
Macleans College - POLICIES & DIRECTIVES

SECTION NO: **1100**

POLICY NO: **1103**

ISSUE DATE: 15/03/07

TITLE: **SAFE SCHOOL POLICIES**

ISSUE NO: 2

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Drugs and Alcohol

DEFINITIONS:

“Drug” as used in this policy means any chemical or other substance, **the improper or illegal** use of which may be harmful to health and well being.

A “medicine” is a chemical substance, the property and legal use of which provides benefits to health. A particular chemical substance may therefore be either a drug or a medicine depending on the circumstance of use. This policy relates to “drugs” and not “medicines.”

Other substances, including alcohol, tobacco, petrol and other solvents, while well known to cause harm to health under some circumstances, may be legally and properly used in other circumstances. This policy relates to the improper and illegal use (abuse) of such substances.

RATIONALE:

Students have the right to be educated in a drug free environment, to be provided with factual information, to be able to make informed choices and to be supported in their drug free choice or in a decision to free themselves of a drug habit.

This policy is based on acknowledgement of the wider cultural context beyond school.

- Drug taking is a widely accepted part of social life.
- Some teenagers find it difficult to make informed choices or trust a helper once under the influence of drugs.
- Society will continue to lose young people to the drug culture if a safe environment and support is not provided for those wanting to free themselves from a drug habit.
- A simple change of school rarely deals with addiction or abuse.
- Behaviour will not change if a student continues to use mind-changing substances.

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PURPOSES:

- 1 To provide an up-to-date, factual Alcohol and Drug programme throughout the whole school.
- 2 To provide drug education to all staff and Board of Trustees.
- 3 To provide a social and personal skills programme, and to give students the knowledge and confidence to make responsible choices about alcohol and drug use.
- 4 To provide drug counselling for those students who wish to free themselves of a drug habit, or to provide a place of referral.
- 5 To have key staff, school nurse and counsellor work together in a non-judgmental way with the student to enable them to “feel safe and supported” as they come through withdrawal.
- 6 To be supportive of students who live with a drug user in their home or are strongly influenced by a person who is a drug user.
- 7 To recognise that drug free students need support too.
- 8 To have responsible role models and foster healthy attitudes in the school community.
- 9 To take all reasonable steps to ensure that all school activities where students are involved will be drug free.

GUIDELINES:

- 1 Alcohol and drug programmes will be taught by persons trained in the drug and alcohol field, as part of the ongoing health education throughout the school.
- 2 The programmes will be developmental, and provide personal and social skills with a focus on healthy living in the drug education programme and in the health programme throughout the school.
- 3 Factual information about the effects of alcohol, cigarettes and drugs on the body and mind will be combined with the understanding of social effects on families and society.

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- 4 Both the students and their parents or caregivers must be aware of the school's position in relation to cigarettes, drugs and alcohol. Each year the school will print the rules in its prospectus, and publicise these at school assemblies from time to time.
- 5 When student behaviour indicates drug use, a staff member who recognises this will fill out a referral form for the Student Advisory Services (SAS) department.
- 6 Any student found coming to school under the influence of drugs will be dealt with by the accompanying procedure.
 - 6.1 Any student thought to be experimenting with drugs, ie that significant behaviour or physical symptoms are interfering with school life, or when behaviour indicates drug use, is to be referred to a counsellor or school nurse or a senior teacher.
 - 6.2 The parents or caregivers of the students will be informed if this would benefit the well-being and recovery of the student.
 - 6.3 The school counsellor will work with the parents or caregivers, selected teachers, school nurse and student whenever possible, and will require the student to sign a contract agreeing not to bring drugs into the school grounds as a condition of this help being offered.
 - 6.4 Any student who breaks these rules will be subject to the school's discipline procedures. Counselling, information and education will be made available to the student and family if requested.
- 7 The school policy in relation to the use of cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs is determined by the Board of Trustees.
- 8 The school will ensure all staff have access to current information on drugs and alcohol.
- 9 Staff must ensure that they are able to act responsibly when they are directly in charge of students. Professional judgement will be exercised at all times.
- 10 Alcohol may be consumed at staff or parent functions on school premises with the permission of the management of the school.
- 11 This school will maintain a smoke free workplace to comply with the Smoke Free Environment Act 1990.

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- 12 Students shall not wear any clothes or jewellery which promotes or depicts alcohol, cigarettes or any other drugs when representing the college.

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION:

- Prospectus