

Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs

Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the front office on 9744 0500.

Purpose

Leadership and staff acknowledge the importance in reducing harm from tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs. Providing a smoke, vape and drug-free environment and promoting low-risk alcohol consumption contributes to the overall health and wellbeing of the students, staff and families related to the school.

This policy confirms our commitment to:

- ensuring a smoke, vape and drug-free environment for students, families, staff, volunteers and visitors
- promoting low-risk alcohol consumption to our service community
- delivering tobacco, e-cigarette, alcohol and other drugs education in one or more learning key areas of the curriculum as a part of a whole school approach to health and wellbeing (e.g. developing knowledge, resilience and help-seeking skills of students)
- providing information to staff and families about the health benefits of not smoking, vaping or taking drugs, and low-risk alcohol consumption
- providing a safe, inclusive and empowering school environment
- implementing strategies to prevent and minimise harm
- dealing with drug use (licit and illicit) as a health and safety issue
- establishing supportive procedures to respond to drug-related incidents.

As a health promoting school, we will promote positive behaviours in relation to the use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment, and developing community links and partnerships.

POLICY STATEMENT

Background

Tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs prevention and education is most effective when it is delivered in a context of a whole school approach to health and wellbeing.^{1, 2} Children and young people begin experimenting with tobacco or e-cigarette products, and licit and illicit drugs at school age and role modelling by adults is very influential during this period. Teachers and parents are in a particularly influential position as their behaviour can have an impact on how children and young people behave. For example, a smoke, vape and drug-free school environment sends a clear message that a healthy lifestyle does not include smoking, vaping and drug-taking. Likewise, education can play a counterbalancing role in shaping a normative culture of safety, moderation and informed decision-making.

¹ DET Alcohol and Other Drugs - Students Policy <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/alcohol-and-other-drugs-students/policy>

² DET Smoking and Vaping Ban Policy <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/smoking-vaping-ban/resources>

There are a range of risk and protective factors related to the environment, knowledge, attributes and skills of students that influence the likelihood of them experimenting with tobacco or e-cigarette products, alcohol and other drugs.³ Research suggests that young people who have a number of protective factors in their lives are less likely to engage in long-term risky behaviour, including tobacco, e-cigarette, alcohol and drug experimentation.⁴ Developing protective factors such as resilience and social and emotional competencies will enhance the potential for children and young people to resist risky behaviours. A Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy will be most effective when all stakeholders (teachers, parents and students) are involved in its development. This enables them to understand the reasons for the policy and increases the likelihood of their support.

Whole school engagement

It is recognised that every member of Sunbury Downs College has an impact on students' health and can contribute to creating a healthy environment that is smoke, vape and drug-free and promotes low-risk alcohol consumption. All members of our school community including staff, students, families and volunteers will be supported to meet this policy.

Definitions

Tobacco, alcohol and other drugs: For the purposes of this policy and for the Healthy Schools Achievement Program, the 'Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs' health priority area focuses on creating smoke, vape and drug-free environments and low-risk alcohol consumption. Smoke and vape-free refers to both traditional and electronic cigarettes (i.e. e-cigarettes).

Tobacco product: Any device or product that contains organic matter that is heated or burned to create aerosol or smoke that is inhaled by the user.

E-cigarette product: Any electronic device that is intended to be used to create an aerosol for inhalation and any liquid, or product containing liquid, intended to be used in or with an electronic device to create an aerosol for inhalation.

Drug: Any substance taken to change the way the body and/or mind functions.⁵

Alcohol: A depressant drug that slows down activity in the central nervous system.⁵

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership and commitment

- Staff, families and students are involved in guiding the development and implementation of the whole school Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy and practices.
- Staff, families and students are provided with information about policy requirements, with opportunities to provide feedback and input.

³ DEECD, 2009, Smoke Free Schools Tobacco Prevention and Management Guidelines for Victorian Schools <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/health/manageguide.pdf>

⁴ DET, 2002, Talking Tactics Together <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/health/talkingtactics.pdf>

⁵ Australian Drug Information Network 2012, Glossary <https://adf.org.au/resources/did-glossary/>

Healthy physical environment

- There is smoke and vape free signage that can be easily seen and understood by the whole community.
- All events, on and off site, are smoke, vape and drug-free.
- If there is alcohol at a staff or family event, school leadership ensures all legal requirements related to the sale and supply of alcohol are met. Low-risk consumption of alcohol is promoted.
- If external organisations use the premises, a formal agreement ensures the school premises are smoke-, vape- and drug-free and low-risk alcohol consumption is promoted.

Healthy culture

- Diversity and cultural practices are considered when implementing this policy and preventative tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol and other drug initiatives.
- Staff, families and visitors are required to adhere to legislation and school policies related to smoke and vape free areas and are asked not to smoke or vape in sight of students.
- Staff who smoke are encouraged to take appropriate hygiene measures, such as thoroughly washing their hands, after smoking or vaping so that students are not exposed to second hand smoke or e-cigarette aerosol.
- Staff and families are encouraged to engage in low risk alcohol behaviours and abstain from taking drugs, particularly while around students.
- Our school encourages its events, celebrations, awards, gifts and fundraising to be free of alcoholic products.

Student teaching and learning

- Tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol and drug education, including information about related health risks, is appropriately incorporated into the curriculum.
- Students who want to quit smoking or vaping, drinking or using drugs are supported to seek information, advice and treatment referrals.
- Staff are supported to access professional development and resources about tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol and other drug education and best-practice responses to student misuse.

Supported staff

- Staff who want to quit smoking or vaping, drinking or using other drugs are supported and referred to appropriate agencies.
- Tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol and other drug policy requirements are included in staff induction/orientation.
- Resources about the health risks related to smoking and vaping, high-risk drinking and taking drugs are available to staff.

Families and community partnerships

- Information about health risks related to smoking and vaping, high-risk drinking and using other drugs is available for families and community members, including information about accessing support services.
- Partnerships are established with relevant organisations and health professionals to support smoke-, vape- and drug-free and alcohol harm reduction initiatives where appropriate.
- There are no partnerships with organisations that manufacture or wholesale alcoholic, tobacco or e-cigarette products.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

- [Tobacco Act 1987](#)
- [DET Smoking and Vaping Ban](#)
- [Liquor Control Reform Act 1998](#)
- [DET Smoking and Vaping Ban](#)
- [DET School Policy and Advisory Guide: Alcohol and Other Drugs - Students](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#)

RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES

- Student Engagement and Wellbeing
- Fundraising
- Duty of Care
- Medication

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Consultation	School Community – ongoing consultation with the school community via an offer to provide feedback on child safety policies and procedures as outlined on our website
Approved by	School Council 9 May 2024 Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2027