Catholic Schools
Parramatta Diocese

Banned Substances Student Procedures

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1. Introduction and Purpose

CSPD is committed to maintaining a safe, secure and supportive environment for all students, and acts to ensure that schools are places that are free of banned substances. This Procedure covers the possession, use and distribution of **alcohol, tobacco, vaping devices, illegal drugs or other banned substances**, and the misuse of over-the-counter and prescribed medications, including the supply of banned or illegal substances at school or CSPD sites or events.

Management of any suspected banned substance-related incident will ensure that the immediate safety, wellbeing and educational needs of the student(s) involved are balanced with the wellbeing and educational interests of the broader student community.

Schools will manage disciplinary matters involving suspected Banned Substances with reference to the school-based pastoral care and student management procedures and CSPD's *Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion Procedures.*

2. Definitions

Banned substances mean any substance that has been prohibited by the school, including but not limited to alcohol, tobacco, vaping devices, nitrous oxide cartridges (nangs), illegal drugs and over-the-counter and prescription medications that are used for non-prescribed or inappropriate purposes.

CSPD means the Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese and includes CSPD Support Teams (office-based staff) and Schools.

Support Teams means CSPD Support teams such as the Behaviour, Attendance and Inclusive Learning teams at CSPD. It applies to the central office and office-based staff.

Distribution of Banned Substances means the passing on of banned substances by a student(s) to other student(s).

Illegal substances mean any substance that is expressly forbidden at law, including but not limited to criminal law.

Possession of Banned Substances means having a Banned Substance on one's person or in one's personal effects, for example bag, a locker, pockets, etc.

Use of Banned Substances means the taking of Banned Substances into the body.

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3. Ensuring a safe and secure environment

3.1. CSPD schools must be places that are free from the possession, use or distribution of banned substances within their communities, on their premises, and/or during school or CSPD events/activities.

3.2. When a school becomes aware of a serious out-of-school hours incident, parents/carers will be notified and the police or other appropriate authority notified as required.

3.3. The principal is responsible for the implementation of this procedure, and for ensuring that this procedure is communicated clearly to students, staff and parents/carers.

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4. Prevention

4.1. Each school will have in place educational programs that will support students and parents/carers in the prevention and misuse of banned substances.

4.2. Schools will have a holistic pastoral care and student management procedure which includes support of at-risk students, in partnership with parents/carers, counsellors and other external agencies.

4.3. Positive links with external agencies (such as NSW Police) are established and used to strengthen the capacity of the school to educate young people and parents/carers, and to respond to issues. This includes working with police youth liaison officers on a range of intervention and response strategies.

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5. Categories of banned substances

5.1 While each issue must be dealt with on its individual merits, the following categories generally apply where there is a reasonable belief of student use, possession or distribution of banned substances:

5.1.1 **Category A** – Use of alcohol, tobacco, vaping devices and misuse of prescribed medications: the misuse of prescribed medications, over-the-counter medications, inhalants and solvents or chemicals, and the use of alcohol and tobacco.

5.1.2 **Category B** – Supply of alcohol, tobacco, vaping devices and prescribed medications

5.1.3 **Category C** – Use of illegal substances at a school site or school or CSPD event or activity.

5.1.4 **Category D** – Supply of illegal substances to other students or at a school site or school or CSPD event or activity.

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6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The principal and/or delegate must:

6.1.1 Implement these procedures at their school

6.1.2 Ensure that the school community is educated with regard to this procedure

6.1.3 Manage any allegations or evidence of student use, possession or distribution of banned substances in accordance with the school-based pastoral care and wellbeing procedures, the principles of procedural fairness and the CSPD Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures.

6.2 School staff must:

6.2.1 Support the implementation of this procedure

6.2.2 Adhere to the Guidelines for Professional Conduct

6.2.3 Inform the principal if they are aware of any instances of student use, possession or distribution of banned substances.

6.3 Students must:

6.3.1 not use, possess or distribute banned or illegal substances.

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7. Responding to the use, possession, or distribution of banned or illegal substances, or misuse of prescribed medications

7.1. Where drug taking is suspected, the immediate priority is to try and establish what type of drug was taken, how much and whether first aid or emergency aid is required

7.2. If the student suspects that the student is in possession of illegal substances, the student should be supervised separately to their school bag and mobile phone.

7.3. If a student is suspected of use, possession or distribution of banned substances, the immediate priority is to ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff.

7.4. The Principal should carry out an interview to ascertain facts and give the student the opportunity to respond.

7.5. Where a **Category A** and/or **Category B** breach is suspected, Principals will use their discretion in contacting the police in consultation with the Executive General Manager Student Support. The student's parent/carer must also be contacted. Individual circumstances may require action in accordance with the CSPD Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures. Principals will use their discretion in deciding whether a suspension is necessary, depending upon the circumstances and the impact of the behaviour on the individual and the community.

7.6. If there is a reasonable belief that a student has been involved in illegal activity (**Category C and/or D**) the police must be contacted. The Principal must also contact the Executive General Manager Student Support and the student's parent/carer and keep records of the school's investigation process. The use of illegal substances would be managed in accordance with the CSPD Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures. In considering whether a transfer or exclusion is warranted, a principal will take into account any prior behaviour of the student, the circumstances of the incident, whether the interests of the student are served by remaining within the same school community and whether there are broader implications for the school community as a whole. Transfers can only be approved by Executive General Manager Student Support and exclusions can only be approved by the Chief Executive Officer at CSPD.

7.7. The Principal will inform the Head of Student Wellbeing if the police have been notified about suspected banned substance use or possession. The Principal and

the Head of Student Wellbeing will decide if the incident constitutes a critical incident and will advise the Executive General Manager Student Support. If so, principals should refer to the Critical Incident Management procedures.

7.8. Students may be asked to empty the contents of bags and pockets for inspection. If they refuse, parents should be called to assist with the search. If they refuse, consideration should be given to weather police need to be notified to assist

7.9. Any searches of students' bags and possessions should be carried out by police or parents.

7.10. Once police have been contacted, the Principal should defer to the instructions of the police in relation to further interviews or investigation.

7.11. If the school is contacted by the media, the Principal should contact the Head Executive Office and Communications before communicating with the media.

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8. Related Documents

- Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion procedures
- Risk Assessment to be completed
- Student Wellbeing Policy

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9. Related Legislation

- *Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 (NSW)*
- *Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1986 (NSW)*

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10. Further Information

Further information on this procedure can be directed to (02) 9840 5620 or via the CSPD Help Centre portal (internal) or the Community Liaison Unit on (02) 9840 5796 (external).