

Croydon Community School & OPTIONS

Drug and Alcohol Policy



INTRODUCTION

All staff members of Croydon Community School & OPTIONS are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of students. Our school's fundamental purpose of assisting every student reach his or her academic and personal potential provides a strong foundation for this policy.

At Croydon Community School & OPTIONS we believe that everyone (students, staff, parents and guests) has the right to feel safe and supported. This policy aims to address the negative impacts of drug and alcohol use and misuse.

This policy describes the school's management and intervention practices when dealing with the health, social and community issues related to alcohol and illicit drugs.

PURPOSE

Croydon Community School & OPTIONS aims to create a drug-free environment in accordance with the Department of Education and Training regulations, community expectations and in the interest of establishing a positive learning and working environment for our students and staff.

Croydon Community School & OPTIONS does not condone the use of unsanctioned or illicit drugs by students on our campus grounds or at any school function or event. While our position on this is clear, our responses to incidents of drug and alcohol use are varied. We accept the need for a comprehensive and coordinated approach to drug education and responses to student drug related issues across the whole school community and acknowledge that it is only one part of a community response to drug and alcohol issues.

POLICY

We aim to ensure that a balanced, consistent and informed approach to drug and alcohol use be presented by the whole school community, specifically encompassing the following strategies:

- education programs incorporated into the curriculum
- framework for staff to respond to school-based incidents of unsanctioned and illicit drug use by students
- staff education on drug and alcohol related issues
- support, assistance and referrals for students identified as having problems with drugs or alcohol
- clear direction regarding when of when alcohol can and cannot be consumed:
 - on school premises
 - off school premises during school activities
 - in school hours
 - outside of school hours
 - on camps and excursions

IMPLEMENTATION

Croydon Community School & OPTIONS provides education to students across all year levels including drug and alcohol education which might focus on risk taking behaviours, resilience and making positive choices. Further information and educational opportunities are made available through a variety of means including, individual education sessions, freely available written and digital information, guest presenters and access to the wellbeing team.

RESPONSE TO STUDENT ALCOHOL OR DRUG USE/POSSESSION

Croydon Community School & OPTIONS considers possession or use of unsanctioned or illicit drugs is likely to be an indication of a need for help rather of criminality. Therefore a care team meeting that includes the student, parents and/or carers, Advisory's and the Student Wellbeing Team is seen as the most productive means of planning action.

While the school principal has overall responsibility for students and certain members of staff have particular designated duties for monitoring student wellbeing, all staff members have responsibility for student wellbeing and discipline.

Possession, use, distribution and selling of unsanctioned licit drugs or illicit drugs is prohibited on school premises regardless of a student's age. Students identified as acting outside of this policy may be involved in a care team meeting to plan action including:

- participation in education programs
- counselling
- case management
- notification of parents
- notification of police
- returned to school or home if appropriate
- School sanctions

Drug use or possession is considered to be very serious. The principal must advise the local police (which may include the youth resource officer) when they have knowledge of an alleged criminal offence including the possession, use and distribution of illicit drugs.

In all cases involving drug or alcohol use, whether self-disclosure, reported use, discovered use or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs at school, all staff members should document the details of their involvement in the incident. All staff must inform a member of the Principal/ Leadership Team of an incident immediately.

If a student is thought to be under the influence of a drug, all student's wellbeing and safety is the first concern.

Immediate Response (safety of students)

Staff member should:

- Stay calm
- Focus on the safety and wellbeing of those directly and indirectly involved
- Assess the situation e.g. First Aid, Ambulance, Police
- Seek assistance – Stay with the student while sending for help
- If possible isolate the situation from other students
- Safely collect and store any suspected drugs and drug paraphernalia

Next (notifying, supervising and documentation)

Staff member should:

- Gather facts and relevant information
- Report the matter to a Principal
- Make contact with parents (either the Principal or a delegated staff member)
- While the student is at school, provide supervision until he/she can be collected by a parent. Students should not leave the school grounds or travel home on their own.
- DOCUMENT (incident report, compass)

Follow up

Actions taken by the Principal or staff delegated by the Principal:

- Explore what took place and the impact on the school community (who, what, where etc.). Remember confidentiality
- Contact with medical and counselling services as necessary
- Contact police and follow their direction as necessary
- Contact SSU
- Notify Student Wellbeing Team for ongoing support and referral
- Determine other interventions and requirements including sanctions, care plans, parent meetings and return to school meetings.
- Document

The flow chart which shows actions to take when a student thought to be under the influence of a drug is detected or when they have possession of drug items.

