

Policy, procedures and resources
for matters involving students and
illegal substances

June 1999

Foreword

In working to provide a safe and nurturing environment for our students, our schools face many challenges. None of our schools is exempt from the effects of substance abuse, whether with students directly or members of their families, their friends or their social environment.

While educational programs, pastoral care and climate of awareness will all contribute to the goal of an environment free from illegal substances, this set of documents and resources also recognises the complexity of many situations confronting principals, staff and families.

Many experienced and capable people have contributed to these documents, which I believe will provide guidance, support and resources in both educational planning and appropriate responses to incidents. These documents will be reviewed, evaluated and revised as necessary in 2001.

I commend them to schools in an appreciation of the complex and difficult matters schools must face and resolve fairly and pastorally, and with appreciation for the compassion and commitment which underpin the school's ministry.

I have every confidence that the school's knowledge of each student, its pastoral concern and informed understanding of the issues involved will guide staff both in the processes which justice requires and the decisions which follow.



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Executive Director of Schools

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Purpose

This set of documents has been prepared to:

- set out the policies and procedures for systemic Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta regarding illegal substances;
- assist school leaders to deal with incidents involving students and illegal substances by outlining procedures which are congruent with diocesan policies on pastoral care, enrolment, suspension and expulsion; and
- provide a summary of educational and counselling resources available through the Catholic Education Office and community agencies.

Philosophical basis

Catholic schools exist to be a sign to the world of the presence of the Kingdom of God in our midst and agents of change which take a leadership role on moral and values issues (*Catholic Schools: A Statement of Understanding and Vision for the Diocese of Parramatta*). In fulfillment of these goals, Catholic schools are guided not only by civil law but also by those values which characterise the Kingdom of God.

All students in diocesan schools have the right to attend a school which is free of illegal substances. In responding to the impact of illegal drugs on schools, this policy attempts to strike a balance between the rights of the individual students and members of the families concerned and the rights of the broader school community. Because our schools value the worth of each child, responses to individual situations will be made in the light of the gospel values of justice, compassion and forgiveness.

Principles

- The safety and welfare of each student are the prime considerations in addressing the issue of illegal substances in the school context. The responsibilities of all citizens to uphold the law are acknowledged.
- Schools have educational and pastoral responsibilities towards all students and their families in addressing these issues.
- The principal is responsible for the formulation and publication of school policies consistent with diocesan policies.
- The Catholic Education Office is responsible for ensuring schools have access to adequate curriculum, counselling and advisory support in dealing with the issue of illegal substances.

Chapter 2

Management by schools

Individual school policy on drugs

All schools are asked to develop a clear policy statement on illegal drugs, whether as a part of their student management and discipline policies, codes of conduct, or as separate statements. The key elements of the diocesan policy should be reflected in the school's statement.

It should be understood by school staff, students and parents that matters involving illegal drugs will be addressed as part of the school's normal student management procedures and pastoral care for students. While the additional element of illegality will require specific responses in some cases, the school's first responsibility in any disciplinary matter is the safety and welfare of students.

Communication of policy and procedures

The expectations of the school and the procedures it will follow should be made very clear to students and their families through means such as the enrolment process, student diary, school assemblies, school newsletters and meetings with parents.

The parent community needs to be informed regarding strategies used by the school in dealing with the issue of drugs, both through curriculum and in dealing with specific incidents.

This diocesan policy and its application at a particular school should be made known to parents of both applicants for enrolment and of continuing students. Enrolment in a Catholic school involves an acceptance of the right of the school to protect the school community in accordance with this policy.

Preventative education

All schools should provide age-appropriate preventative education relating to substance abuse through the Personal Development Health and Physical Education programs, and, where appropriate, through the pastoral care and Religious Education programs of the school. Parents should be made aware of this education in suitable ways.

Resources available to support schools are detailed in Chapter 3.

Dealing with specific incidents

This policy and these procedures are designed for use in situations where school staff know or have reasonable grounds to believe that:

- illegal drugs have been brought to the school, its immediate vicinity or to school events; or that
- students at school, in its immediate vicinity or at school events are affected by illegal drugs.

School events include those events directly under the control of the school as well as events which might be interpreted as being under school control.

This policy also applies when such knowledge or suspicion involves students who are travelling to or from school, are in school uniform or are in other school-related situations.

