Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools

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1. **Scope (audience and applicability)**

This procedure applies to all people who provide and support learning in schools and senior secondary schools (colleges) and early learning settings including Child and Family Centres, Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) and child care facilities.

2. **Purpose**

This procedure supports the implementation of the systemic drug education and drug management policy. It is essential to ensure that all educational leaders have a consistent approach to providing drug education and managing drug related incidents including the confiscation of licit and illicit drugs.

Leaders should be aware that there may be legal ramifications if they were to take unilateral action that is inconsistent with the nationally accepted protocols and departmental policies and procedures for managing drug-related incidents in schools.

3. **Definitions**

**Drug:** A substance which produces a psychoactive effect. Within the context of the National Drug Strategic Framework, the term drug is used generically to include tobacco, alcohol, pharmaceutical drugs and illicit drugs. The National Drug Strategic Framework also includes strategies to address the harmful use of other substances, including inhalants.

**Drug-related incident:** Any occasion involving alcohol, tobacco and/or other drug use and/or the possession, distribution or supply of a drug or drug-related equipment.

**Drug-related issues:** All issues associated with drugs, including those that arise from personal use and use by another person or persons.

**Illicit drug:** A drug for which the production, sale, possession or use is prohibited. An alternative term is 'illegal drug'.

**Pharmaceutical drug:** Drugs available through pharmacies, supermarkets or stores including over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

**Prescribed person:** Principal, teacher or member of staff of any Tasmanian Government school and early learning settings including Child and Family Centres, ECIS and child care facilities.

**Psychoactive effects:** The effects produced by a drug or substance that alter mental processes including mood, cognition, thinking or behaviour. There are a range of substances that produce a psychoactive effect such as energy drinks, performance enhancing drinks/drugs, sugar and caffeine which impact on learning and behaviour.

**Safe and supportive school environment:** Environments which will provide for the physical, physiological, psychological, social, cultural, aesthetic and intellectual development of students (as defined in the National Safe Schools Framework).
School community: The school community is generally considered to comprise of students, school staff (for example teachers and other professionals, administrators and other support staff) and parents/guardians and other carers.

Unsanctioned drug: A drug that its use is restricted by law, school authorities and/or school policies/guidelines. It includes illicit, licit and pharmaceutical drugs, being used illicitly.

4. Requirements

4.1 Principles of Harm Minimisation

The National Drug Strategy and the Tasmanian Drug Strategy are based on the philosophy of ‘harm minimisation’. It is considered to be the most useful approach to drug-related issues in that it aims to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs for individuals, their families and friends, and the community. Its key concept is that drug use should be minimised and that harm from drug use and psychoactive substances should be limited. Harm minimisation involves a range of approaches to prevent or reduce drug-related harm, including prevention, early intervention, specialist treatment, supply control, safer drug use and abstinence.

- It involves a balance between demand reduction, supply reduction and harm reduction strategies aimed at promoting better health, social and economic outcomes for the community and the individual.
- According to the harm minimisation approach, schools and other educational settings, while acknowledging that it is likely that some students will experiment with drugs, should neither condone nor encourage the misuse of drugs by young people.
- It is an approach most likely to discourage high risk behaviours and encourage safer behaviours.
- In educational settings this means encouraging personal choice and informed decision-making by students as the foundation of effective drug prevention and intervention strategies, and it means the provision of a supportive environment that maximises the factors known to be protective for students in reducing risk-taking behaviours.

4.2 School-based Policies and Procedures

Tasmanian Government schools will have in place policies and procedures that outline the provision of drug education and managing drug related incidents.

These will be developed in accordance with:

- The Principles of Harm Minimisation (section 4.1)
- The Action Plan: drug-related incident (Appendix 5)
- Managing media in relation to a drug-related incident (Appendix 6)

4.3 Drug Education

All Tasmanian Government schools will provide age-appropriate, teacher led drug education consistent with the Principles for School Drug Education (2004) (Appendix 1) and the Australian Curriculum – Health and Physical Education.
Guided by the National Safe Schools Framework, all schools will provide a safe and supportive environment, maximising the factors that are known to be protective for students in reducing risk-taking behaviours.

4.4 Drug Management of licit and illicit

Drug management is about managing all forms of licit and illicit drugs:

- on school premises
- at functions and activities held on school premises outside school hours.
- during school functions and activities that are not conducted on school premises.

