procedures

None

### Related Forms & Checklists

None

### Related Safe Work Practices & Guidance Notes

None

### Related Other Documentation

SPW Student Diary

Staff Procedure Manual

### Other

None