Where knowledge arises of matters involving illegal drugs in other contexts which are outside school situations, school staff, from a legal point of view, have the same rights and obligations as other citizens. However, pastoral concern for students would require staff to refer such matters to the principal and, when appropriate, the police. Where the principal believes that events outside school hours have impacted or will impact on students at school, the school should offer, as an extension of its pastoral care for students, appropriate support to parents of students involved or likely to have been involved.

While some aspects of this policy will apply to matters involving alcohol or tobacco, it is not specifically addressed to those situations.

Pastoral responsibilities

Support for members of the school community

An essential element of a Christian response to the impact of illegal drugs is to provide support to those affected. On various occasions these will include students alleged to have been involved, those proved to have been involved, families of such students, and especially siblings in the school, other students in the school and staff.

In all cases of substance abuse involving students the possibility of a need for counselling should be investigated. When necessary, support should be available as soon in the process as practicable, not delayed until formal resolution of the situation. In many cases, the student's family may also benefit from counselling. In some cases participation in a designated program may become a compulsory element of an enrolment contract for students who have broken school drug rules.

Chapter 4 of this document lists referral agencies. The Marist Education Centre will provide support and advice to parents in the short term if the school principal makes a referral. Secondary school student support officers are able to advise on referrals and provide support to families.

If an incident results in a student transferring from a systemic school to another school, the principal of the systemic school should endeavour to arrange for the student to receive necessary counselling and a genuine fresh start. The principal of the receiving school should be provided with sufficient information to protect the well being of present students as well as

the student being transferred. Transfer is not the only, nor necessarily the best, solution in a given situation.

It is important that the diocesan policy on suspension and expulsion be observed in incidents involving illegal substances, both as a matter of justice for the student and for accountability to the diocesan community.

Legal requirements

When to involve police

A principal is obliged to report a matter to police if there is evidence of a serious offence. A serious offence is defined in the *Crimes Act* as one which involves imprisonment of at least five years. The following offences carry a penalty of imprisonment of five years or more and are therefore matters which must be reported to police:

- cultivation of an indictable quantity of illegal drugs;
- manufacture or production of an indictable quantity of illegal drugs;
- supply of an indictable quantity of illegal drugs (including supply to a person under 16 years of age); and
- conspiring, aiding or abetting the cultivation, manufacture, production or supply of an indictable quantity of illegal drugs.

Indictable quantities of the more common illegal drugs

Cannabis	_____	1000 grams
Hash resin	_____	50 grams
Heroin	_____	5 grams
LSD	_____	0.005 grams
Amphetamines	_____	5 grams
Ecstasy	_____	5 grams

If the amount in question is less than the above amounts then whether to report the matter to police is a matter for the principal's discretion.

The purity of the drug does not matter; only the weight. For example, a mixture of heroin and glucose is regarded as being all heroin for the purpose of determining an indictable quantity.

Any attempt to represent and sell a substance as a drug renders the seller liable to prosecution for supplying the drug itself, even if the substance was falsely represented. This is true whether they have made a genuine mistake or were attempting to cheat the other person.

Searches

Bags, desks and lockers

A search of a student's belongings should only occur when the principal has reasonable grounds to believe that the student is in possession of a dangerous or illegal item.

The school has no legal right to search personal property such as bags and lockers for which students have paid a fee unless this has been made a condition of enrolment or of hiring a locker. It is strongly advised that schools include this condition within the school's own drug issues policy and make parents aware of this condition at the time of enrolment.

In the first instance, the student should be asked to open her or his locker, bag or desk. If the student refuses, the principal or the principal's representative should ensure that both the student and another staff member as a witness are present when the locker, bag or desk is searched.

Personal searches

The school cannot make searches of a student's person – i.e. body searches – a condition of enrolment. To attempt a body search without the consent of the student would be to commit an assault. Teachers can ask students to empty their pockets, but only police should undertake a body search if this is considered necessary.

An exception to these legal restraints would exist if a principal or the principal's representative had good reason to believe that a student was concealing a dangerous weapon, presenting a real and immediate threat to the safety of self and others.

