Blackheath & Thornburgh College

ALCOHOL, SMOKING & ILLICIT DRUGS POLICY

Review Procedure
Blackheath & Thornburgh Executive Management and the Board will review the policy as required. The review schedule is directed in response to organisational and/or legislative changes and requirements. The review will be undertaken in consultation with employees and other relevant parties. All relevant persons will be made aware of changes made because of the review.

This policy will be reviewed if:

- There are changes in the workplace that may affect the policy;
- The policy is not effective;
- There are legislative changes that affect the policy; or
- There is a breach of this policy.

This policy is reviewed at least biennially.

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Topic:	Alcohol, Smoking & Illicit Drugs
Approval Authority:	Principal
Document Owner	Blackheath & Thornburgh College
Last Approval Date:	September 2026
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Audience:	All employees, students, volunteers, contractors and parents/guardians
Related Policies	Student Code of Conduct Administration of Medications Policy Whistleblower Policy Staff Code of Conduct Privacy Policy
Document Web Links:	https://www.qld.gov.au/health/staying-healthy/atods/drugs
Notes:	

Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to prevent the possession, use, sale and distribution of alcohol, smoking and illicit drugs and related implements by students whilst attending College or at a College-related activities. It is also intended to give guidance to teachers, parents, students and administrators on the consequences of an incident involving these substances at the College or at College functions.

Definitions
For the purposes of this policy, a drug is defined as 'any substance which affects physical or mental functions'. Drugs include a range of materials, many of which are legal in our culture although prohibited from use at College.

Any reference to '**illicit drugs**' includes illegal drugs and related implements, as well as legal drugs and substances being used for non-medical (i.e. recreational) purposes. For example, this includes cannabis, dexamphetamine used for non-medical purposes and inhalants such as spray paints, glue and solvents.

Although this policy refers directly to illicit drugs, it also by extension applies to the implements involved in the use of illicit drugs. Such implements indicate an intention to use the prohibited drug and will attract consequences consistent with the use of illicit drugs at College.

Any reference to cigarettes and/or tobacco also includes electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), the use of which is commonly referred to as 'vaping' and is prohibited at College.

Prescription and non-prescription medications
Importantly, prescription and non-prescription medications (e.g. paracetamol) can only be used and distributed in accordance with the College's Administrations of Medications Policy. Medications are **otherwise not permitted** to be possessed, acquired, used, sold or otherwise distributed by any student and only authorised staff are permitted to distribute these medications to students in accordance with the College's policy.

If a student is found to be in breach of this policy, they will face consequences as outlined below.

Scope
This policy applies to students, employees, volunteers, contractors and parents/guardians and to all College activities, including camps, excursions and sporting events in which the College may participate. Students travelling away from College on official College activities are automatically covered by the policy. The policy outlines the objective, the responsibilities of all stakeholders and the procedures for dealing with these substances at the College.

Objective
The College has a **ZERO** tolerance policy towards student use, possession, sale and distribution of alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs and related instruments whilst attending College or at College-related activities. A person must not smoke cigarettes including e-cigarettes (regardless of whether they contain nicotine) within the College premises and within five (5) metres of any pedestrian access to the College. Smoking in these places is a fineable offence.

The primary objective of this policy is to provide for a school environment free of these substances, whether the drugs in question are legal or illegal.

Staff obligations
All College personnel have legal and professional responsibilities to respond to information about, and incidents involving, student use or possession of these substances at College or during College activities.

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 College staff and with the acknowledged need to model appropriate behaviour for students.

Values
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 illicit 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 illicit drug use.

It is the responsibility of the College to ensure 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 information on illicit drug abuse and advice on the legal questions surrounding the use of drugs. The principles underpinning the College's policy are:

1. Parents and students have a right to be consulted in the formulation of the policy and to contribute to the ongoing application of the policy.

2. The College acknowledges that it shares with parents responsibility to inform students of the best ways of resisting pressures to become involved in illicit drug use and experiences to build their self-esteem to the level where they feel confident to make informed decisions for themselves.

