ILLICIT AND/OR ILLEGAL DRUG, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO POLICY
INTRODUCTION

The school may occasionally have to manage incidents that involve illicit and/or illegal drugs, including the use of alcohol. Reference to drugs in this document also can include reference to alcohol. Any response to a drug-related incident must be in a way that is fair, taking into account:

- the nature of the incident;
- the circumstances of the individuals involved, including age, developmental and other relevant considerations, and
- the needs and safety of others.

This document provides guidelines for managing drug-related incidents.

PREVENTION

In order to be better able to prevent and manage drug-related incidents SMGS will:

1. have clear rules and consequences for use or possession of drugs at school including school functions and events on or off campus;
2. ensure students, parents and school staff are aware of the rules about drugs and the consequences of possession or use of drugs at school;
3. provides a safe and supportive school environment, with curriculum and student welfare strategies, which help to strengthen protective factors and minimise risk factors known to be associated with drug misuse by young people;
4. create a sense of belonging to school, within which there are teachers/mentors who can provide guidance and emotional support for the young people in its care;
5. endorse membership of peer groups that actively discourage drug use;
6. encourage well-developed social and interpersonal skills, combined with adequate decision making skills;
7. promote personal responsibility and a commitment to achieving success at school and sense of wellbeing;
8. provide drug and alcohol education as a regular part of its curriculum, to equip students with the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe in a society in which drug use occurs and is often condoned or encouraged;
9. have established links with key community agencies to strengthen the school’s capacity to respond to drug related issues and reinforce the notion of community ‘ownership’ of drug issues;
10. provide its staff with current training in first aid, emergency care and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, as identified for contact in the case of a drug related incident that requires first aid or involves an emergency situation.

MANAGING DRUG-RELATED INCIDENTS

The immediate priority in any drug-related incident is to ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff. Once the immediate safety and welfare needs of students have been attended to the Principal will ensure appropriate follow-up actions are implemented in relation to the student/s involved in the incident. The goals of any follow-up actions will be to:

• consider on going safety and welfare of students and staff;
• inform the parents, if deemed appropriate, the Board and/or the relevant authority, if required;
• determine whether the student can remain enrolled in the school in consultation with the Board;
• support the enrolled student concerned, if remaining at SMGS assist the student to overcome problems relating to drug use where possible;
• assist the student and the family to link to appropriate community support services.
CONSIDERING SAFETY AND WELFARE OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

The immediate priority in any drug related incident is to ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff. Immediate action may include:

- establishing the basic facts necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of the students;
- determining what type of drug was taken;
- determining how much was taken;
- determining when and how it was taken;
- determining whether more than one type of drug was taken;
- determining whether anyone else was involved;
- locating any remaining drugs which may have been left after the incident;
- summoning help or providing first aid or emergency care;
- isolating students or confiscating any drugs in their possession;
- attending to the safety and welfare needs of all students involved, including those not directly concerned but who may have observed the incident;
- informing the Principal, as soon as possible.

STAFF COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Relevant staff will be briefed about a drug related incident, particularly where there is a need to coordinate staff support and implement a management plan for student. A briefing will include advice to staff about the basic facts of the incident and also advice about appropriate responses staff might give to questions that they may be asked. This will help to avoid inflaming the situation or passing on rumours. The nature of the briefing for staff will vary considerably depending on the nature of the incident. Depending on the circumstances of the incident, some members of staff may need support.

SCHOOL BOARD COMMUNICATION

The Principal will inform the Chairman, at the earliest possible opportunity, of any drug-related incident occurring within the school. The Principal and Chairman will then determine the level of detail to be communicated to the School Board and community, bearing in mind privacy issues, but understanding the need for the Board to be adequately informed in order to answer questions addressed to them by the school and local community.
MEDIA

All communication with the media concerning a drug-related incident will be through the Principal or his/her delegate.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

As soon as it is deemed appropriate, the Principal will inform the school community of any drug-related incident that has occurred. The privacy of the individuals involved will be maintained at all times, but by informing the school community of the facts, the spreading of rumours may be reduced.

IDENTIFYING SUBSTANCES SUSPECTED OF BEING ILLEGAL OR RESTRICTED

Where substances suspected of being illegal drugs or restricted substances are found in the possession of students or other school community members, the Principal will seek the assistance of the local NSW Police who may come to the school and take possession of the substance.

POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

Where there are implications of illegal activity and the police are called, the investigation is then the responsibility of the NSW Police. The Principal will not initiate an investigation, beyond establishing the basic facts, unless advised to do so by the police. The police will carry out any enquiries consistent with approved police practice.

Decisions about criminal investigation in a matter involving a student and illegal drugs are the responsibility of the NSW Police. However, a police investigation of a particular matter does not remove the Principal’s obligation to deal with the behaviour as an internal disciplinary action and to impose appropriate school-based sanctions. The Principal is required by law to report use or possession of illegal drugs to the NSW Police without delay.