Confiscated substances

When any substance believed to be an illegal drug is discovered in the possession of a student it should be confiscated, sealed, signed and dated, and temporarily stored in a secure location. If initial inquiries indicate that a serious offence has occurred, the police should be asked to collect the substance as soon as possible. If initial inquiries indicate a lesser offence, the principal may exercise discretion about whether to report. The principal must also decide whether to destroy the substance or to ask police to collect it. The decision and consequent action should be made promptly, preferably within 48 hours after discover. If the decision is to destroy the substance, this disposal should be witnessed and noted in the records of the incident.

Records of incidents

As with any other disciplinary matter, a factual record should be maintained in the school.

Rights

Rights of students

Each student facing an allegation about involvement with illegal drugs is entitled to a fair hearing, including the opportunity to present her or his case. The student also has the right to an unbiased decision made on the basis of relevant evidence. These guidelines recognise that such a student has the right to be accompanied by her or his parents, or a delegate, at the meeting at which a decision about the student's position will be considered.

Rights of parents/guardians

If the school becomes aware of, or suspects, a student's involvement with illegal drugs, parents have the right to know of this. The principal should inform the parents of such knowledge or suspicion at the stage indicated by the flow chart, regardless of whether the school has conclusive evidence or whether disciplinary action is contemplated. In doing so, care should be taken to maintain confidentiality to the fullest extent possible about other students who may be involved, even though their identity may be revealed from other sources.

Interviewing students

It is important that the purpose of the interview be made clear to the student. The initial interview occurs to gather data – i.e. to find out what has happened – not to make decisions about disciplinary or other consequences. Justice demands that the student is not pre-judged.

Where there is suspicion which cannot be supported with firm evidence, it may be preferable to avoid seeking/acquiring evidence and to counsel the student. Professional judgement and knowledge of the student need to be used here. It is noteworthy that about 70% of young people who come before children's courts on drug-related charges do not re-offend. It may be sufficient to deal with a matter at school level, placing a student on a contract if relevant.

If there is sufficient evidence for the principal to conclude that an offence has been committed about which police must be informed, that step must be taken. Further investigation should only be undertaken by the school after approval from the police officers involved.

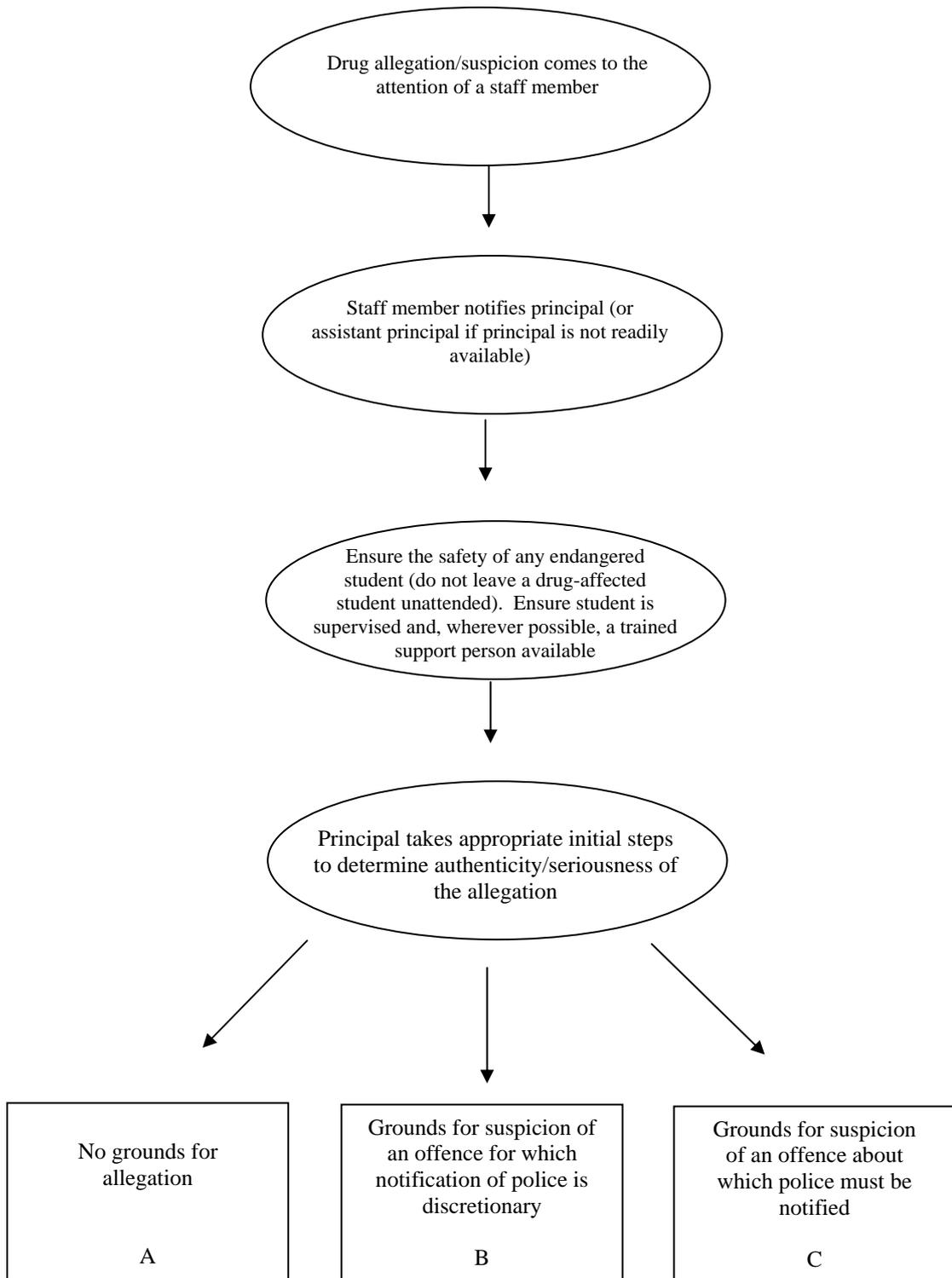
If there is evidence only of a lesser offence, but one which might nevertheless result in suspension, transfer or expulsion, the principal should conduct the data-gathering interview under the following conditions.

