



Drug Policy

Statement of Context

Yarra Valley Grammar is committed to the care, safety and wellbeing of its students. Trends in modern society indicating increasing experimentation with and abuse of drugs have demanded that schools take steps to address and reflect community concerns about this problem. The School recognises that drug use is a community-wide problem. The School also recognises that students can be affected by their own drug use or by that of others. The issue of substance abuse is best addressed when all members of the School's community – students, parents and employees – are involved and informed.

For the purpose of this policy a drug is defined as:

Any substance, with the exception of food and water, which, when taken into the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically.

This definition includes all drugs of addiction or dependence, such as analgesics, alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, steroids, amphetamines, barbituates, pharmaceutical drugs, illicit drugs, as well as inhalants, such as glue, paint, nitrous oxide and petrol.

For the purpose of this policy 'employees' includes teaching and support staff, contractors and volunteers.

Reference Points / Background Papers

YVG Policy - Alcohol – Staff Consumption
YVG Policy – Anaphylaxis Management
YVG Policy – Asthma First Aid
YVG Policy – First Aid
YVG – Mini Bus Policy
YVG Child Protection Policy

The Yarra Valley Grammar Drug Policy is based upon current principles endorsed by medical, legal and ethical practitioners.
These are:

- a. The fact that alcohol and nicotine are the major causes of drug-related harm;
- b. That any policy should be consistent with the **Harm Minimisation** approach adopted by State and Federal Governments in Australia, which takes into account the relationships between people, their drug use and the environment in which their drug use occurs. (A Harm Minimization approach supports targeted strategies designed to have maximum impact in reducing negative effects of drug use and improving health, social and economic outcomes for the individual and community. . Outcomes

- may include abstinence or prevention of drug use, reduced or controlled use, and safer administration or reduction of the harmful consequences of drug use for the community.)
- c. That the cause of drug use is not only experimentation and the 'pursuit of pleasure', but also is often perceived as self-medication – to reduce pain or suffering;
 - d. That a standard approach to drug education and wellbeing procedures will be maintained across the campus;
 - e. That any policy should be implemented with care and support for students;
 - f. That there should be a well-formulated individual School-wide Drug Education Strategy within the framework set out by the Victorian Government.
 - g. That a policy should involve all students, employees and parents/guardians;
 - h. That there will be an ongoing monitoring of the policy and programmes.

Aims

The Aims of this policy are to:

- Create an environment where students, employees and parents are responsibly educated about drugs and drug issues
- Promote and maintain a positive, safe and caring School environment;
- Promote student wellbeing;
- Provide a consistent age appropriate approach when dealing with this issue which encourages guided and sensible decision-making;
- Provide education through classroom curriculum as well as seminars for students, parents and employees.
- Actively promote our School as aiming to be a drug free environment;
- Be consistent with State and Federal laws;
- Inform students of the dangers associated with the abuse of drugs so that they may make informed decisions;
- Foster self-esteem and build peer support groups;
- Develop clear steps to be taken in the event of substance abuse being evident;
- Establish clear rules for supervision of prescription drugs and pharmaceuticals.

Policy Details

Education

Health, Wellbeing and Lifestyle Education is one of the School's major concerns. The curriculum addresses many issues related to drug use, in particular, the following:

- a. The development of the individual's self esteem and decision making skills;
- b. Provision of facts about alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs and prescribed medication which give accurate information and examine benefits as well as risks;
- c. Discussion of risk taking behaviours and attitudes so that stereotypes and myths are challenged;
- d. Harm minimization – this form of education is about drug usage as well as opposition to drug use. This approach acknowledges that many young people will use drugs, including tobacco and alcohol, recreational drugs and prescription medication at some stage in their lives. However, through appropriate drug education strategies, they will acquire the knowledge to make informed decisions about drug use and be able to minimize any harmful effects associated with it;
- e. The law and drugs – an examination of the law, its rules, legal rights and coping with conflict arising. Employees, students and parents have a responsibility to discourage the use of all drugs which are detrimental to health and well-being;
- f. Giving and receiving help – focusing on skills to help oneself and to help others;
- g. Community action – exploring responses to drug use in the local and national environments;
- h. Parents and community workshops – designed to educate parents and other adults.