3. The College commits itself to deal compassionately with students who become involved in situations of illicit drug use, but such treatment must always be given within the context of due regard for the needs and rights of the whole College community.

4. The College commits itself to work closely with the police and welfare agencies in this matter and with other secondary schools which face common problems in this area.

5. Experience suggests that students who divulge information to College staff 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 College community in this way.

6. 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.

7. Teachers share with parents the responsibility for modeling appropriate drug usage both in and out of College. Teachers accept that they are under a professional obligation to set an example to their students in this matter.

Action plan

If the College becomes aware, or reasonable suspects, that a student has been or is consuming, using is in possession of or selling alcohol, cigarettes (including e-cigarettes) or illicit drugs at College or at a College-related activity, the College will take the following action, as appropriate in the circumstances:

- Firstly, ensuring the safety of the student/s concerned
- Confiscate the substance and/or the implement if appropriate
- Interview the student/s
- Contact the student/s' parents/guardians
- Report the matter to the police if appropriate
- Offer appropriate support to any student involved in the matter
- Implement any other consequences or actions that might be appropriate in the circumstances, including possible disciplinary action (see further details below)
- Consider the need to communicate the incident to staff, 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

Consequences

Students who are to found to have used, possessed, sold or distributed illicit drugs, alcohol, cigarettes (including e-cigarettes), vapes and/or other related instruments at College or at a College activity may face any of the following consequences:

- Loss of the prohibited product
- Involvement of parents
- Detention
- Counselling and/or participation in a College service activity to prevent recurrence
- Withdrawal from College activities (such as sporting trips or school excursions)
- Loss of privileges at the College
- A period of suspension from the College
- Depending on the seriousness and the circumstances, expulsion

Reporting to Police

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

- A student is trafficking drugs in the College
- A student is found in possession of or using illicit drugs in the College

Students and staff should be aware that possession, use and sale of drugs, and possession of implements related to drug use, is illegal and, in most cases, the police will be called if a student is found in possession of or using an illicit substance at College. Further, 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.

With matters involving the police, students have 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.

Confiscating property

The College 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, either destroy the item or give it to those who are responsible for the student

Education

To educate about consequences of illicit drug use, the College will:

- Include information about drug abuse and decision making as part of the College's Human Relationship/Life Skills/Health and Physical Education programs.
- Ensure that the whole College community is aware that smoking and vaping are not permitted at the College and within five (5) metres of the College entrances. This may be achieved through the signage required at each entrance.
- Ensure teachers on playground duty are vigilant and aware of this issue. This includes providing in-service, so they are able, for example, to recognise objects commonly used as bongs.
- Inform students, parents, teachers and the police of the College's policy.
- Build on trust between students and staff, particularly staff with a welfare responsibility for students such as pastoral care teachers and year level coordinators.

- If further measures are required (due to non-compliance), notices in the College newsletter, on the College website and direct communication with specific staff, students, parents/carers or visitors who are non-compliant may be required.

With regard to smoking and vaping specifically, the College will:

- Remind the College community that smoking and vaping are not permitted at College-sanctioned events held off College premises.
- Encourage College employees who require support complying with the ban to call the Quitline on 13 78 48. Quitline is a friendly, confidential telephone service. A Quitline counsellor is trained to listen carefully and provide practical advice tailored for each person.

Minimising Illicit Drug Use

In order to minimise illicit drug use, the College will:

- Advertise widely that illicit drug use, possession and supply at the College is unacceptable and, when detected, will result in serious consequences, including police and parental involvement
- Reinforce the unacceptability of illicit drugs in schools by consistently carrying through on stated actions
- Identify consequences and apply them consistently and fairly to users and suppliers
- Establish an environment in which all College community members have enough care and concern for each other that they will confidentially pass on information about people using, carrying and/or selling drugs
- Use police cautioning processes where possible and utilise reintegration processes such as Community Accountability Conferencing and community services where appropriate
- Ensure that detection and deterrent processes are maintained and sustained
- Review and evaluate strategies and procedures regularly and revise them as required