1. To protect the integrity of the process, students to be interviewed should be kept separated and under observation by a staff member until each has been interviewed.
2. The venue and arrangements for the interview should be as discreet as possible to protect the dignity of all involved.
3. The purpose of the interview should be made clear.

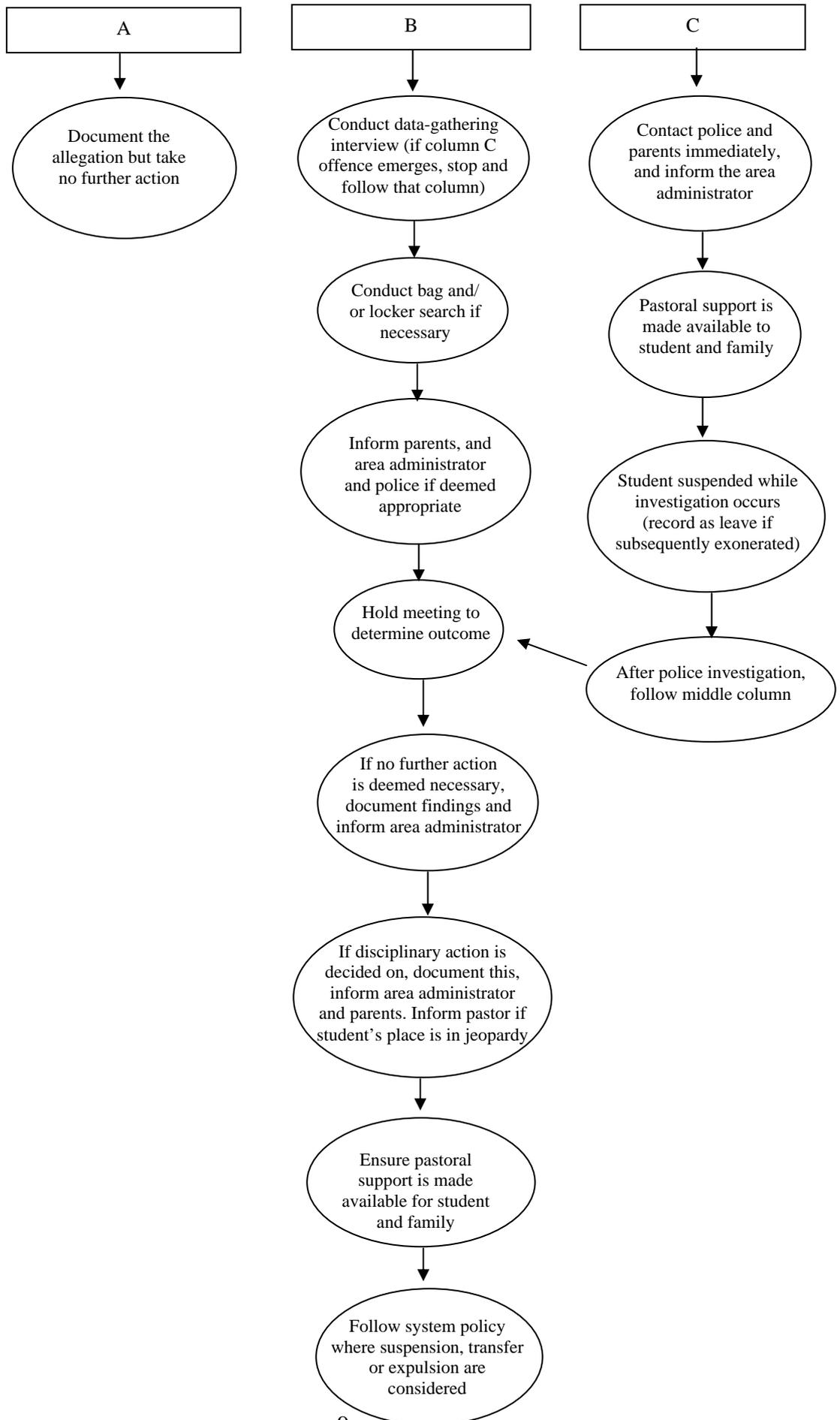
4. A second staff member should be present at the interview to take notes. The student must know that this is happening.
5. The student should be offered the opportunity to nominate a staff member to be present at the interview as a support person, but reminded that no decisions will be made at this stage.
6. The student should be asked to write down her or his account of the events which have led to the interview.
7. The student must have the opportunity to present her or his version of what happened and to answer any allegations made. Sufficient time should be allowed for this to occur.
8. Interviews should not last longer than necessary to establish what has happened and to allow the student to be fully heard. A student should be allowed appropriate breaks during an extended interview.
9. The next step in the process should be explained to the student at the end of the interview.
10. A *cooling off* time should be allowed after the interview. The student would then be given an opportunity to correct any misrepresentations or misunderstandings.
11. At this point, wherever possible, a support person able to recognise signs of potential suicide or self harm should be available to the student and should carry out a risk assessment. The student should not be left unsupervised, and parents should be requested to arrange supervised travel home.

School response to an incident

Flow chart of response



continued...



Meeting to determine outcomes

Principles underpinning the meeting

A meeting to determine outcomes should occur only after time has been allowed for all concerned to reflect on the matter. Normally it will not be on the same day as the initial interview.

