

MAY 2025

Drug Education and Management Policy

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1 Purpose

The Drug Education and Management Policy (this Policy) aims to support schools and colleges, Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS), Child and Family Learning Centres (CFLCs) to understand the requirements regarding drug education, drug management and the management of drug-related incidents in their premises, including confiscation of alcohol, smoking products and other illicit drugs.

2 Policy Statement

This Policy applies to all Learning Environment staff and should be used as a guide to assist with the development of any policy or procedure regarding drug education, drug incidents, and drug management. Educational Leaders should be aware of their responsibilities regarding drug education, drug management and the management of drug-related incidents.

Acting inconsistently with this Policy and the nationally accepted protocols and Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) policies for drug-related issues in Learning Environments may have legal ramifications.

It is essential to ensure that all Principals and CFLC Leaders have a lawful and consistent approach to providing drug education and managing drug related incidents. A systemic approach ensures all learners and staff are provided with an environment that is supportive and free from harm.

2.1 Principal of Harm Minimisation

The philosophy of “harm minimisation” underpins the [National Drug Strategy](#), the [Tasmanian Drug Strategy](#) and any DECYP policies for drug education and management in Learning Environments. Harm minimisation is considered to be the most useful approach to drug-related issues. It aims to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of alcohol, smoking products and other drugs for individuals, their families and friends, and the community. The key concept for this approach is that drug use should be minimised and that harm from drug use and psychoactive substances should be limited.

Harm minimisation involves a range of approaches to prevent or reduce drug-related harm, including prevention, early intervention, specialist treatment, supply control, safer drug use and abstinence. It involves a balance between demand reduction, supply reduction and harm reduction strategies aimed at promoting better health, social and economic outcomes for the community and the individual. According to the harm minimisation approach, Learning Environments should neither condone nor encourage the misuse of drugs by young people, while acknowledging that it is likely that some students will experiment with drugs.

In educational settings, this means encouraging personal choice and informed decision-making by students as the foundation of effective drug prevention and intervention strategies. It also means the provision of a supportive environment that maximises the factors known to be protective for students in reducing risk-taking behaviours.

Guidelines for Managing Drug Related Incidents in Tasmanian Schools between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges

The Department for Education, Children and Young People has a [Guideline](#) for managing drug related incidents with Tasmania Police. This [Guideline](#) complements preventative school-based drug education programs and ensures that, where police intervention is requested in relation to drug-related incidents in schools, police and individual school responses are planned, structured

and consistent with the National Drug Strategy. Educational Leaders and staff should be aware of the [Guideline](#) and its contents.

2.2 Children, Young People and their Families Act 1997 (Tas) (CYPFA)

The CYPFA makes all people coming into contact with students in a professional role, mandatory reporters, including staff and volunteers in Learning Environments. If a student discloses drug use in any circumstances it is considered that the student may be at risk within the framework of this Act and a notification **MUST** be made.

2.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Educational leaders **MUST** ensure:

- The Learning Environment and its drug policies are planned to provide a safe and supportive environment for all students
- The Learning Environment's drug-related policy and guidelines are up to date, and follow requirements outlined in this Policy
- Staff are aware of drug policies and have the tools/knowledge to apply them
- That staff, parents, volunteers, students and the wider community are aware of the Learning Environment's policies for drug education, drug management and responses to drug-related incidents.

Teachers and other support staff **MUST**:

- Be aware of, understand and comply with the Learning Environment's policy for drug education and management of drug-related issues.

2.4 Frequently Asked Questions

Why DECYPs my Learning Environment need to have its own policy?

Each Learning Environment has different needs and a unique community. Your Learning Environment's policy should reflect its context and needs.

Where can I find a template to develop a policy for my Learning Environment?

Templates for developing a DECYP policy can be found in the [Template](#) Library on the DECYP webpage.

Can I search a student's locker, desk or bag?

Staff can search a student's locker or desk without permission because these things are generally considered school property.

Staff can search a student's bag with permission. If you don't have permission, you should ask the student to empty their bags out themselves. The only time staff can search a bag is if they think there is an urgent risk to the safety of other students. Staff need to remind the student that the school can always call the police who can search them without permission.

How should I communicate the Learning Environments' policy to its community?

The best way to communicate policies to your community is via your Learning Environment's Newsletter. In addition to this, you may also post on your Learning Environment's webpage or social media page.

3 Related policies

- Nil

4 Related procedures

- [Drug Education in Learning Environments Procedure](#)
- [Drug Management in Learning Environments Procedure](#)
- [Responding to Alcohol, Smoking Products and Drug-Related Incidents in Learning Environments Procedure](#)

5 Supporting information/tools

- [National Drug Strategy](#)
- Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools [between Tasmania Police and Tasmanian Schools and Colleges](#)

6 Definitions

Drug

A substance which produces a psychoactive effect. Within the context of the [National Drug Strategic Framework](#), the term drug is used generically to include tobacco, alcohol, pharmaceutical drugs and illicit drugs. The [National Drug Strategic Framework](#) also includes strategies to address the harmful use of other substances, including inhalants

Drug-related incident

Any occasion involving alcohol, smoking products and/or other drug use and/or the possession, distribution or supply of a drug or drug-related equipment. The [Guidelines for managing drug-related incidents in Tasmanian schools](#) does not include alcohol or tobacco.

Learning Environment

Generally considered to comprise of students, Learning Environment staff (for example teachers and other professionals, administrators and other support staff) and parents/guardians and other carers.

Smoking Product

Any product containing one or both: tobacco product or vaporiser product. It includes: cigarettes, cigars, shisha containing tobacco, products for use with tobacco, packets containing tobacco,

products for use with tobacco, packets containing tobacco products, vaping equipment (including spare and second-hand parts), E-cigarettes, e-juices and personal vaporisers.

7 Legislation

- *Public Health Act 1997*
- *Poisons Act 1971*

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