4.4.1 Managing licit drugs

The provision includes schools’ administration of medications and managing other health care issues such as handling discarded needles/syringes, matters covered in the Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines.

4.4.2 Managing illicit drugs

All schools will implement the procedure for managing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug related incidents consistent with:

- Statutory Requirements – Alcohol in Schools (Appendix 2)
- Statutory Requirements – Tobacco in Schools (Appendix 3)
- Statutory Requirements – Illicit Drugs in Schools (Appendix 4)
- The department’s Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy
- The Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools

4.5 Responding to drug related incidents

All responses to drug related incidents will be based upon:

  - The guidelines for developing a drug related incident action plan (Appendix 5)
  - The guidelines for managing media in relation to a drug-related incident (Appendix 6)
  - The Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools

4.5.1 Confiscation of licit and illicit drugs

Principals will refer to the Statutory Requirements:

- Statutory Requirements – Alcohol in Schools (Appendix 2)
- Statutory Requirements – Tobacco in Schools (Appendix 3)
- Statutory Requirements – Illicit Drugs in Schools (Appendix 4)
4.5.2 Responding to drug related incidents

In responding to drug related incidents school leaders will:

a. reflect the principles of procedural fairness, that is, utilising fair procedures in the making of decisions which might adversely affect the rights of those subject to them
b. be consistent, whilst taking into account the nature of the incident and the circumstances of the student/s involved, including relevant age, developmental, gender, cultural and social considerations
c. recognise the needs and safety of others in the school
d. recognise the role of Tasmania Police as described through the Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools.

e. utilise, as appropriate, the resources of support staff and community service providers in ensuring that responses to students' drug-related behaviours are comprehensive and coordinated
f. seek to ensure that students involved in drug-related incidents remain connected to an educational or vocational pathway. Detachment from school is a known risk factor for problematic drug use.

4.6 Communication Strategy

School leaders will ensure that:

- staff, parents, students and the wider school community are aware of:
  - the Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy and Procedure
  - the Principles for School Drug Education (Appendix 1)
  - the Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools
  - the consequences of possession, use and/or distribution of illicit and other unsanctioned drugs such as tobacco and alcohol that are prohibited in all Tasmanian Government schools.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

| Deputy Secretary Early Years and Schools must | • provide advice and support for the enactment of this procedure. |
| General Managers Learning Services must: | • promote this procedure and ensure that schools adhere to the requirements of this procedure.  
• ensure schools and senior secondary schools (colleges) adopt and implement these policies and procedures and outline and promote the provision of drug education and managing drug related incidents.  
• ensure the *Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy and Procedure* are implemented in accordance with principles and guidelines noted in section 4.2 of this procedure. |
| Managers’ School Support must: | • ensure, in partnership with schools that there is ongoing support provided to students involved in drug related incidents, with the aim of maintaining their engagement in an educational or vocational program.  
• facilitate where necessary, a student’s re-integration into the school (if suspended or excluded), or integration into a new school, alternative educational setting or vocational program. |
| School principals must: | • ensure that the school provides a safe and supportive environment for all students.  
• implement the *Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy and Procedure* that outline the provision of drug education and managing drug related incidents.  
• ensure the *Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy and Procedure* are implemented in accordance with principles and guidelines noted in section 4.2.  
• act in accordance with the *Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy and Procedure* for responding to drug-related incidents including the *Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools*.  
• raise awareness of the *Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy and Procedure* with staff, students, parents and the wider school community. |
| Teachers and other school staff must: | • contribute to the provision of a safe and supportive environment in the school.  
• comply with the *Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy and Procedure* that outline the provision of drug education and managing drug related incidents. |
| Parents/carers must: | • adhere to the *Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy and Procedure* that outline the provision of drug education and managing drug related incidents. |
| Learners must: | • adhere to the *Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy and Procedure* that outline the provision of drug education and managing drug related incidents. |
6. Associated Documents and Materials

The following documents are available from www.education.tas.gov.au (Search for the Doc ID)

- Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy (Doc ID: TASED-4-1880)
- Learner Wellbeing and Behaviour Policy (Doc ID: TASED-4-1734)
- Learner Health Care and Safety Policy (Doc ID: TASED-4-2986)
- Child Protection and Children in Care (Doc ID: TASED-4-1723)
- Work Health and Safety – Smoke-free Workplaces (DocID: TASED-4-2306)
- Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools
- National Drug Strategic Framework
- Appendix 1: Principles for school drug education
- Appendix 2: Statutory Requirements – Alcohol in Schools
- Appendix 3: Statutory requirements – Tobacco in Schools
- Appendix 4: Statutory requirements – Illicit Drugs in Schools
- Appendix 5: Action Plan: drug-related incident
- Appendix 6: Managing media in relation to a drug-related incident

Authorised by: Liz Banks
Position of authorising person: Deputy Secretary, Early Years and Schools
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Developed by: Strategic Policy and Planning
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This document replaces: Alcohol School Guidelines, Tobacco School Guidelines, Illicit Drugs School Guidelines
Appendix 1

Principles for school drug education

The Principles for school drug education are based on a set of Principles devised by the University of Canberra in a document called Drug Education in Schools in 1994, which were revised by the Commonwealth under the auspices of the Principles for school drug education, 2004.

1. Base drug education on sound theory and current research and use evaluation to inform decisions.
2. Embed drug education within a comprehensive whole school approach to promoting health and wellbeing.
3. Establish drug education outcomes that are appropriate to the school context and contribute to the overall goal of minimising drug-related harm.
4. Promote a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment as part of seeking to prevent or reduce drug-related harm.
5. Promote collaborative relationships between students, staff, families and the broader community in the planning and implementation of school drug education.
6. Provide culturally appropriate, targeted and responsive drug education that addresses local needs, values and priorities.
7. Acknowledge that a range of risk and protective factors impact on health and education outcomes, and influence choices about drug use.
8. Use consistent policy and practice to inform and manage responses to drug-related incidents and risks.
9. Locate programs within a curriculum framework, thus providing timely, developmentally appropriate and ongoing drug education.
10. Ensure that teachers are resourced and supported in their central role in delivering drug education programs.
11. Use student-centred, interactive strategies to develop students’ knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

Provide accurate information and meaningful learning activities that dispel myths about drug use and focus on real life contexts and challenges.
Appendix 2

Statutory Requirements – Alcohol in Schools

Students

- Regardless of age, students are not permitted on school premises under the influence of alcohol, or to possess or drink alcohol at school or at school-related activities including excursions, camps, socials or end-of-year dinners.

Confiscation of Alcohol

- Alcohol being used or in the possession of a student must be confiscated by staff and stored in a designated secure place.
- Staff must record the details of the incident, including actions taken and where possible seek witnesses to the incident. The incident report should be uploaded to the Student Support System (SSS).
- For students under the age of 18, parents must be informed and offered the option of removing the alcohol from the school. If parents don’t take up this offer, the principal is to safely dispose of the alcohol.
- For students over the age of 18 the alcohol can be returned to the student after school hours with a directive to take them immediately off school property.

Schools

- Employers have an obligation to provide a safe workplace for their employees. Section 19(3a) of the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 requires an employer to provide and maintain a working environment without risks to health and safety.
- Staff should be made aware of possible implications in relation to:
  - Attending student social occasions not sponsored by the school, including Year 12 end of year functions.
  - Posting personal photos and information depicting or implying the use of alcohol and other drugs on electronic and social network facilities/online communities. For further information see the DoE Social Media Policy.

Student-focussed functions/events

- Alcohol must not be provided at any student-focussed function or event.
- Staff cannot supply alcohol in any form to students, this includes in school Home Economics cooking classes.

Community/parent-focussed school functions/events

- The principal at their discretion may permit consumption of alcohol at out-of hours community/parent-focussed school functions/events (social and fundraising occasions) provided that:
  - the function is not during normal school hours
  - the General Manager Learning Services is informed of and approves the provision of alcohol at the said function
  - during the planning phase the views of parents around the provision of alcohol is sought
• parents are advised in advance that alcohol will be offered/available and that students who are not supervised by a parent or responsible adult cannot attend

• students who are present with their parents are the responsibility of their parents

• students without parent or responsible adult supervision are not permitted to attend

• the requirement for a liquor licence or RSA (responsible serving of alcohol) training is ascertained

Staff

• Under the State Service Code of Conduct staff are required to act appropriately in the course of their duties and to maintain the confidence of the community in the activities of the State Service. Whilst holding duty of care responsibilities, including at out of hour student or school functions, activities or events, the consumption of alcohol or other unsanctioned drugs (see the department’s Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy), is not permitted.

