

Intervention matters



Revised 2011

A policy statement and procedural framework for the management of suspected drug-related incidents in schools

Incident guide and checklist

These extracts from *Intervention matters* support school personnel when a suspected drug-related incident occurs. Refer to the full document for approaches to whole school prevention and intervention, detailed procedures and drug policy development.
<http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/drugstrategy> > Key Documents and Policies

The school's jurisdiction, legal obligations and working in partnership

Schools, and principals in particular, need to use their professional judgment in determining their legal obligations and DECS requirements regarding when and whom to notify in the case of suspected drug-related incidents. The seriousness of the incident will frequently influence the decision of whom to contact. In all cases, the police, DECS Drug Strategy, Legislation and Legal Services or the regional office can be contacted for advice.

There is a clear demarcation line between the authority or jurisdiction of the school and that of the police in managing illegal drugs incident in schools.

- By law, in the case of the use or possession or suspected use or possession of illicit drugs or drug paraphernalia, the police must be notified. DECS policy is that the regional director must be notified and the incident

reported using the Incident and Response Management System (IRMS).

- In the case of a legal drug being used illegally, for example, alcohol use or possession at school, principals are required to contact police... Whenever police become involved, regional directors should be notified and incidents reported using the Incident and Response Management System (IRMS). The obligation to notify these parties becomes increasingly stronger, the more serious the incident.
- In the case of legal drugs being used in an unsanctioned way, principals should use their discretion as to whom to contact...

In all incidents, schools should take a 'wellbeing first' approach, while responding to legal and policy obligations.

From *Intervention matters* Part 3: Managing suspected drug-related incidents.

Quick drug reference for school communities



Substance and ways of taking	Legal status	School sanctioning
Caffeine Oral	Legal	Generally sanctioned , but hot coffee, iced coffee and 'Energy drinks' are in the Red Category of the DECS Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply guidelines and are banned from sale in school canteens and vending machines. Bringing caffeinated products to school may be unsanctioned under a local school policy.



Tobacco Smoked	It is illegal for any person to sell or supply a cigarette to a person under 18 years. Smoking is banned in enclosed, public places, workplaces and shared areas in South Australia.	Use not sanctioned by any person on school grounds.
Alcohol Oral	Supply or sale of alcohol to a person under 18 years in a public place, such as school or hotel is illegal . Possession and use for young people in a school is illegal .	Use not sanctioned by students at school functions. Use not sanctioned by staff, even out of hours, whilst holding duty of care responsibilities. School staff must utilise harm minimisation principles as an OHSW obligation if consuming alcohol whilst students are not present, eg staff Friday night drinks.



Over the counter /analgesics (eg Panadol, Disprin) Oral	Legal , but not to be supplied to students by other students.	Sanctioned in accordance with DECS <i>Health Support Planning</i> Guidelines. School staff should store and supervise only that medication which has been prescribed by a doctor for a student for a specified period of time, and is used according to the agreed plan.
Prescribed medication (eg Insulin, Ritalin, asthma medication) Injection/Oral	Legal if prescribed by a doctor. Illegal for any person to supply/distribute/sell prescription medication which has not been prescribed for that person. Police need to be advised.	
Volatile substances (eg whipped cream dispensers, petrol, sprays/toluene/ nitrous oxide) Inhalation	<i>Controlled Substances Act</i> states it is illegal for a person to sell or supply a volatile substance if they suspect it will be inhaled or supplied to someone else who will inhale it.	Sanctioned only if used appropriately and within the law. Must be securely and appropriately stored.

Illicit drugs—police must be advised. Unsanctioned by schools

Cannabis Marijuana Oral/Smoking	Hallucinogens Magic mushrooms Oral	Meth/Amphetamines Speed, Ecstasy, Ice Snorting/Injecting Oral/Anally	Heroin Oral Smoking	Cocaine Snorting, Injecting Oral/Anally
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Drug paraphernalia	Legal status	School sanctioning
Smoking paraphernalia May be home-made as a pipe or empty plastic bottle with short hose attachment, or may be metal and dismantled into smaller parts.	Not illegal to have an unused pipe with no intent to use. Illegal to have an instrument which has been used or with intent to use for smoking cannabis. Police need to be advised.	Unsanctioned.
Needles/syringes	A syringe or needle is not illegal .	Sanctioned only for medical use under agreed medication management plan. Unsanctioned for any other purpose.



