

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

Purpose Statement

Beaumaris Secondary College values and respects the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. A response to drug-related issues is a key priority for the Victorian Government. We seek to eliminate drug use and the harmful effects on our community as a whole.

A harm minimisation approach is an important focus that aims to reduce the risks associated with drug use, and promote healthier, alternative behaviours for students. At Beaumaris Secondary College, we support the whole school approach to minimise drug use and associated harm.

Aim

This policy is to ensure that a balanced, consistent and informed approach to student drug and alcohol use is adopted and implemented by the College community. Beaumaris Secondary College will use a harm minimisation approach to review and implement school drug education programs and activities that:

- are comprehensive and evidence based
- promote a positive school climate and relationships
- are targeted to needs and contexts identified through consultation with students, staff and parents
- embed timely, developmentally appropriate drug education programs within a curriculum framework that utilises effective pedagogy.

As a secondary college committed to health and wellbeing, we must:

- provide all students with drug education prevention and intervention programs
- involve parents/guardians and the wider school community in drug-related curriculum and wellbeing issues
- prohibit possession, use, distribution and selling of illicit drugs and unsanctioned licit drugs on school premises or at any function or activity organised by the school or persons exhibiting intoxicated behaviour
- develop or review policy to support the management of drug-related incidents
- make every effort to retain students in the education system because students are often at greater risk if disengaged from school.

Prevention and Harm Minimisation

School drug education utilises a whole school approach to health promotion, prevention and early intervention to student wellbeing and engagement, based on the principles of harm minimisation. It aims to promote resilience, and build on knowledge, skills and behaviours to enable young people to make responsible, healthy and safe choices.

It encompasses all policies, practices, programs and initiatives connected with prevention and reduction of drug-related harm, and the building of resilience in individuals and school communities. Schools

should implement relevant and comprehensive drug education for all students as an ongoing core component of the curriculum.

It is recognised that in the process of developing their decision-making skills some students may make errors of judgement. At all times, however, the safety and wellbeing of Beaumaris Secondary College students and staff must be preserved, where practicable the dignity of the individual student is maintained (whilst not condoning the behavior). All student welfare and discipline procedures are therefore underpinned by the principles of fairness, compassion and consistency and are to be implemented accordingly. School drug education aims to prevent:

- harmful drug use
- illicit drug use
- inappropriate alcohol consumption
- solvent use.

Responding to Alcohol or Drug Related Issues

Beaumaris Secondary College prohibits the consumption of alcohol by students at school, or any school organised activity. Consumption of alcohol is prohibited regardless of the student's age. It is recognised that drug use is a complex issue and that there may be a variety of contributing factors to student drug use. It is intended, therefore, that the College's student welfare and discipline measures be as comprehensive as possible, at all times aiming to provide care for individual students, and above all, protection for all involved in the College community. The College will treat drug use as a health matter, combined with the Student Engagement Policy. The College is mindful of the fact that drug use in many forms is illegal and appropriate authorities need to be involved. The Principal must be informed of illegal activities of students. It is also recognised that despite the opinions individuals may have, drug use may involve legal consequences, particularly regarding trafficking in and/or possession/use of illegal drugs. Members of the College Community are subject to these laws both on and off the campus and as citizens of the state are bound to uphold the law. The Student Engagement Policy provides guidelines of how to respond.

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.

These provisions apply to:

- anywhere on the College premises or
- while in uniform travelling to or from the College or
- any official College activity, camp, excursion, rehearsal or performance.

Intervention Procedures

Students who are found engaged in the following:

- drinking or under the influence of alcohol or in the possession of alcohol;

- misusing, in the possession of, or under the influence of, solvents;
- using, or in the possession of, or under the influence of, drugs not prescribed for them;
- using, or in the possession of, or under the influence of, illegal drugs; will be suspended from the College pending a conference with parents.

Students who are found to be trafficking illegal drugs will be suspended from the College pending further discussion with parents and the College will inform the police.

Intervention is intended to ensure a safe environment for all members of the College community and provide support and care for all individual students. The school will also provide referral for those using drugs and prevent further deterioration in the health of those using drugs inappropriately.

Immediate Response is:

- focus on the safety and welfare of those directly and indirectly involved
- stay calm

gather any:

- facts/relevant information
- make a first aid assessment (if necessary seek medical support)
- seek assistance as soon as possible
- safely collect any suspected alcohol, drugs and drug paraphernalia
- inform the school administration
- Isolate the situation from other students, if possible.

Subsequent Response when it is safe. Follow up to:

- inform parents/guardians of students involved in incident
- notify health, community and welfare services, if appropriate
- contact the police, if required
- establish a case management team to:
- gather and verify information
- allocate tasks and roles
- document information
- develop a communication strategy
- consider interventions
- consider sanctions in line with student engagement policies
- monitor, evaluate and reflect.

Drugs and Schools: Legal Issues

The Department and Victoria Police have agreed on a protocol concerning a crime alleged to have been committed by a student. For the purpose of the protocol, a criminal offence means any behaviour that could seriously threaten the safety, security or wellbeing of any person or property for which the principal has responsibility, and it includes use, possession or distribution of drugs. Under the protocol, the police contact person must be advised of the school’s knowledge of a suspected criminal offence — and that includes use, possession and distribution of drugs. Internal procedures at the school may also be implemented by way of education and counselling. Documenting information, responses and actions is essential. Under the protocol concerning use, possession or distribution of drugs, the Principal must:

- refer an alleged criminal offence concerning use, possession or distribution of drugs to the police. If in doubt, the principal may obtain advice from the police contact person (station commander or sub-officer nominee);
- notify the parents of the student who is a suspect. The police will investigate and decide whether an offence has been committed; and

In addition the police will:

- provide advice to the principal when requested;
- notify the principal when a student at the school has been charged with an offence;
- assist the school to safeguard student welfare by informing the principal of any action taken or the result of information received.

Review: We will review this policy in May 2022.