

INTRODUCTION

All staff members of Bairnsdale Secondary College are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children. Our College values of 'respect for self' and 'respect for others' provide a strong foundation for this policy.

We believe all students have the right to feel safe and supported in their school community. Issues such as alcohol and drug use and misuse will negatively impact on the school and community.

AIM

Bairnsdale Secondary College 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 the most harmonious and positive working conditions for our students and staff.

The College value 'be the best you can be' underscores our belief that students should participate in a learning environment that actively promotes safety, empowerment and wellbeing for the whole College community.

The College does not condone the use of unsanctioned or illicit drugs by students on our campus grounds or at any College 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
- provision of a framework for staff to respond to school-based incidents of unsanctioned and illicit drug use by students
- provision of adequate, up to date staff education on drug and alcohol related issues
- provision of appropriate support, assistance and referrals for students identified as having problems with drugs or alcohol
- provision of clear understandings 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

The College aims to develop and maintain a health-promoting environment. The possession, use, selling and distribution of substances such as tobacco, alcohol, inhalants, inappropriately used prescription drugs and all illicit drugs at school constitute a health and safety risk and breach of school rules.

IMPLEMENTATION

The College provides education to students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 including drug and alcohol education and risk taking behaviours, resilience and making positive choices. All students in year 7 – 12 attend assemblies and workshops with guest presenters for education on a wide range of drug and alcohol issues.

RESPONSE TO STUDENT ALCOHOL OR DRUG USE / POSSESSION

The College’s approach to the possession or use of unsanctioned or illicit drugs by students is that it is more likely to be an indication of a need for help than of criminality. Therefore the “case-conference” approach involving School Principals, Hub Leaders 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 welfare, all staff members have responsibility for student wellbeing and discipline.

Possession or consumption of unsanctioned or illicit drugs is prohibited on school premises regardless of a student’s age. Students acting outside of this policy will be:

- managed in accordance with the College’s Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, which may include:
 - participation in education programs
 - counselling
 - case management
 - notification of parents
 - notification of Police if appropriate
- returned to school or home if appropriate

Such incidents are considered as very serious. The principal may notify police particularly if the source of supply, such as a retailer, can be identified.

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. To ensure they are acting within their role and responsibility they are obliged to inform a member of the Principal Team.

If a student is found under the influence of a drug, safety is the first concern. Staff members should:

- maintain a calm demeanour
- seek privacy to ensure confidentiality
- seek first aid assistance
- report the matter to a Principal

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| Bairnsdale Secondary College Policy Name: Drug and Alcohol Policy Reviewer: Principal | Ratified by Council: October 2016 Review Schedule: every 2 years Date of last review: October 2016 | Page 2 of 4 |
|---|--|-------------|

It is the role of the College Principals to deal with reported incidents. This may involve:

- investigating within the school
- making contact with medical and counselling services as necessary
- making contact with parents
- making police contact as considered necessary
- referral to Student Wellbeing Team for ongoing support to student

USE OF ALCOHOL DURING SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

Schools must:

- obtain school council approval before alcohol may be consumed on school premises, at school approved activities whether inside or outside of normal school hours and ensure adherence to the responsible service of alcohol requirements
- ensure the legal requirements for the sale and/or provision of alcohol in public situations at school functions are enforced
- 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 / trips off school premises staff members:

- 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 RESOURCES / CONTACT NUMBERS

BAIRNSDALE SECONDARY COLLEGE:

- College Wellbeing Team
- College Nurse

OTHER:

- Gippsland Lakes Community Health 5155 8300
- Headspace (not open yet but will be operating in Bairnsdale start 2017-ish)
- www.education.vic.gov.au/drugeducation
- www.cyf.vic.gov.au/family-services/child-first
- www.kidshelpline.com.au/teens/ 1800 55 1800

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|---|--|-------------|
| Bairnsdale Secondary College Policy Name: Drug and Alcohol Policy Reviewer: Principal | Ratified by Council: October 2016 Review Schedule: every 2 years Date of last review: October 2016 | Page 3 of 4 |
|---|--|-------------|

DEFINITIONS

Drugs: Drugs include a range of substances, including prescribed medications, alcohol, tobacco and illicit substances. Some drugs are described as 'illicit' or 'unsanctioned'. 'Illicit' refers to drugs that the law makes illegal for any person to use, possess, cultivate or traffic. 'Unsanctioned' refers to legal drugs that are illegal for young people to purchase in some circumstances, for example, alcohol or tobacco. For the purpose of this document, where the word 'drug' is used, it refers to illicit drugs, unless otherwise stated.

RELATED DOCUMENTS / KEY REFERENCES

BAIRNSDALE SECONDARY COLLEGE:

- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- Student Management Policy

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

- Drug Education Policy
- School Policy and Advisory Guide: Drug Use
- School Policy and Advisory Guide: Alcohol

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|---|--|-------------|
| Bairnsdale Secondary College Policy Name: Drug and Alcohol Policy Reviewer: Principal | Ratified by Council: October 2016 Review Schedule: every 2 years Date of last review: October 2016 | Page 4 of 4 |
|---|--|-------------|