SCHOOL-BASED CONSEQUENCES

As the School does not condone the illegal use or possessions of drugs, the school will use measured consequences to respond to individuals who are involved in drug-related incidents. The individual circumstances will always be considered in any decision taken, but the ability of the school to safeguard the student concerned and the other students and staff, will be of paramount importance. The range of consequences applicable may include:

• suspension from the school and/or the Boarding House;
• expulsion from the school.
**RETURN TO SCHOOL**

Should there be any consideration of a return to school a condition will be the involvement in a targeted intervention program to help them change their drug related behaviours. Participation in an appropriate program can take place before or after the student’s return to school and should not necessarily delay the return after the suspension period has been served. The school counsellor, in consultation with parents and the Principal (and Residential Director for boarders), will assist in:

- assessing the student’s involvement with drugs and implementing appropriate strategies to help the student to change their behaviour
- determining the nature of the targeted intervention program, which may include:
  - counselling at school,
  - participation in a school-based intervention program or
  - referral to a specialised drug and alcohol or health service.

Appropriate staff within the school’s student welfare team will monitor a student’s progress and provide support to the student on return to school. A student who has been suspended for any involvement with drugs or drug use can only return to school with a re-entry plan that ensures that their behaviour and progress is strictly monitored, which may involve drug testing on a periodic basis. It is important that confidentiality and privacy is respected.

**TOBACCO**

The Principal will implement the school’s student welfare and discipline policies and strategies appropriate to the circumstances. Student use of tobacco and alcohol is prohibited whilst under the care of the School and the Boarding House. This includes but is not limited to school functions, excursions and any sporting events.

If a student is suspended, appropriate staff within the school’s student welfare team will monitor progress and provide support to the student on return to school. It is important that confidentiality and privacy be respected.

**SCHOOL-BASED CONSEQUENCES**

As the School does not condone the use or possession of tobacco, the school will use measured and progressive consequences to respond to individuals who are involved in tobacco-related incidents. The individual circumstances will always be considered in any decision taken, but the ability of the school to safeguard the student concerned and the other students and staff, will be of paramount importance. The range of consequences applicable may include:

- gating (for boarding students), afterschool/weekend detentions
- suspension from the school and/or the Boarding House;
expulsion from the school.

Internal counselling, as well as accessing external support/dependence programs may also be a measured part of responding to ongoing student use.

**MISUSE OF OVER THE COUNTER AND PRESCRIBED MEDICINES**

Where there are concerns that a student is misusing over-the-counter or prescribed medicines, the Principal will discuss possible interventions with the student, where appropriate, and/or with the school counsellor and/or the parents. If doubts remain as to the medical circumstances of the case or possible treatment required, the parents will be advised to consult the family doctor.

If there are concerns that student misuse of prescribed medications could have implications of illegality, the Principal may refer the matter to the NSW Police to seek advice as to the next appropriate steps to be taken. Where the NSW Police are consulted the parents of any students involved will be informed as soon as practicable. In cases where students are supplying a restricted substance, the NSW Police must be notified.

**MISUSE OF OVER THE COUNTER AND PRESCRIBED MEDICINES**

The school reserves the right to drug or breath test students, but only under the following conditions:

- Where permission from the parents has been granted. If this permission is withheld, the school reserves the right to require the parents to remove the student from the school with immediate effect;
- Where a pre-arranged agreement has been made, involving the parents and the student, as part of a management plan for a student who has been involved in a drug related incident.

Any testing undertaken will follow strict medical guidelines and be undertaken by a qualified medical practitioner of the school’s choice with the cost being met by the parents.

If a member of staff suspects that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they must immediately report this to the Principal or his/her delegate, who will then instigate appropriate procedures, as outlined in this policy.

Where there is an issue of safety involving either the student concerned, or other students involved with the student, or a member of staff, the member of staff responsible will first take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of all concerned.
**Authority to Search**

The Principal may elect to authorise the search of a student’s room (Boarding), locker or bag other school property where there is any suspicion that the student may have an illegal substance/implement, or alcohol or tobacco in their possession. The School will make every attempt to contact a parent before undertaking this process where practicable. The School reserves the right to carry out a search as required and may elect to call in the NSW Police in some situations. The School will ensure that there are no less than two members of staff present to carry out a search and where practicable the student will also be present to ensure sensitivity to privacy is considered. Every attempt will be made to have a female member of staff to search a female student’s room and a male member of staff for a male student but this cannot always be assured. Where personal property (such as a bag) is in need of searching to aid an investigation, a member of staff will seek permission from the student and/or parent in advance. Where permission is denied, the NSW Police may be called to search the item instead.