• The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 makes all people coming into contact with students in a professional role provide mandatory reporting when required. School staff and volunteers are mandatory reporters under the CYPFA. If a student discloses drug use in any circumstances it is considered the student may be at risk within the framework of the Act and a notification must be made.

Staff function/events

• The consumption of alcohol at staff functions/events organised by employers (may include such things as "Friday night drinks", Christmas parties, social functions etc.) requires careful consideration that:

  o the function is not during normal school hours

  o the principles of responsible serving of alcohol are adhered to

  o the principles of the Respectful Schools and Workplace Framework are adhered to and staff assume responsible and courteous behaviour at all times.
Appendix 3

Statutory Requirements – Tobacco in Schools

Students

- The law states that a child (under 18 years) must not smoke, use or possess any tobacco product (*Public Health Act 1997*).
- The law also states that a person must not sell, lend, give or supply or offer to sell, lend, give or supply any tobacco product to, or for the use of, any child (*Public Health Act 1997*). This applies to all persons who are employed in, contracted to, study in, or visit schools, senior secondary schools (colleges) and early learning settings including Child and Family Centres, Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) and child care facilities.
- Students over 18 who smoke are restricted by the Department of Education Drug Education and Drug Management policy and procedures and relevant *Public Health Act 1997* provisions.

Confiscation of Tobacco

- Tobacco being used or in the possession of a student must be confiscated by staff and stored in a designated secure place.
- Staff must record the details of the incident, including actions taken and where possible seek witnesses to the incident. The incident report should be uploaded to the Student Support System (SSS).
- For students under the age of 18, parents must be informed and offered the option of removing the tobacco from the school. If parents don’t take up this offer, the principal is to safely dispose of the tobacco.
- For students over the age of 18 the tobacco can be returned to the student after school hours with a directive to take them immediately off school property.

Schools

- The law states the following areas must be smoke free (*Public Health Act 1997*):
  - Enclosed public places
  - Workplaces
  - Outdoor sporting venues (20 metres from competition, seating and marshalling areas)
  - Within three metres of entrances and exits to buildings
  - Within ten metres of air conditioning intakes of buildings.
- All schools and educational sites including the school buildings and grounds are smoke-free. This extends to a “buffer zone” around crossing guards employed by the State when undertaking their duties at crossings.
  - This applies to all persons on school premises including staff, students, contractors, visitors, etc.
  - All school events including fairs, sporting events and parent/community meetings are smoke-free.
- External and community organisations applying to utilise departmental facilities should be informed of the department’s *Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy* and *Procedure* at the time of application.
- All staff have the responsibility to ask any person/s to refrain from smoking in schools, educational sites and other smoke-free department locations.
Staff

- The law requires all workplaces and work vehicles (when another person is present) must be smoke-free (*Public Health Act 1997*).

- The Department of Education also maintains a smoke-free environment in line with its occupational health and safety obligation to provide a healthy and safe work environment for all of its employees.

- Employees cannot smoke at any time in any departmental work locations, including buildings or grounds, or government vehicles; effective 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- Smoking must only occur away from the workplace during a recognised break. This means out of school grounds.

- The *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997* makes all people coming into contact with students in a professional role provide mandatory reporting when required. School staff and volunteers are mandatory reporters under the CYPFA. If a student discloses drug use in any circumstances it is considered the student may be at risk within the framework of the Act and a notification must be made.

The Department of Education supports the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) *Smoke Free Generation* initiative. This seeks to shift attitudes, intentions and behaviours around smoking by young people.
Appendix 4

Statutory Requirements – Illicit Drugs in Schools

Students

Adhere to the school’s implementation of the Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy and Procedure that outline the provision of drug education and managing drug related incidents.

Confiscation of Illicit Drugs

- As per the Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools.

If a suspected illicit drug is located on school premises:

- Staff should take temporary possession of the suspected illicit drug and hand it over to the police at the first possible opportunity. Staff should ensure corroboration/confirmation of any seizure, and such seizures are to be recorded and stored securely until handed over to the police.
- In the interests of safeguarding the health and safety of staff, unknown substances should be handled to a minimum and with extreme care.
- Protective gloves should always be worn when handling suspected illicit drugs or drug paraphernalia.
- Do not under any circumstances taste or sniff any suspicious substance.