Yarra Valley Grammar's specific protocol on alcohol and tobacco

The consumption of alcohol is not permitted by students on School premises, and only in circumstances for employees and members of the public, when approved by the Principal. (also refer YVG Policy on Alcohol – Staff Consumption)

- a.

Smoking is not permitted on School grounds by students, employees, parents or any member of the public

Intervention

The **intervention procedure** is designed to address incidents of drug use in a way which is in the best interest of all parties, while also conforming to legal requirements.

Yarra Valley Grammar does not permit students, while on School premises and whether or not under School supervision, to:

- a. Smoke tobacco products
- b. Consume or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages
- c. Deliberately inhale substances such as such as glue, paint, nitrous oxide and petrol
- d. Possess drug related equipment such as syringes (unless prescribed for medical reasons and with the knowledge of the Yarra Valley employees) bong, pipes, nitrous oxide cartridges, etc.
- e. Possess, use or be under the influence of drugs prohibited in accordance with the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 (Vic)*
- f. Be under the influence of drugs, except for medical reasons.

These provisos include all occasions when a student is in School uniform or is representing the School, traveling to and from School, or any camp, excursions, sporting events or other organized function, e.g. disco, formal, social or sporting function.

Irrespective of what individuals may think or feel, the law regarding the sale or possession of illegal drugs is clear, and penalties are provided for the prosecution of offenders.

Where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion of drug use or possession, the Principal or a Head of School may, in the presence of the student and another teacher, search property such as a bag or search a locker (which is deemed to be the School's property). If the Principal is not part of the search process then the Principal must be notified of the situation within 24 hours.

Parents or guardians will be informed if a student is involved in an incident.

Any information provided or discovered will be treated confidentially until a thorough investigation has been completed, at which time it may be deemed necessary to reveal such information.

Implementation

- a. In the case of student use, possession or intention to supply drugs on the School property, appropriate sanctions will be decided by the Principal, School Heads and other relevant employees and may involve expulsion.
- b. The School will establish a check-list of short-term actions to be taken by employees on discovery of drug use, e.g., lines of communication amongst concerned people.

- c. The School will maintain a directory containing local doctors, clinics and agencies to which students with a drug problem can be referred. Copies will be held by the Principal, School Heads, Head of Student Wellbeing, the Health Centre and the Chaplain.
- d. In the event of a student appearing to be under the influence of a drug or drugs, medical advice will be sought.
- e. The School will notify parents/guardians before referral to medical agencies or, in circumstances where that is not practicable or appropriate, as soon as possible thereafter.
- f. The Police may be contacted by the Principal if deemed necessary.

Action

- a. **Sanctions** are the actions that will be taken when any element of the School Drug Policy has been infringed. Such sanctions are designed to consider the emotional and physical health and the wellbeing of all students as priorities.
- b. **Counseling** of students found to be infringing drug policies is integral to the wellbeing practice within the School. Counselors will hold such confidences within the limits of the law. An exception to this is when someone's safety is at serious risk. There may also be circumstances which require the involvement of professionals outside the School.

Specific Responses

Cigarettes

It is our intention that Yarra Valley Grammar should be a smoke-free school for students, employees and members of the public. Students found smoking, in possession of cigarettes, buying cigarettes from other students or supplying cigarettes to other students, anywhere in the School environment, will be liable to a range of sanctions dependent on the circumstances, at the discretion of the Principal.

This range of sanctions includes:

- a. Informing and consulting parents;
- b. Community service, in conjunction with outside agencies;
- c. Loss of any office held;
- d. Detention;
- e. Suspension from School;
- f. Expulsion from School.