This meeting should be attended by the student, her or his parents or their delegate, the principal and the assistant principal or other appropriate staff members. No outcome decision should be made prior to this meeting.

The principal will treat each person with justice and compassion and will respect the rights of both the students involved and the whole school community.

The options available to principals in matters involving illegal drugs include all the options normally available in other student management situations. These include internal responses, suspension, transfer or expulsion. Relevant Catholic Education Office procedures are to be followed in all cases.

Appropriate documentation of the events leading to the meeting, of the meeting itself and of the outcome of the meeting must be kept.

Conducting the meeting

1. The findings of the investigation and the evidence on which they are based, as these relate to the particular student, should be presented to those present at the meeting.
2. The student and her or his parents/guardian should be given an opportunity to consider these findings and to respond.
3. The options available to the school should be outlined by the principal.
4. The student and her or his parents should be given an opportunity to present reasons for recommending a particular option.
5. The principal, either at the meeting or after further consultation with the assistant principal and/or other relevant people, shall inform the parents and the student of a decision.
6. Any school decision which involves either transfer or a recommendation for expulsion will be made in consultation with the Area Administrator.
7. The student has the right to have a decision to transfer (see point 6 above) reviewed by the Executive Director of Schools and will be informed of that right at point 5.
8. The Executive Director of Schools will determine whether the student is to be expelled, based on the information and advice of the principal and Area Administrator.

Involvement of pastor/coordinating pastor

The pastor in the case of a primary school, and the coordinating pastor in the case of a secondary school, exercises the pastoral care of the community entrusted to him under the authority of the diocesan bishop (Canon 519).