Use of Alcohol during school functions

If alcohol is going to be present at a school event, Croydon Community School & OPTIONS must:

- Ensure the legal requirements for the sale and/or provision of alcohol is enforced eg RSA
- Obtain school council approval before alcohol may be consumed on school premises or at school approved activities whether inside or outside of normal school hours.
- Prohibit the consumption of alcohol by students at school or during any school organised activity whether inside or outside of normal school hours

For all excursions and trips off site, staff members must:

- inform parents/guardians and students before departure of:
 - the alcohol prohibition
 - the outcomes that could be expected for offending (including the requirement that parents / carers may have to collect the student at their own expense if caught in possession of or using unsanctioned or illicit drugs)
- Act in accordance with their duty of care to students, which is in force during the entire time of the camp or excursion.
- Be aware that consumption of alcohol by staff during camps or excursions is:
 - inconsistent with the standard of professional conduct necessary to maintain community confidence in these activities
 - considered unwise
 - could lead to allegations of negligence and loss of WorkCover rights

Other Drug related issues and information

Below outlines a number of drug related issues schools might face. For a detailed outline of how to response to drug related school issues refer to the Principal's guide "Drugs and Schools: Legal issues <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/spag/safety/drugschoollegalissue.pdf>

Police interviews

Normal procedure requires the parent to be advised and given the opportunity to attend the interview. If the parent declines, an independent person (e.g. Principal) should be in attendance at all times while the interview is conducted.

Drug testing

DET does not support any form of drug testing in schools for teachers or students to avoid:

- raising a lack of trust between schools and students
- legal, technical, ethical and financial issues.

Situation one
You have formed a belief that a student is affected by drugs or alcohol

Situation two
You have formed a belief that a student has possession of drugs

Immediate Response – Safety of the student/s

Staff member should:

- Stay calm
- Focus on the safety and wellbeing of those directly and indirectly involved
- Assess the situation e.g. First Aid, Ambulance, Police
- Seek assistance – Stay with the student while sending for help
- If possible isolate the situation from other students
- Safely collect and store any suspected drugs and drug paraphernalia

Next (notifying, supervising and documenting)

Staff member should:

- Gather facts and relevant information
- Report the matter to a Principal
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- DOCUMENT (incident report, compass)

Follow up

Actions taken by the Principal or staff delegated by the Principal

- Explore what took place and the impact on the school community (who, what, where etc.). Remember confidentiality
- Contact with medical and counselling services as necessary
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Drug searches

- A school locker (for example) is the property of the school and it can be searched if a teacher has reasonable grounds for believing that it contains unsanctioned or illicit drugs. This search can take place without notice.
- A student's bag is their own property and as a rule cannot be searched. If a teacher has a serious concern about the contents and considers that there may be a serious and imminent threat, they can ask the student to empty their bag for inspection.
- A serious concern is something that the teacher considers constitutes a serious and imminent threat to others eg gun, knife. What is serious will also depend on the circumstances eg knowledge of the student, their propensities and previous threats of self-harm/harm to others.
- If there is reasonable suspicion that a student has illicit drug in their bag and they aren't willing to disclose **BUT there is no imminent danger** that it will be used, the Principal should contact the police and keep the student under supervision until the police arrives to search the bag.
- If there is reasonable **suspicion of imminent danger** relating to illicit drugs that the student is concealing, the teacher in consultation with the principal should conduct an immediate search to prevent harm before police are called. The principal should immediately notify the parents of the action taken.

See 6.16.5 of the Schools reference guide

Seizure of property

Security of confiscated items rest with the teacher who confiscated the item. As soon as practicable items should be

- Returned to parent e.g. cigarettes and alcohol
- Given to the police e.g. weapons, illegal drugs
- Returned to student at the end of the school day e.g. phone

See 6.16.5 of the Schools reference guide

Duty of Care

Teachers have a duty of care to pass on information to the principal if they have knowledge about illicit drug use by students or members of a student's family irrespective of:

- whether the use:
 - is confirmed, suspected or likely to occur
 - occurs on or outside school grounds
- the drug used.

Note: Under this duty of care staff cannot promise unconditional confidentiality to students.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

References:

Department of Education and Training

- Police and DHS interviews
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/interviews.aspx>
- Medication
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/medication.aspx>

- Smoking Ban
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/smokingban.aspx>
- Syringe disposals and injuries
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/syringe.aspx>

Other resources/contact numbers

School-based

- Wellbeing team
- Drugs and schools, Legal issues. A guide for Principals
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/health/drugslegal.pdf>
- School Policy Advisory Guide
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/druguse.aspx>

External

- Youth Resource Officers
- YODAA 1800 458 685
- Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS) 9415 8881 (worker available to see students at school. See wellbeing team for further information)
- Police 000
- Croydon Police Station 9724 0100
- Eastern Drug and Alcohol Service (EDAS) 1300 650 705
- Eastern Access Community Health (EACH) 1300 003 224
- Nurse on call 1800 022 222
- Maroondah hospital 1300 342 255

Fact Sheets

Information appropriate for students, parents and staff on a variety of drug related issue can be found at the below web sites.

- <http://www.yodaa.org.au/drug-alcohol-info>
- <https://headspace.org.au/young-people/category/alcohol-and-drugs>
- <http://www.ysas.org.au/i-want-information-about-drugs/i-want-information-about-drugs>
- <http://www.ysas.org.au/i-want-information-about-alcohol/i-want-information-about-alcohol>

Please refer also to the school's:

- Camps and Excursions Policy
- Care Arrangements For Ill Children Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Emergency & Incident Reporting Policy
- Medical & First Aid Emergencies Policy
- Health Care Needs Policy
- Medication (Administer of) Policy
- Professional Learning Policy
- Smoke Free Policy
- Swimming Instruction/Water Safety Policy

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy, last updated 15th March, 2019 and will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change.