Unknown substance	Possibly illegal. Needs to be referred to police for identification.	Possibly unsanctioned.
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Incident management checklist— suspected drug-related incident

The following checklist is designed as a quick reference tool for principal and/or delegate's own use if they choose to.

	Check box
Has First Aid/ Emergency Care been attended to?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the basic facts to ensure safety of student/s known?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the safety and wellbeing of all students involved been attended to? (Are there other students who have taken the substance?)	<input type="checkbox"/>
If appropriate has the student/s been escorted to a safe, confidential place where the state of health can be closely observed? (Health and wellbeing issues paramount)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the student assessed as 'well' to continue the interview?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a presumption of innocence until proven otherwise?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there any evidence? If yes, has the evidence (drugs/drug paraphernalia) been secured? Witnessed by:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has the student/s been informed as to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • steps of process that will now occur <input type="checkbox"/> • right to representation by advocate of choice <input type="checkbox"/> • right to be heard, including the right to remain silent <input type="checkbox"/> • right to question evidence <input type="checkbox"/> • right to hear what is alleged and to know reasons for determinations? <input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you discussed informing the parents/caregivers with the student and ascertained any issues of concern with engaging parents/caregivers?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have parents/caregivers been informed? If a decision has been taken not to inform parents at this stage, it has been made on the basis of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being in the best interest of the child's welfare <input type="checkbox"/> • on police advice, pending investigation <input type="checkbox"/> • the student (over 18 years) requesting that parents not be contacted <input type="checkbox"/> If parents unavailable to attend school, have they offered another time? If yes, when? _____ Are there any considerations as a result of contact with parents/caregivers? _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
In the case of a more serious incident, and especially if police are required, has the student or parent/caregiver requested a legal advocate (eg solicitor) to be present?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the student been offered the right to have a procedural observer of their choice present?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the student admitted to using, possessing or distributing the drug?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

		Check box
Do you know what the substance/equipment is?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, is it	If No, do you need to:	
Legal, but unsanctioned in a school? (eg tobacco) <input type="checkbox"/>	Call police for search of student or school property? <input type="checkbox"/>	
Illegal for youth in a school (alcohol) – call police for advice <input type="checkbox"/>	Call police for identification of substance? <input type="checkbox"/>	
Legal to possess, but illegal to supply (eg supplying prescription medicine to others) —is there a need to call police as collaborative partners or to clarify legality issues? <input type="checkbox"/>		
An illicit substance or drug paraphernalia—call police and suspend further school investigations <input type="checkbox"/>		
If appropriate, has the regional office been informed?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your manager, regional support services need to be involved? (Intent to exclude, developing an alternative program, early intervention strategy)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a need to make a mandatory report or to seek advice regarding a report?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Continue with interview, using Student interview record—Suspected drug-related incident		

Follow-up record

To be completed by principal/delegate or procedural observer following student interview and all police investigations.

	Check box
If there has been police involvement, will the student be involved in any police/justice program? (Police Drug Diversion Initiative or Early Intervention Pilot Program) If yes, detail _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has there been a decision on disciplining student behaviour?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, has the student been advised of the decision and any appeal process to which they are entitled?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has school-based support for the student/s been put in place?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a necessity to contact other agencies to support student and family?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Have these been agreed to by the student and (if under 18) the family? If yes, which ones?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the incident been reported through the Incident and Response Management System (IRMS) if required?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Have the appropriate staff been informed of the determination whilst affording the student the right to (qualified) privacy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the school discussed reviewing the drug policy/behaviour code?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Managing suspected drug-related incidents in overview

(See Intervention matters Part 3: Managing suspected drug-related incidents for rationale and detailed procedures)

