Drug and Substance Abuse Policy

1. Rationale

This policy addresses the use of prescription drugs, legal and illicit drugs at school and gives guidance to teachers, parents, students and administrators on the consequences of a drug incident at the school.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to prevent the possession, use, sale and distribution of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs and related implements by students whilst attending school or at a school related activity.

The following values underpin all that follows in the policy and may need to be referred to when the policy itself is unclear in its application, to one of the many situations which may arise:

- Every student has the right to come to school to learn in an atmosphere free from the distractions and dangers imposed by drug use.
- Parents have the right to expect that their children will be educated in an atmosphere free from the distractions and dangers imposed by drug use.
- It is the responsibility of the College to guarantee that the rights of students and parents are respected in this matter.
- The College acknowledges that it shares responsibility with parents and the wider community to provide students and parents with factual information on drug abuse and advice on the legal questions surrounding the use of drugs.
- The College is based firmly in Christian principles and teachings and these standards do not support the use illegal or harmful drugs or the unlawful protection of those who do so.

Principles underpinning the College's Drug and Substance Abuse Policy are:

- The College acknowledges that it shares with parents the responsibility to inform students of the best ways of resisting pressures to become involved in recreational drug use and to give experiences to build their self-esteem to the level where they feel confident to make informed decisions for themselves.
- The College commits itself to deal appropriately with students who become involved in both legal and illicit drug use, but such treatment must always be given within the context of due regard for the needs and rights of the whole school community and the relevant laws.
- Experience suggests that students who divulge information to staff of a school on drug matters sometimes do so at considerable risk to themselves. The College commits itself to the protection of students who have the courage to assist the school community in this way.
- It is the responsibility of the Principal to advise the Board on the formulation of policy and the responsibility of the Board to support the College in the difficult decisions it may be called upon to make in these matters.

- Teachers share with parents the responsibility for modelling appropriate drug usage both in and out of school. Teachers accept that they are under an obvious professional obligation to set an example to their students in this matter.
- This policy will apply to all College activities including College social events, camps, excursions and sporting events. Students travelling away from school on official school activities are automatically covered by the policy.
- The policy may also be applied to students who use drugs inappropriately out of school hours in private settings, if knowledge of that usage comes to be publicly known in the College community bringing the College into disrepute.
- Although this policy refers directly to drugs it will by extension apply to the implements involved in the use of drugs. Such implements indicate an intention to use or a history of use of the prohibited drug and will attract penalties consistent with the use of drugs at school.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all students and staff of Emmanuel College.

4. References

Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 (Qld)
Liquor Act 1992 (Qld)
Emmanuel College Student Codes of Conduct (located in Schoolbox Senior School and Junior School Guidelines and Procedures)
Emmanuel College Medication - Administering at School Policy
Emmanuel College Admissions Policy
Emmanuel College Work Health and Safety Policy

5. Definitions

Illicit drugs: are taken to include illegal drugs and related implements, as well as legal drugs and substances being used for non-medical (i.e., recreational) purposes.

Examples would include cannabis, dexamphetamine used for non-medical purposes and inhalants such as spray paints. In Queensland, e-cigarette (vaping) products containing nicotine are illegal unless on prescription and supplied from a pharmacist or through Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) processes. In addition, sale to, and use of all e-cigarettes by children under 18 years of age is also illegal.

6. Policy

a) Administration of medication to students (See Medication - Administering at School Policy)

b) Use of Legal Drugs (e.g. Tobacco, Alcohol)
There are clear legal sanctions governing the sale to and use of alcohol and cigarettes by minors. These legal sanctions apply at Emmanuel College as in the rest of the community.

In formulating this policy, the following has been considered:

- Health and Safety legislation places a duty of care on the employer to provide a safe working environment.
- It is not unlawful or discriminatory for an employer to ban or restrict smoking or use of alcohol on school premises or at school related activities.
- It is illegal to supply cigarettes or alcohol to children under 18 years of age.
- It is illegal for persons under the age of 18 to purchase cigarettes and alcohol.
- An employer may be held liable for illness resulting from passive smoking.
- Emmanuel College Board has declared the entire campus of Emmanuel College a tobacco free zone, and a minor and student use-of-alcohol-free zone.
- All non-government schools in Queensland have a complete ban on smoking on school premises and at all school functions where students are involved, and most schools restrict the supply of alcohol at school functions.

