Drug Education and Management Policy

STAFF ONLY
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1. PURPOSE

The Drug Education and Management in Schools Policy (this Policy) aims to support schools and colleges, Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS), Child and Family Centres (CFCs) and Libraries (Learning Environments) to understand the requirements regarding drug education, drug management and the management of drug-related incidents in their premises; including confiscation of alcohol, smoking products and other illicit drugs.

This Policy applies to all Learning Environments and should be used as a guide to assist with the development of any policy or procedure regarding drug education, drug incidents, and drug management. Educational Leaders should be aware of their responsibilities regarding drug education, drug management and the management of drug-related incidents. Acting inconsistently with this Policy and the nationally accepted protocols and departmental policies for drug-related issues in Learning Environments may have legal ramifications. It is essential to ensure that all Principals and CFC Leaders (Educational Leaders) have a lawful and consistent approach to providing drug education and managing drug related incidents. A systemic approach ensures all learners and staff are provided with an environment that is supportive and free from harm.

2. KEY MESSAGES

2.1 Principle of Harm Minimisation

The philosophy of “harm minimisation” underpins the National Drug Strategy, the Tasmanian Drug Strategy and any Department of Education policies for drug education and management in Learning Environments. Harm minimisation is considered to be the most useful approach to drug-related issues. It aims to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of alcohol, smoking products and other drugs for individuals, their families and friends, and the community. The key concept for this approach 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, Learning Environments should neither condone nor encourage the misuse of drugs by young people, while acknowledging that it is likely that some students will experiment with drugs.

In educational settings, this means encouraging personal choice and informed decision-making by students as the foundation of effective drug prevention and intervention strategies. It also means the provision of a supportive environment that maximises the factors known to be protective for students in reducing risk-taking behaviours.

2.2 Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges

The Department of Education has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tasmania Police. This MoU complements preventative school-based drug education programs and ensures that, where police intervention is requested in relation to drug-related incidents in schools, police and individual school responses are planned, structured and consistent with the National Drug Strategy. Educational Leaders and staff should be aware of the MoU and its contents.
2.3 **Children, Young People and their Families Act 1997 (CYPFA)**

The CYPFA makes all people coming into contact with students in a professional role mandatory reporters, including staff and volunteers in Learning Environments. If a student discloses drug use in any circumstances it is considered that the student may be at risk within the framework of this Act and a notification **MUST** be made.

2.4 **Roles and Responsibilities**

Educational Leaders **MUST:**

- Ensure the Learning Environment and its drug policies are planned to provide a safe and supportive environment for all students.
- Ensure the Learning Environment’s drug-related policy and guidelines are up to date, and follow requirements outlined in this Policy.
- Ensure staff are aware of drug policies and have the tools/knowledge to apply them.
- Ensure that staff, parents, volunteers, students and the wider community are aware of the Learning Environment’s policies for drug education, drug management and responses to drug-related incidents.

Teachers and other support staff **MUST:**

- Be aware of, understand and comply with the Learning Environment’s policy for drug education and management of drug-related issues.

2.5 **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Why does my Learning Environment need to have its own policy?**

Each Learning Environment has different needs and a unique community. Your Learning Environment’s policy should reflect its context and needs.

**Where can I find a template to develop a policy for my Learning Environment?**

Templates for developing a DoE policy can be found in the Template Library on the DoE webpage.

**Can I search a student’s locker, desk or bag?**

Staff can search student’s locker or desk without permission because these things are generally considered school property.

Staff can search student’s bag with permission. If you don’t have permission, you should ask the student to empty their bags out themselves. The only time staff can search a bag is if they think there is an urgent risk to the safety of other students. Staff need to remind the student that the school can always call the police who can search them without permission.

**How should I communicate the Learning Environments’ policy to its community?**

The best way for you to communicate your policies to the community is via your Learning Environment’s Newsletter. In addition to this, you may also post on your Learning Environment’s webpage or social media page.

2.6 **Associated documents and materials**

The following resources **MAY** help in developing or updating the Learning Environment’s policies for drug related issues:

- National Drug Strategy
- Tasmanian Drug Strategy
3. DRUG EDUCATION IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

3.1 Policy Objective
It is important for Learning Environments to aim to maximise factors that are known to be protective for students in reducing risk-taking behaviours. This Policy aims to guide Learning Environments in achieving consistent and positive drug education that is age-appropriate, teacher led and promotes harm minimisation.

3.2 Requirements
The drug education in the Learning Environment MUST:
- Be consistent with the Australian Curriculum – Health and Physical Education.
- Be guided by the National Safe Schools Framework.
- Follow the Principles for Drug Education outlined below.