<p>Incident</p>	<p>Student/s suspected of possessing, distributing or using a drug or drug paraphernalia, including being drug affected.</p>			
<p>Initial procedures for staff at incident —all drugs</p>	<p>Calmly but firmly intervene, ensuring the safety and health of student/s and particularly utilising OHS&W principles in caring for yourself.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Consider calling on additional staff. If intervening staff member is not a teacher, a teacher should be called to the scene. 2 Assess health and safety of all student/s involved e.g. the need for an emergency response (Phone 000). 3 Inform student/s of concerns, seek cooperation, outline initial procedures which might follow and keep students informed of their rights. 4 Note details of incident throughout and record when practical—who, what, when and where. 5 Safely, collect any suspected drugs and drug paraphernalia, awaiting police collection. 6 Escort student/s to principal or delegate and hand over with details of incident and any collected materials. 7 Attend to other students involved. 			
<p>Principal/ delegate management of incident</p> <p>Note: If it is determined that police presence is required by law, the role of the principal/ delegate investigating the incident is suspended pending police investigations.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Continue to monitor student safety. 9 Throughout, inform student/s of the proceedings, outlining the principles of natural justice as they apply to the situation. 10 Secure evidence. 11 Make initial assessment of seriousness of incident, mindful at all times of the need for procedural fairness. Collect information, document, seek advice, as appropriate. (See below) 12 Determine the next level of involvement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13 Suspected use/ possession/ distribution of illegal substance, drug paraphernalia or unidentified substance 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13 Suspected use/ possession/ distribution of legal substance but illegal behaviour (e.g. alcohol) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13 Suspected use/ possession/ distribution of legal substance but unsanctioned behaviour
<p>Following actions, determining consequences</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13 No substance, no confession of drug use but unusual behaviour suggests drug use 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Contact police to investigate/ identify. Contact regional office. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Contact police for advice, clarification or notification. Notify regional office. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Use professional judgment to determine if need to inform police e.g. regarding community safety.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Contact police to investigate/ identify. Contact regional office. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Contact police for advice, clarification or notification. Notify regional office. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Use professional judgment to determine if need to inform police e.g. regarding community safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat the student as unwell, implementing the school's processes for managing unwell students. • Contact parents/ caregivers to collect unwell student.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15 Contact parents. If police are involved, be guided by them in this matter. 16 Determine other participants for a school-based response: student advocate when not a parent, procedural observer, translator. Ensure all participants understand proceedings and roles. 			
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17 Consider whether mandatory reporting is required. 18 Report critical incident through Incident and Response Management System (IRMS) as required. 19 Apply processes and consequences as per school's behaviour and/or drug policy. Consider responses which are educative, punitive and deterrent to support student wellbeing and engagement in learning. Involve participants. Keep stakeholders informed, including right of appeal. 20 Where necessary, establish and implement student development plans, mindful of learner wellbeing including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ongoing educational support • offering counselling options • re-entry planning if student has been on 'take home', suspended or excluded. 21 Debrief staff and review school policy. 			

For advice contact, as appropriate: local police or telephone 131 444; DECS: regional office; Drug Strategy 8226 1287; Legislation and Legal Services 8226 1555; Communications 8226 7904.

See also <http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/drugstrategy> > Key Documents and Policies

For the complete, revised (2011) document: Intervention matters: a policy statement and procedural framework for the management of suspected drug-related incidents in schools: see <http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/drugstrategy> > **Key Documents and Policies**

Contents (which can be downloaded as separate documents) include:

DECS Policy statement

Part 1: Introduction

Societal norms and drugs. What does this mean for schools? A national strategy. The DECS Drug Strategy. Harm minimisation. Reasonable and responsible. practices in school communities. Developing school-based policy and procedures. Professional learning

Part 2: Important issues around schools and drugs

What is a drug-related incident? Differentiating: legal, unsanctioned and illicit. Searching, drug testing. Managing personal disclosure. Parents as partners. Supporting Aboriginal students and those from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds. The need for professional judgment. Managing the media

Part 3: Managing suspected drug-related incidents

Quick drug reference for school communities. Managing suspected drug-related incidents in overview. Initial procedures for staff at incident. Principal/delegate management of incident. Determining consequences and following actions

Part 4: Developing a school policy

Why have a whole school approach to drug education and intervention? Why have a school policy for intervention? Developing common understandings. Exemplar of a school drug policy

Appendix A: Incident management roles and documentation

Appendix B: Legal status of drugs

Appendix C: Legal obligations

Appendix D: Principles of natural justice

Appendix E: Scenarios: *includes new alcohol-related scenario*

Appendix F: Frequently asked questions: with new section, *Considering issues related to alcohol*

Support services

References

Contact for advice and/or to inform:

Emergency: Telephone 000

SAPOL: 131 444 for urgent attention or local police or Crime Stoppers 1800 333 000

Regional office (for advice and to inform)

DECS Drug Strategy (for advice) 8226 1287

DECS Legislation and Legal Services (for advice) 8226 1555

DECS Communications (for media advice) 8226 7904

For complete list see *Intervention matters: Support Services*



Government of South Australia
Department of Education and
Children's Services

Drug strategy
with our eyes open

