St. Therese School
Drug Policy

Introduction
The Policy for Drug Management is framed within the Vision Statement for South Australian Catholic Schools. This policy recognises that Catholic school communities develop the whole person, encourage the pursuit of excellence and celebrate the human and divine gifts of each student.

South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Vision Statement 1991

Underlying the policy is a belief in an education which aims at reconciliation, student autonomy and responsibility. Following the example of Jesus, we at St Therese School aim to develop students so that they can take responsibility for their own actions.

Background
Drugs are part of life in Australian society and drug use is a significant issue in our communities. It is vital that children and adults have the information, strategies and skills to prevent or reduce the harm that arises from drug usage. Illicit and unsanctioned drug use has no place in schools.

We at St Therese School believe in educating students for active participation in all dimensions of life in Australia through witness to the Christian message.

Definition
Drugs refer to those substances that alter a person’s physical or mental state.

Principles
- Drug education is a shared responsibility between home, school and community.
- Everyone has a right to a safe environment and a responsibility to promote safe practices.
- The use of illicit and unsanctioned drugs has no place in our school.
- Drug education is most successful when it is part of a health promoting school in which policies and practices support the classroom drug education program.
- Drug education is best taught in the context of an ongoing, developmental, appropriate school health curriculum.
- Drug education should address the values, attitudes and behaviours of society, the school community and the individual.

Key Policy Outcomes
The drug education program aims to minimise harm by providing a supportive environment in which to develop personal and social skills that equip students to deal with drug-related issues in a variety of contexts.

The curriculum will:
- Build on students’ existing knowledge, understanding, skills and strategies using a positive, preventative approach and harm reduction strategies
- Reinforce the school’s response to illicit use of drugs
- Provide information and access to support services
- Examine the use and management of medication
Reinforce healthy life choices

Responses to drug related incidents:
The school’s response to a drug related incident will be in line with the National Protocols and the CEO Guidelines and will take into account
- The nature of the incident
- The circumstances of the students involved including relevant age, developmental stage, gender, cultural and social considerations
- The safety and welfare of all members of the school community

The school’s response may include:
- An assessment of a student’s health status and seeking medical assistance
- Confiscating any substances or drug related objects
- Investigating the incident including interviewing students
- Informing parents and caregivers
- Informing police if the substance is suspected to be an illicit substance

The consequences for involvement in a drug related incident may include some or all of the following:
- Counselling
- Re-entry contracts
- Detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion

MEDICATION AND GENERAL HEALTH NEEDS
In support of this policy St Therese School will:
- Accept responsibility for reasonable supervision of students
- Provide an appropriate drug education
- Inform the students and parents of our expectations with regard to the use of drugs
- Ensure that medication is dispensed according to school guidelines
- Ensure that management plans and procedures are in place for students suffering from asthma or other serious medical conditions

The Staff will:
- Be familiar with health management plans of students in their care suffering from asthma or other serious medical conditions
- Fulfil their student supervision obligations
- Maintain confidentiality

The Students will:
- Ensure that they are familiar with and abide by the school’s medication dispensing guidelines
- Maintain a respect for their own health and that of others

The Parents will:
- Be familiar with the school’s medication dispensing guidelines
- Inform the school of any medical condition that requires monitoring or special provisions being made
ILlicit AND UNSanctioned DRUG USE

In Support of this policy St Therese School will:
Inform the school community that in the context of the statements made earlier in this policy, the school does not permit students to:

- Smoke or possess tobacco
- Consume or possess alcoholic beverage
- Use or possess illegal drugs
- Misuse prescribed or over-the-counter medicines
- Misuse solvents and other chemical agents
- Be under the influence of any of the above
- Sell, supply, exchange or negotiate in relation to any of the above
- Possess drug related objects unless medically authorised

The school prohibits the possession, sale, supply, exchange or negotiation of the above when on school premises or any occasions when the staff have responsibility for an individual or a group of students. Any drug related incident is to be reported to SAPOL.

The Principal will:
- Support the professional development of staff around drug education
- In the event of a drug related incident follow procedures that promote and protect the safety and welfare of all members of the school community
- In all cases, the parents/caregivers of the student will be notified immediately
- If the incident involves an illicit substance the police will be notified
- Develop a range of responses that take into account the nature of the incident, the circumstances of the student(s) involved, including relevant age, developmental, gender, cultural and social considerations and the needs and safety of others in the school
- Inform other school staff on a need to know basis only.

The Staff will:
Provide an educational program that:
- Builds on students’ knowledge, understanding, skills and strategies about the use of drugs to enable them to make informed responsible decisions about drug use as part of a healthy lifestyle
- Reflects the principles of best practice in drug education
- Reflects a positive preventative approach and harm reduction strategies which take care not to represent the use of inappropriate drugs as acceptable
- Direct a student to the principal in the event of the suspicion of a drug related incident
- Maintain confidentiality

The Students will:
- Ensure that they are familiar with and abide by the school’s policy and procedures on the use of licit and illicit drugs

The Parents will:
- Ensure that they are familiar with the school’s policy and procedures on both licit and illicit drugs as stated above
- Support the drug education program offered by the school
- Meet with the principal in the event of their child being involved in a drug related incident to be informed about the school’s discipline and pastoral care responses
**Bases of Discretion**
The Principal reserves the right to inform parent, interview students and take appropriate action if there is a reasonable suspicion that a student is breaching this policy, particularly as regards the guidelines concerning illicit and unsanctioned drug use at school.

**SUPPORT SERVICES**
- The school may refer parents and students to drug counsellors, CAMHS and other services.
- 24 hour information and counselling is available through a number of agencies, including:
  
  - Kids Help Line 1800 551 800
  - Parent Help Line 1300 364 100
  - Alcohol & Drug Information Service 1300 131 340

This policy is linked to:
- Family Life Education Policy
- Health and Physical Education Policy
- Religious Education Policy
- First Aid Policy
- OHSW Policy

**EVALUATION AND REPORTING**
Parents, staff, students and relevant community members will be consulted in the development and regular review of this policy.

**Review Date**

May 2011