3.2.1 PRINCIPLES FOR DRUG EDUCATION
The Principles for Drug Education (based on Principles for school drug education 2004, devised from the University of Canberra’s principles, 1994) MUST be used to guide the provision of Drug Education in schools. School-based Drug Education MUST:
- Be based on accurate information and use evaluation to inform decisions.
- Be embedded within a comprehensive whole Learning Environment approach to promoting health and wellbeing.
- Establish drug education outcomes that are appropriate to the Learning Environment context and contribute to the overall goal of minimising drug-related harm.
- Promote a safe, supportive and inclusive Learning Environment as part of seeking to prevent or reduce drug-related harm.
- Promote collaborative relationships between students, staff, families and the broader community in the planning and implementation of Learning Environment drug education.
- Provide culturally appropriate, targeted and responsive drug education that addresses local needs, values and priorities.
- Acknowledge that a range of risk and protective factors impact on health and education outcomes, and influence choices about drug use.
- Use consistent policy and practice to inform and manage responses to drug-related incidents and risks.
- Locate programs within a curriculum framework, thus providing timely, developmentally appropriate and ongoing drug education.
- Ensure that teachers are resourced and supported in their central role in delivering drug education programs.
- 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.

3.3 Roles and Responsibilities
Educational Leaders MUST:
- Ensure drug education in the Learning Environment is implemented according to the requirements outlined above.
Teachers and other support staff MUST:

- Provide students with a safe and supportive environment for drug education.

### 3.4 Associated Documents and Materials

The following resources MAY help in planning for the implementation of drug education in Learning Environments:

- [Australian Curriculum – Health and Physical Education](#)
- [National Safe Schools Framework](#)
- [Principles for school drug education 2004](#)
4. **DRUG MANAGEMENT IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

4.1 **Policy Objective**

This Policy provides guidance to Learning Environments for consistent management of licit and illicit drugs at functions and activities held on the Learning Environment’s premises outside operating hours; and during functions and activities of the Learning Environment held outside its premises. Consistent management is important to minimise harm and provide a safe environment for Learners and staff. The provision includes Learning Environments’ administration of medications and managing other health care issues, such as handling discarded needles/syringes, matters covered in the Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines.

4.2 **Requirements**

The procedures for management of illicit drugs and drug related issues **MUST** be consistent with:

- The Principles for School Drug Education outlined in the requirements for Drug Education in Schools section of this Policy (see page 5).
- The Department’s Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy (this Policy).

4.3 **Alcohol in Learning Environments**

4.3.1 **STUDENTS**

- Regardless of age, students are not permitted on the Learning Environment’s premises under the influence of alcohol, or to possess or drink alcohol at the Learning Environment or at a Learning Environment-related activity including excursions, camps, socials or end of year dinners.

4.3.2 **LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

- 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 Learning Environment, 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 or online communities. For further information, see the DoE Social Media Policy.

4.3.3 **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.

4.3.4 **COMMUNITY/PARENT-FOCUSSED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FUNCTIONS/EVENTS:**

- The Education Leaders **MAY** permit consumption of alcohol at out-of-hours community/parent-focussed functions/events (social and fundraising occasions) provided that:
  - the function is not during the normal operating hours of the Learning Environment,
4.3.5 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, the consumption of alcohol or other unsanctioned drugs is not permitted. This includes functions, activities or events that occur outside of the normal operating hours of the Learning Environment where duty of care responsibilities are present.

4.3.6 STAFF FUNCTIONS/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:
  - the function is not during the normal operating hours of the Learning Environment,
  - the principles of responsible serving of alcohol are adhered to,
  - the principles of the Respectful Schools and Workplace Framework are adhered to, and staff assume responsible and courteous behaviour at all times.

4.4 Smoking Products in Learning Environments

4.4.1 STUDENTS

- The law states that a child (under 18 years) MUST NOT smoke, use or possess any smoking product (Public Health Act 1997).
- Smoking products are defined as either or both of the following: any tobacco product and any personal vaporiser product.
• The law also states that a person MUST NOT sell, give or supply or offer to sell, lend, give or supply any smoking products 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 any Learning Environment.

• Students over 18 who smoke are restricted from smoking in certain places as prescribed by the Learning Environment policies and Public Health Act 1997 provisions.

4.4.2 LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

• The law states the following areas MUST be smoke free (Public Health Act 1997):
  o Enclosed public places,
  o Workplaces,
  o Outdoor sporting venues (20 metres from competition, seating and marshalling areas),
  o Within three metres of entrances and exits to buildings,
  o Within ten metres of air conditioning intakes of buildings.