Alcohol

Students found drinking or intoxicated in possession of alcohol, buying alcohol from other students or supplying alcohol to other students, in any School environment, will be liable to a range of sanctions dependent on the circumstances, at the discretion of the Principal.

This range of sanctions includes:

- a. Informing and consulting parents;
- b. Being sent home from School camps or School events and functions (at parent's expense);
- c. Community service;
- d. Referral to outside agency;
- e. Notifying police;
- f. Detention;
- g. Suspension from School;
- h. Expulsion.

Inhalants

Inhalant abuse, is the use of any inhalant for other than its primary purpose, particularly for the achievement of a state of altered awareness. Students will be liable to a range of sanctions dependent on the circumstances and whether or not previous offences have been recorded, at the discretion of the Principal.

This range of sanctions includes:

- a. Informing and consulting parents;
- b. Being sent home from School camps or School events and functions (at parent's expense);
- c. Community service;
- d. Referral to outside agency;
- e. Notifying police;
- f. Detention;
- g. Suspension from School;
- h. Expulsion.

Illegal Drugs

The possession and/or supply of illegal drugs is an offence and is against the law. The School will view either offence as a very serious matter.

- i. Any student found supplying illegal drugs is committing an offence against the law. The police will be notified.
- ii. Any student found in possession of illegal drugs, in any School environment, will be suspended immediately. His/her parents will be notified in order to begin a consultation process and the police will also be informed.

Students will be liable to a range of sanctions (at the discretion of the Principal) which includes:

- a. Informing and consulting parents;

- b. Being sent home from School camps or School events and functions (at parent's expense);
- c. Community service;
- d. Referral to outside agency;
- e. Notifying police;
- f. Suspension from School;
- g. Expulsion

Use of Medication

The actions of the School will be consistent with the following guidelines.

- a. 'Medication' includes all prescribed drugs and all legal non-prescribed drugs such as paracetamols, ventolin puffers, etc.
- b. Students who are required to use occasional medication at School should have a written request from their parents/guardians.
- c. Medication used on a long term basis should be recorded by the parent/guardians on the School Medical Form held by the Health Centre
- d. School-supplied medication may only be administered to students by the School Nurses or appropriately qualified First Aiders.
- e. Where parents request that students administer their own medication, the note should be directed to the Class Teacher/Tutor or Health Centre.
- f. Ventolin pumps and sprays are readily accessible through the Health Centre and in all First Aid Kits
- g. Prescribed medications brought to School for administration during the day must either taken to be the Health Centre and stored appropriately or in the Junior School Homeroom Teacher's locked drawer. Security is paramount.
- h. The exchange of medication between students is strictly forbidden. Medication should only be used by the person for whom it was prescribed.
- i. Medication should only be taken for the purpose for which it was intended.
- j. The dosage should be strictly adhered to. Over medicating could have serious and potentially fatal implications.

Confidentiality

Employees will endeavor to maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved in drug-related situations.

Media

All enquiries from external persons including the media, should be referred immediately to the Principal. Unless the authority has been formally delegated, the Principal is the only authorized representative of the School able to make media comment

Implications for Practice

At Board Level

To properly implement this policy, the Board must ensure that this policy is endorsed on an annual basis.

At Principal Level

To properly implement this policy, the Principal must ensure:

- that copies of this policy are made available to employees, students and parents, for example on the School intranet and/or internet, in physical form in the staff room and/or on employee bulletin boards;
- that this policy is incorporated into the School's induction program, to ensure that all employees are aware of the policy, have read and understood the policy, and acknowledge their commitment to comply with the policy;
- that periodic training and refresher sessions are administered to all employees in relation to this policy;
- that within the limits imposed by legislation, conflicts are resolved to:
 - protect the well-being and safety of the School community;
 - protect the well-being and safety of the individual;
 - protect the reputation of the School.

At other levels

To properly implement this policy, the employees must ensure that they will abide by this policy and assist the School in the implementation of this policy.