

1. Rationale

The College considers the use, sale, distribution, and storage of drugs or drug paraphernalia as a very serious matter that constitutes a high risk to personal and community safety. Consequences and countermeasures to a breach of this policy are designed to reflect the severity of this issue.

Drug use by students is an issue that confronts the majority of schools in some way at some stage. The College Drug Policy has its origins in the 'dignity of the human person', which is based on the following beliefs:

- *All persons have an innate dignity as each person is made in God's 'image and likeness' (Genⁱ 1:26)*
- *Living a moral life witnesses to this dignity (CCCⁱⁱ 1706)*
- *Human life is sacred*
- *Life and physical health are precious gifts given to us by God (CCC 2258)*
- *Each person is responsible for care of self, others and the common good (CCC2288)*
- *Each person is required to grow in virtue and avoid sin*
- *If they sin, they are to ask for God's mercy (CCC2258).*

The spiritual, moral, emotional and physical wellbeing of Mazenod College students and their families is of the highest priority. In considering its response to drug use, the College will be mindful of individual circumstances. The Principal has the right to exercise discretion in the application of sanctions to breaches of this policy.

The College acknowledges that sanctions often don't directly address underlying factors. This policy recognises that sanctions alone are inadequate, unless supported by relevant education, counselling and reconciliation.

The intervention procedure is designed to address incidents of drug use in a manner that is in the best interest of all parties while conforming to legal requirements. Members of the College community are subject to the law and have the same responsibilities as all other citizens regarding the sale and possession of drugs.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **Drugs** are substances, other than food or water, that alter the way the body functions, physically or mentallyⁱⁱⁱ. This definition covers all drugs and drug paraphernalia, including but not limited to, analgesics, alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, amphetamines and prescribed legal drugs not prescribed for them. While not classified as drugs, other substances that are inhaled, consumed or otherwise taken into the body, for example solvents such as glue and petrol sniffing are included in the policy.
- 2.2. **On College property or during a College organised event** includes at school, in transit between school and home or otherwise while wearing the College uniform, attending organised functions such as a social, College ball, sporting events, retreat, camp, excursion, tour, or other functions as a representative of the College.

3. Policy

- 3.1. The College does not permit staff, students, parents or visitors, while on *College property or during a College event* to use, possess, sell, trade or distribute, or be under the influence of drugs (defined above). It should be noted that being in the presence of drug use constitutes involvement in a prohibited activity.
- 3.2. Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages at organised college events involving responsible alcohol use by **adults** may be approved by the Principal. **No student is permitted to consume or possess alcohol on school property or at any College organised event (on or off campus).**

- 3.3. Drugs for medicinal purposes are to be used in accordance with College Administration of Medication guidelines. Parents or guardians are responsible for providing, in writing, details of medication and its appropriate use. Medication is kept locked in student services.
- 3.4. The Principal has the responsibility to investigate and reduce potential risk of harm to both students and staff. The rules of procedural fairness will be applied to all investigations, including: a hearing appropriate to the circumstances, lack of bias, evidence to support a decision, inquiry into the matters in dispute.
- 3.5. A breach of this policy is considered a Serious Breach of the Code of Conduct and will be managed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and Exclusion of Students for Disciplinary Reasons Policy.
- 3.6. All students will receive age appropriate health and drug education to enable and support them to make informed choices, and to minimise the harm associated with drug use.
- 3.7. Referral to counselling and support groups will be provided to students where appropriate.

4. Implementation

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- 4.1. relevant professional development and training for appropriate staff
- 4.2. adequately resourcing Pastoral Care programs for student drug education and support
- 4.3. involving parents in drug education programs where appropriate (through Pastoral Care programs)
- 4.4. effective consultation and notification procedures
- 4.5. implementation of corrective action where necessary.

5. Procedures

- 5.1. Mazenod College will respond to incidents of drug use in a manner to ensure the safety, and the emotional and physical health and welfare of the students involved. Each incident will be considered individually by the Principal, in consultation with appropriate staff, according to the given set of circumstances at the time.
- 5.2. College premises are private property under the control of the Principal. The Principal has a legal duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent reasonably foreseeable harm to students and staff. This includes the duty to actively identify and remove any hazardous item or substance on College premises.
 - To discharge the Principal's duty, staff, with the authority of the Head of Year or Dean of Students, and without seeking student consent, may:
 - open and search lockers, bags and other containers
 - remove and make safe any property or substance that reasonably appears to be hazardous to any person
 - notify the Police if the possession of any property or substance appears to be unlawful.
 - Student consent must be sought for searches of student clothing being worn, including pockets or shoes. If the student does not consent, parents may be called and asked to search the student in the presence of staff.
 - Staff may remove items from a student's clothing without consent if the staff member has reasonable grounds to believe that the student is in possession of property that presents an immediate and serious threat to the health or safety of the student or any member of the school community.
 - Searches must be carried out with at least two staff members present, unless the immediacy and seriousness of any threat does not allow it. They must be conducted in a manner that respects the student's privacy and dignity in all the circumstances.
 - Staff are reminded that the purpose of searches is to protect students and staff, and not for law enforcement. The Police must be notified of any suspicion of a criminal offence to allow them to follow evidence gathering procedures and exercise their powers to do so.
 - Parents must be notified if a student or property in their possession is searched, regardless of the outcome.

- 5.3. Mazenod College retains the right to involve the WA Police when a student is found in possession of illegal drugs, equipment or illegal activity / behaviour.
- 5.4. Breaches of this policy are managed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, commencing at Stage 4 and where appropriate Stage 5, which is addressed through the Exclusion for Students for Disciplinary Reasons Policy.

6. Privacy

- 6.1. Where drugs are involved, the ramifications for the individual student and his/her family can be quite serious. The privacy and dignity of the individual student and family will be respected. A student's personal information is managed through our Privacy Program, in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth). All records will be managed in accordance with College Records Management policy and procedures.

As with all incidents at the College, only the Principal can speak with the media.

7. Related Documents

Behaviour Policy
 Student Code of Conduct
 Code of Conduct [Staff]
 Exclusion of Students for Disciplinary Reasons
 Unsatisfactory Performance or Misconduct Policy [Staff]

8. Review and Improvement

This policy will be made available to students via the Student Handbook, Pastoral Care Programs and College Website.

Following any incident, the College Leadership Team will review that policy and procedures were adhered to and implement changes where appropriate. Mazenod College may amend this policy at any time to ensure continuous improvement. The policy will be subject to review every three years or earlier if there has been a change in legislation or regulations.

9. Review History

Year of Review:	Approved by:	Amendments/Review:
2017	CLT	Policy published
2021	CLT	Policy updated

ⁱ Gen – The Book of Genesis

ⁱⁱ CCC – Catechism of the Catholic Church

ⁱⁱⁱ Department of Health, sighted Nov 2020 <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/drugs>