NEITHER POLICE OFFICERS NOR SCHOOL STAFF ARE AUTHORISED BY THE POISONS ACT 1971 OR MISUSE OF DRUGS ACT 2001, TO DESTROY OR DISPOSE OF DRUGS SEIZED. ALL SEIZURES ARE FORFEITED TO THE CROWN.

SCHOOL AUTHORITIES SHOULD REPORT ALL ILLICIT DRUG-RELATED INCIDENTS TO TASMANIA POLICE.

Schools

All schools will develop a range of procedure responses to illicit drug-related incidents that:

- recognise the needs and safety of others in the school
- reflect the principles of procedural fairness, that is, utilising fair procedures in the making of decisions which might adversely affect the rights of those subject to them
- are consistent, whilst taking into account the nature of the incident and the circumstances of the student/s involved, including relevant age, developmental, gender, cultural and social considerations
- utilise, as appropriate, the resources of support staff and community service providers in ensuring that responses to students’ drug-related behaviours are comprehensive and coordinated
- seek to ensure that students involved in drug-related incidents remain connected to an educational or vocational pathway. Detachment from school is a known risk factor for problematic drug use
• recognise the role of Tasmania Police as described at: Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools.

Staff

The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 makes all people coming into contact with students in a professional role provide mandatory reporting when required. School staff and volunteers are mandatory reporters under the CYPFA. If a student discloses drug use in any circumstances it is considered the student may be at risk within the framework of the Act and a notification must be made.
Appendix 5

Action Plan: drug-related incident

When an illicit or unsanctioned drug is found with a student or a student is found apparently affected by drug use, or there is evidence of this, the following steps are to be followed. Schools may choose to add intermediate steps and specific names to the chart.

1. Attend to the immediate health and safety needs of the student/s or situation
2. Send for assistance: first-aid officer and/or senior staff person.
   Do not leave student/s unattended or, if there is no apparent health and safety risk involved, escort student/s to the principal, senior staff person or principal's nominee.
3. Call ambulance or provide first-aid with trained staff if required.
4. Report to principal or senior staff person or principal's nominee.
5. Record all details of the incident, including actions taken, and seek witnesses to the incident
   From this point responsibility for action lies with the principal or his/her delegate.
6. Inform parents/guardians of student/s of the circumstances, if the student is under the age of 18.
   For students over 18 inform the emergency contact.
7. Take steps in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools.
8. Implement the school’s counselling and disciplinary procedures, with appropriate support in place for student/s and staff involved. Note: if drugs are illicit, police may initiate intervention procedures.
9. Inform school staff, students, families, school associations on a need-to-know basis, as necessary, having regard to issues of confidentiality. This may include reference to the support services available to the student/parents in the wider community.
10. Refer any media to the department's Communications and Media Unit, in collaboration with your General Manager Learning Service.
Appendix 6

Managing media in relation to a drug-related incident

When a drug-related incident occurs in a school, whether possession, use or distribution of an unsanctioned or illicit substance, the media may hear of it and approach members of the school community for comment. Should this occur the following procedure is advised:

1. Advise the media representative that you will ring them back, or ask them to ring back at a designated time. **Do not** respond off the cuff.

2. Ring your General Manager Learning Service to brief them about the drug-related incident (if this has not already been done) and to inform them of the media contact. Decide which one of you will take the next step.

3. Ring the Department’s Communications and Media Unit on 6165 5724 and talk to the Manager or to one of the Communications Consultants. On their advice, decide on a strategy for responding to the media considering Confidentiality and Media Management on page 12 in the *Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools*.

4. Nominate one media spokesperson for the school, usually the principal or the General Manager Learning Service (or nominee), in collaboration with the Communications and Media Unit.

5. In collaboration with the Communications and Media Unit and General Manager Learning Service, prepare a written press release to provide to the media who seek information. Fax or email media release when requested. Name the media spokesperson with whom the media representatives may follow up if they wish. **Names of students and teachers involved in the incident should not be used.**

6. Direct any follow-up phone calls or other form of contact to the media spokesperson nominated. **No-one else should speak to the media.** The principal must ensure that all parties are aware of this.

7. Media spokesperson should record times and dates and broad content of all conversations with the media for future reference.

8. A similar consultation process should determine who within the wider school community (staff, students, families, and other interested parties like school associations) should be informed of the incident and in what detail.