• All Learning Environments and educational sites including the school buildings and grounds are smoke-free under this Policy, which also provides a smoke free “buffer zone” around crossing guards employed by the State when undertaking their duties at crossings:
  o This applies to all persons on Learning Environment’s premises including staff, students, contractors, visitors, etc.
  o All Learning Environment’s events including fairs, sporting events and parent/community meetings are smoke-free.
  o External and community organisations applying to utilise departmental facilities should be informed of the department’s Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy (this Policy) at the time of application.
  o All staff have the responsibility to ask any person/s to refrain from smoking in Learning Environments, educational sites and other smoke-free department locations.

4.4.3 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 Learning Environment’s grounds.

The Department of Education supports the Department of Health (DoH) Smoke Free Generation initiative. This seeks to shift attitudes, intentions and behaviours around smoking by young people.
4.5 Illicit Drugs in Learning Environments

4.5.1 STUDENTS
All students MUST be made aware of, and adhere to, the Learning Environment’s implementation of this Policy that outlines the provision of drug education and managing drugs and drug-related incidents.

4.5.2 LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
All Learning Environments MUST develop a range of procedure responses to illicit drug-related incidents that:

- Recognise the needs and safety of others in the Learning Environment.
- 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 in: Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools.

4.5.3 STAFF
All staff MUST:

- be aware of, and follow the Learning Environment’s guidelines regarding drug management and drug-related incidents.
- recognise and fulfil their role in the management and reporting of illicit drugs in Learning Environments outlined by the MoU and this Policy.

4.6 Roles and Responsibilities

Educational Leaders:

- Implement management of drugs in Learning Environments in accordance to this Policy.
- Ensure all members of staff are aware of appropriate drug management procedures and Learning Environment’s policies.

Teachers and other support staff:

- Follow Learning Environment’s guidelines, this Policy and Tasmania Police MoU for drug management.

4.7 Associated Documents and Materials

The following resources MAY help in the drug management in Learning Environments:

- Infection prevention and control guidelines.
5. RESPONDING TO ALCOHOL, SMOKING PRODUCTS AND DRUG-RELATED INCIDENTS IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

5.1 Policy Objective

This Policy aims to guide Learning Environments on how to draft a policy/procedures to meet their context while also promoting lawful conduct and best outcomes, maximising safety and minimising harm for all Learners and staff.

5.2 Requirements for responding to Drug-Related Incidents

The Learning Environment’s authorities MUST report all illicit drug-related incidents to Tasmania police. The responses to drug related incidents MUST be based upon:

- The Principles for School Drug Education (page 5).
- The guidelines for developing a drug related incident Action Plan (page 13).
- The guidelines for Managing Media in relation to drug-related incidents (Page 13).

5.2.1 CONFISCATING LICIT AND ILLICIT DRUGS

Neither police officers nor Learning Environments’ 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.

The confiscation of licit and illicit drugs MUST comply with the relevant section below:

5.2.2 CONFISCATING ALCOHOL:

- The confiscation of alcohol MUST comply with Alcohol in schools and the Procedure set below.

PROCEDURE:

- When confiscating alcohol the following steps MUST be adhered to:
  - 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 Educational Leader 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.
5.2.3  CONFISCATING SMOKING PRODUCTS

- The confiscation of smoking products **MUST** comply with *Smoking products in Learning Environments* and the procedures set below.

**PROCEDURE:**

- When confiscating smoking products, the following steps **MUST** be adhered to:
  
  o Smoking Products being used by a student, or in the possession of a student **MUST** be confiscated by staff and stored in a designated secure place.
  
  o Staff **MUST** record the details of the incident, including actions taken. Where possible, staff should seek witnesses to the incident. The incident report should be uploaded to the Student Support System (SSS).
  
  o For students under the age of 18, parents **MUST** be informed and offered the option of removing the smoking product from the Learning Environment. If parents do not remove the smoking product from the Learning Environment within a reasonable period of time, the Educational Leader is to safely dispose of the smoking products.
  
  o The smoking product **MUST NOT** be returned to the parents with knowledge that it is intended to be returned to the child for use, as this is an offence under 64-1 of the *Public Health Act 1997*.
  
  o The return of the smoking product to the parent **MUST** be accompanied by a notification to the parents that it is an offence under 64-1 of the *Public Health Act 1997* to supply smoking products to a child.
  
  o Students over the age of 18 can have the smoking products returned after school hours, with a directive to immediately remove the products from the Learning Environment property.
  
  o E-cigarettes and e-juice containing nicotine are illegal in Australia and **MUST** be treated as a poison.
  
  o E-juice **MAY** be considered as suspicious of containing nicotine and, as such, should be regarded as an illicit drug and a poison according to *Poisons Act 1971*.
  
  o If there is doubt as to whether the e-cigarette or e-juice contains nicotine, or as to the correct disposal of the poison, the police or tobacco control can provide advice.