The following applies in relation to the use of alcohol or cigarettes on school property or at College functions:

- All students are prohibited from using alcohol or tobacco on College property or at College functions and activities. A student in the possession of, or using alcohol or, tobacco while at school or at an off-campus school function could receive a significant consequence
- A student knowingly in the company of a student in the possession of, or using alcohol or, tobacco while at school or at an off-campus school function could also receive a significant consequence.
- The College values restorative practice and an educative approach to such matters and this will be incorporated into the management of any incidents.
- Staff at school camps and excursions will refrain from drinking alcohol or smoking. This observation is in keeping with the legal duty of care incumbent on all school staff and with the acknowledged need to model appropriate behaviour for students.
- Schools were declared 'smoke free zones' in 1989 and this prohibition on smoking applies to staff, students, contractors, parents and members of the public.
- In this policy, glue, solvents and other inhalants will be treated in the same way as student use of alcohol or tobacco. That is, their use at school is prohibited and their use will attract similar penalties.
- Support programmes for students who use tobacco and/or alcohol but wish to give up will be offered as needed. This will be done in a non-punitive manner out of concern for the students' health.
- The school undertakes to develop as part of its curriculum information for students on the responsible use of alcohol and the dangers of tobacco use.

c) Use of Illicit Drugs

An essential aspect of dealing with the use of illicit drugs is recognition of the fact that even though students may become involved in unlawful activities they retain certain rights as citizens. These include the right not to divulge information that may incriminate themselves or others, the right to have a legal guardian present and the right to refuse a search of their possessions or person. Students of Emmanuel College are not permitted to supply, possess or consume illicit drugs whilst enrolled at the College. Furthermore, the College will consider police involvement on a case by case basis when dealing with matters related to use of illicit drugs. However, it must be noted that under the law mandatory police involvement could be required if a student is found in possession of or using an illicit substance at school.

Should a student find a needle, syringe, e-cigarette (vape) or other drug use device on school grounds they should not touch it or allow any other person to touch it. They should alert a member of staff who will arrange for it to be disposed of in accordance with safe handling procedures.

It should be noted that students who are 17 years or older are regarded in the eyes of the law as adults. An incident involving an adult is very likely to result in court action. Where a student is considered an adult there is no requirement for another adult to be present at the formal interview and parents do not have to be advised although the College may choose to do so.

7. Procedures

a) Action Plan

If the College becomes aware, or reasonable suspects, that a student has alcohol, tobacco or illicit drugs at the school or at a school-related activity, the College will take the following action, as appropriate in the circumstances:

1. Firstly, ensuring the safety of the student/s concerned
2. Confiscate the substance and/or implement if appropriate
3. Interview the student/s
4. Contact the student/s' parents
5. Report the matter to the police if appropriate
6. Offer appropriate support to any student involved in the matter
7. Implement any other consequences or actions that might be appropriate in the circumstances, including possible disciplinary action
8. Consider the need to communicate the incident to employees, students and parents, taking into account the privacy of the student/s and family concerned, the Australian Privacy Principles and the duty of care the College owes to other students.

Note: in implementing the College's drug policy consideration will be given at all times to:

- protecting the privacy of individual students and their families
- adhering to the principles of Natural Justice

b) Reporting to Police

The College will report relevant matters to the Police when it is in the student's or school community's best interests, as well as when:

- a student is trafficking drugs in the school
- a student is incorrigibly taking drugs in the school

c) Searching and confiscating property

In accordance with the College's Enrolment Contract the College will search a student's property, including lockers and bags, and may confiscate banned items, when it believes it is appropriate in the circumstances. When items have been confiscated, the College will take the following action:

- if the police have been involved in the matter, give it to them
- if the substance is inherently dangerous, destroy it
- if possession of the substance is illegal, destroy it
- if none of the three scenarios above applies, give it to the student or to those who are responsible for the student.

8. Responsibilities

School Responsibilities

- Emmanuel College acknowledges its responsibility to:
- Develop and implement this Policy to help ensure the safety of students
- Communicate this Policy to students, parents and employees
- Keep appropriate records, monitor and report on any issues related to the use, possession, sale or distribution of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drug or related implements at the school or at school-related activities
- Encourage students, parents and employees to contribute to a healthy school culture

Parent Responsibilities

Parents have a responsibility to:

- Read and understand, and ensure their child reads and understands, this Policy
- Ensure, as far as possible, that their child does not use, possess, sell or distribute alcohol, tobacco or illicit drugs or related implements at the school or at school-related events.

Student Responsibilities

College students have a responsibility to:

- Not use, possess, sell or distribute alcohol, tobacco or illicit drugs or related instruments whilst at school or attending school-related activities.

9. Consequences

The response of the College to a drug related offence will consider the nature and circumstances of the offence and the behavioural record of the student. The physical, mental and emotional health and well-being of students is a priority. However, as a general policy students who bring illicit drugs onto campus or an excursion, or who are involved in the sale of same, will face potential expulsion unless a compelling case for relaxation of this standard can be presented to the College Principal. This decision will always be at the Principal's discretion. Where students bring alcohol onto the campus or an excursion, similar penalties may be applied, depending on the age of the students, the particular setting, and the quantity and type of alcohol.

Drug related incidents will be dealt with in a consistent, positive and supportive way in the best interests of the individuals concerned and the school as a whole, according to the Principal's discretion.

Consequences available to the College include:

- informing and consulting parents
- providing counselling
- loss of privileges
- referral to an external agency
- suspension from school
- notification of police
- Show Cause Meeting and possible expulsion from school

10. Use of Alcohol by Adults

The consumption of alcohol at Emmanuel College by adults is detailed in the Alcohol Policy.

11. Review Date

Every 2 years unless required earlier due to legislative or regulatory changes.