



The John Paul College mission statement speaks of the commitment of all members of the community to recognising the essential dignity of the person and of the need for all to experience the 'fullness of life' promised in John 10:10.

Rationale

The John Paul College mission statement speaks of the commitment of all members of the community to welcome students and their families from the greater Frankston region. We strive to be respectful, inclusive, compassionate, just and forgiving and to create a culture that fosters wellbeing, promotes resilience and inspires faith in action.

Preamble

This policy describes how John Paul College will manage the important issue of drugs. As students mature they are faced with decisions concerning their own health and wellbeing. John Paul College strives to provide an educational environment where student decisions can be made with appropriate knowledge and understanding of the potential consequences to themselves and others. John Paul College is a 'drug free' environment, which is binding on all members and visitors of the college community. A reminder to all parents that prescription medication is to be handed into the School Nurse.

Definition

A *drug* is any substance, with the exception of food and water, which when taken into the body alters its function physically and psychologically. This includes all legal and illegal substances.

An *illicit drug* is a drug of which the production, sale, possession or use is prohibited. An alternative term is 'illegal drug'.

An *unsanctioned drug* is a drug for which use is restricted by law, school authorities and/or school policies/guidelines, eg, alcohol and cigarettes. The term includes illicit, social and prescription drugs.

Harm minimisation refers to policies and programs aimed at reducing drug-related harm which includes the promotion of abstinence, prevention of anticipated harm, and reduction of actual harm.

Education

The College's approach to drug education is based on the concept of harm minimisation, which encompasses a range of strategies including non-abuse, so that students can make informed choices based on factual information. It aims to:

- provide knowledge about the effects of individual drugs, including the consequences of drug use and safety messages about risks
- develop coping, problem-solving, decision-making and resilience skills that enable young people to effectively manage everyday stressors and
- develop community links with DET (Department of Education and Training), Victoria Police, Youth Resource Officers and other community agencies.

Specialist teachers are provided with professional development opportunities to keep abreast of current knowledge, trends, resources and practices in drug education. When appropriate and relevant, information about drug-related issues will be disseminated to parents so they will also be able to support the wellbeing of their children

Behavioural Expectations

Unsanctioned drugs are prohibited during school activities and/or when wearing school uniform. At these times it is expected that students:

- are not in possession of any unsanctioned drugs, including cigarettes and alcohol
- are not affected by unsanctioned drugs
- do not possess any unsanctioned drug-related equipment such as syringes, bongs, pipes etc, except in the case of lawful medical use
- do not deliberately inhale solvents including paint, glue and petrol
- do not arrange for the distribution and/or sale of any unsanctioned drugs or be involved in situations that may put other students at risk
- will not knowingly congregate with others using unsanctioned drugs.

Those who have knowledge of unsanctioned drug use by others are expected to act morally and with a duty of care by reporting the matter to a responsible member of the John Paul College community.

Consequences & Procedures

Any breach of the behavioural expectations will be considered on an individual basis. The seriousness of the matter and the age of the student will influence the response, which will ultimately be determined by the College Principal. School-imposed consequences will include appropriate sanctions. Other supportive strategies, such as education, counselling, restorative practices and referral to community agencies will also be offered, so that students can understand the broader life consequences of their decisions and/or behaviour.

Where students are found in possession, using, selling or otherwise distributing illicit drugs, his/her parents will be informed and Victoria Police will be notified. The College will work collaboratively with Victoria Police to safeguard the wellbeing of the young person and the wider community, and to ensure appropriate action is taken in response to the drug-related incident.

In some serious circumstances, a change of school or a move to an alternative setting may be judged the most appropriate means by which a student's wellbeing can be responsibly supported or restored. Such a change, known as negotiated transfer, offers opportunity for personal growth, and for a fresh start in an environment more suited to the student's needs and circumstances.

Reference: CEM (Catholic Education Melbourne) Policy 2.13 – Drug Issues in Catholic Schools

Policy revised: April 2016

Next review date: 2021

Person responsible: Deputy Principal Wellbeing