5.2.4  CONFISCATING ILLICIT DRUGS

- The confiscation of illicit drugs **MUST** comply with *Illicit Drugs in Learning Environments* and the Procedure set below.

**PROCEDURE:**

- If a suspected illicit drug is located on the Learning Environment premises:
  
  o 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.
  
  o In the interests of safeguarding the health and safety of staff, unknown substances should be handled to a minimum and with extreme care.
  
  o Protective gloves should always be worn when handling suspected illicit drugs or drug paraphernalia.
  
  o Staff **MUST NOT**, under any circumstances, taste or sniff any suspicious substance.
  
  o For further information please refer to the *Action plan for a drug-related incident* and Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges – *Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools*. 
5.3  Roles and Responsibilities

Educational leaders MUST:

• Implement response strategies to drug-related incidents in Learning Environments in accordance to this Policy.
• Ensure the Learning Environment’s Action Plan is followed.
• Understand the role of Tasmania Police as described in the Tasmania Police MoU.
• Ensure all members of staff are aware of appropriate drug-related incident responses.
• Seek to ensure that students involved in drug-related incidents remain connected to an educational or vocational pathway.

Teachers and other support staff MUST:

• Follow the Learning Environment’s guidelines and action plan for drug-related incident management in accordance to this Policy.
• Comply with the Memorandum of Understanding between Tasmania Police and the Department of Education.

5.4  Action Plan: Drug-Related Incident

When an illicit or unsanctioned drug is found in the possession of 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. Learning Environments MAY choose to add intermediate steps and specific names to the list below.

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/or safety risk involved, escort student(s) to the Educational Leader, senior staff person or Educational Leader’s nominee.
3. Call an ambulance or provide first-aid with trained staff if required.
4. Report to the Educational Leader, or senior staff person, or Educational Leader’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 Educational Leader or their delegate.
6. Inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of student(s) involved of the circumstances, if the student is under the age of 18. For students over 18, or independent students, 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 Learning Environment’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 the Learning Environment’s 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 students/parents in the wider community.
10. Refer any media to the department’s Communications and Media Unit, in collaboration with the Learning Services Community Liaison Manager (please see below section on Media Management).
5.5 Managing Media in relation to a Drug-Related Incident

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

1. Advise the media representative that they will need to contact the Department of Education Communications Unit for comment. The media outlet will have the contact details. The Principal MUST ensure that all parties, including staff, are aware that they should not speak to the media.

2. Ring the Learning Services Community Liaison Manager to brief them about the drug-related incident (if this has not already been done), and to inform them of the media contact.

3. The Community Liaison Manager will advise the Department’s Communications and Media Unit on 03 6165 5724. The Communications Unit will action the response 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 Learning Environment, to liaise with the Communications Unit and/or the Community Liaison Manager.

5. 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.

6. It should be determined who, within the wider Learning Environment community (staff, students, families, and other interested parties like school associations), should be informed of the incident and in what detail. This should be determined based on advice from the Communications Unit.

5.6 Associated Documents and Materials

The following resources MAY help in developing the Learning Environment’s policies for drug related issues:

- Infection prevention and control guidelines.
6. APPENDIX - 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, smoking products 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 Learning 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).

Learning Environment community: Generally considered to comprise of students, Learning Environment staff (for example teachers and other professionals, administrators and other support staff) and parents/guardians and other carers.

Smoking Product: Any product containing one or both: tobacco product or vaporiser product. It includes: cigarettes, cigars, shisha containing tobacco, products for use with tobacco, packets containing tobacco, products for use with tobacco, packets containing tobacco products, vaping equipment (including spare and second-hand parts), E-cigarettes, e-juices and personal vaporisers.

Unsanctioned drug: A drug that is use is restricted by law, Learning Environment authorities and/or policies/guidelines. It includes illicit, licit and pharmaceutical drugs, being used illicitly.
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<tr>
<th><strong>Authorised by:</strong></th>
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<tr>
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<td>Deputy Secretary, Learning</td>
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| **This document replaces:** | Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Policy  
                              Drug Education and Drug Management in Schools Procedure |