

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS POLICY

PRESHIL VISION STATEMENT

At our core remains an unshakeable commitment to encouraging all children to set and achieve their own goals and to be respected as individuals in their own right. This is a commitment to our children to be nurtured and challenged in an atmosphere that inspires creativity and independent thinking in all areas of life and does not, overtly or subtly, use competition or punishment to motivate through the fear of failure. As global citizens, we encourage an awareness of world issues and effort to make a positive difference. We believe that education should prepare students to be thoughtful, peace-loving and active citizens of the world. Preshil will remain a school that puts kindness, compassion and social relationships at the centre of its operations.

The Policy

This policy outlines the Preshil policy on

- reducing alcohol and other drug use.
- responding to drug or alcohol related incidents.
- supporting students and staff involved in alcohol and other drug use.

Rationale

Alcohol, although legal, is considered one of the most harmful drugs affecting young people today. Our school has a community responsibility to fully inform our students, staff and the whole school community about the effects of alcohol. Alcohol education will sit within the context of our school's Drug Education Program.

Aims

- to provide accurate information regarding the effects of alcohol on the body.
- to ensure students have the necessary knowledge and skills to make an informed choice over their use of alcohol.
- to provide opportunities for the broader school community to participate in alcohol education activities.
- to clearly define the processes required when alcohol has been brought onto the School property or a student or staff member has attended school clearly under the influence of alcohol.

Definitions

Drugs

A drug is any substance that has a physiological effect when taken or administered into the body.. This can include a range of substances including legal drugs such as alcohol, or illegal drugs.

- Illegal drugs refer to drugs that the law makes illegal to use, possess, cultivate or traffic.
- Legal drugs refer to drugs that are legal but may be used in ways that are unlawful and/or harmful.

Harm minimisation

A harm minimisation approach aims to reduce the risks associated with alcohol or drug use, and promote healthier, alternative behaviours for individuals.

Implementation

Preshil will

- provide all students with alcohol and other **drug education** through a harm minimisation approach.
- where appropriate, access agencies within our local community with expertise in the field of alcohol education to participate in classes eg. local police, Community Health Service, and Drug & Alcohol counselors.
- ensure that any lessons taught around alcohol and drugs will be delivered within the context of a Harm Minimisation approach to drug education.
- not permit student possession, consumption or selling of alcohol and drugs on school premises or at camps and excursions.
- manage and report any alcohol and other drug related incidents to the Principal and the Leadership Team in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.
- take appropriate action, including contacting police, if a student is found in possession of, selling or under the influence of illegal drugs on school premises or at camps and excursions

Please note the following

Students are not permitted to bring alcohol or illegal drugs onto school grounds under any circumstances.

The Principal's approval is required before alcohol can be consumed on school premises or at school functions. The School must, however, comply with the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998.

Staff members may not consume alcohol whilst on camps or excursions as this may compromise a staff member's professional standing, their ability to carry out their duty of care, and/or loss of WorkCover rights.

Alcohol on Camps and Excursions

Staff must:

- ensure that student consumption of alcohol and illegal substances on camps and excursions is prohibited regardless of the student's age and that students are made aware of the consequences of any infringement of this requirement
- for camps and excursions involving students over the age of 18 or where the School considers it appropriate to do so, inform parents or carers before departure of the alcohol prohibition, and the sanctions that will be imposed if any student does not comply with this prohibition
- act in accordance with their duty of care to students, which exists during the entire time of the camp or excursion

Service of Alcohol at off-site School Functions

The decision about whether or not to allow the service of alcohol at off-site functions involving students over the age of 18 (such as graduation nights or school formals) rests with the Principal. However, staff have a duty of care to all students at the event, including those over the age of 18. If alcohol is permitted, the school will give careful consideration to the safety and wellbeing of students throughout the event, including the effect that alcohol may have on their safety returning home.

Responding to Alcohol and Other Drug Related Incidents

Assess Immediate Health Needs

Call 000 if there is an immediate threat to life.

Stay Calm

Increasing physical and psychological stress (for example, chasing) may increase the risk of harm, particularly for people affected by stimulants and inhalants.

Keep Other Students Safe

Isolate other students from the situation if necessary.

Keep Informed

If possible, gather facts and relevant information that is, ascertain what substance(s) were taken, how much was taken, when was it last taken and if taken in combination with other substances (including medications).

Safely Remove and Store

- any suspected alcohol, drugs and related materials until they can be handed over to the relevant authorities.
- contact the police, if required, particularly if the source of supply can be identified

Sanctions

Any person who breached school policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion.

Lawful Use of Alcohol

There may be circumstances in which the School may or may not allow the consumption of alcohol on school premises.

Prescription Drugs

Taking prescription drugs without a prescription is unlawful and use by students is prohibited while at school or at any school event or activity.

There are also serious health risks associated with the misuse of prescription drugs. This includes not following instructions or combining them with other medicines, drugs or alcohol.

Duty of Care

Staff members have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent reasonably foreseeable harm. A reasonable step will generally include passing on information to the Principal if the staff member has knowledge about unlawful alcohol or other drug use by students. This applies regardless of whether:

- the use is confirmed, suspected or likely to occur
- the use occurs on or outside school grounds
- the staff member has knowledge of the drug used.

Note: Because they have a duty of care, staff cannot promise unconditional confidentiality to students.

Confidentiality

Staff and students should be aware that information about alcohol and other drug treatment needs (for example, counselling and alcohol and other drug treatment):

- is a private matter which only needs to be shared between students and their parents or carers (for students who are not considered to be mature minors), supporting community agency, the School designated student wellbeing staff and
- may be provided to staff who have direct responsibility for the student if they need to know that information to discharge their duty of care to the student or to other students, or otherwise in accordance with the School's Privacy Policy and Privacy and Information Sharing Policy.

An example of where information about a student's treatment may be communicated to the teacher is where a student's concentration or alertness may be affected by prescribed medication, including pharmacotherapy, or withdrawal from a drug.

Professional Development (Staff Training)

It is recommended that staff be:

- informed of policies and procedures relevant to alcohol and drugs
- provided with professional development in responding to alcohol and drug related incidents
- provided with professional development to deliver **drug education** through a harm minimisation approach

Relevant Legislation

Substances Act 1981 (Vic)

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)