In accordance with this responsibility, the pastor or coordinating pastor should be informed when a student's place at a Catholic school is jeopardised as a result of a drug-related incident. The principal would normally keep the pastor of the student's own parish informed and, if possible, involved as a support to the student and family.

Confidentiality and communication

In order to protect the dignity of students, families and others, it is essential that data-gathering and determination processes occur as confidentially as possible. While the school community does have a right to know that school rules are being upheld and to be given accurate information about events which may impact upon members of that community, there will be many occasions when a principal's judgement needs to be exercised to determine whether and what information should be released and to whom. Each student's reputation and good name must always be of paramount concern. As well, pending legal action may limit what can be communicated.

Not all incidents require a statement to the school community. Any statements which are made to the school community should be confined to factual information in an attempt to avoid compounding the difficulties faced by those directly involved.

Where, as is often the case, rumour and exaggeration of the events is already widespread, it may be appropriate to provide information in order to place the events in perspective for the benefit both of those involved and of the school community.

Communication with staff

It is important that, wherever possible, staff working closely with affected students are informed about incidents involving drugs. While in many cases the amount of detail which can be passed on to the general staff may be very limited, staff will be better able to deal with student reactions and behaviours if they are informed of the existence of an incident. Particular staff members will also be in a position to offer support to students experiencing ongoing problems when they have been appropriately briefed.

When informing staff of either specific incidents or of problems faced by particular students, principals need to be very explicit about what information can be shared with other parties, other staff, students or parents, and what cannot. Staff should be clearly directed not to speak to the media about any incident which involves the school. The principal is the spokesperson for the school.

Media management

If a drug incident involving the school attracts media attention, the principal is to contact the Area Administrator and the Communications Unit at the Catholic Education Office before providing information to the media.

In the event of media representatives coming to the school, the principal is the appropriate person to speak on behalf of the school. In this situation a specific area – for example, the library – should be designated for journalists to wait or to be briefed.

Staff and students should be instructed not to speak to the media.

It is particularly important that secretaries and receptionists be briefed about possible contact from the media and appropriate responses prepared.

If it does become necessary for a principal to speak to media representatives, names and identities of students must not be revealed and information should be limited to the known facts.

Information about drugs

Classification of psychoactive drugs

A substance is a drug when it is used to produce a psychological, physiological or biochemical change in the body. Psychoactive drugs impact on the central nervous system to produce changes in the user's feelings, mood, cognition and, consequently, behaviour.

Illegal drugs		
Depressants	Stimulants	Hallucinogens
<p>Narcotic Analgesics</p> <p>Heroin Opium</p> <p>Cannabis</p> <p>(Cannabis has characteristics of both depressants and hallucinogens)</p> <p>Marijuana, hash, hash oil</p>	<p>Amphetamines (speed)</p> <p>Cocaine (crack)</p> <p>Smack</p> <p>MDMA (Ecstasy)</p>	<p>Bromo DMA bufotenine DMT LSD (acid) psilocin psilocybin (magic mushrooms) phencyclidine (angel dust)</p> <p>mescaline DOM (STP)</p> <p>Cannabis</p> <p>Marijuana, hash, hash oil</p>

Legal Drugs (but in many cases limited to use according to prescription only)		
Depressants	Stimulants	Hallucinogens
Sedative – hypnotics Alcohol Benzodiazepines Librium, Serapax, Valium, Mogadon, Rohypnol Barbiturates Amytal, Nembutal, Soneryl Non-Barbiturates Doriden, Dormel, Mandrax	Nicotine Tobacco Caffeine Coffee, tea, cola drinks, chocolate Amphetamines Dexedrine, Ritalin	None are legal
Narcotic Analgesics Codeine, Morphine, Pethidine, Methadone		
Non-Narcotic Analgesics Aspirin, Paracetamol, Phenacetin		
General Anaesthetics Ether, nitrous oxide		

Recognition of illegal substances

Recognition can be difficult, as these substances often look no different from 'legal' substances – for example, plain white powder or tablets.

- *Amphetamine* is usually white powder (in a drug-related context, any bag of white powder could be regarded as suspicious); occasionally white tablets
- *Hash* looks like plasticine, gold to dark brown, has a pungent odour
- *Ecstasy* comes in the form of tiny white tablets; may be stamped with a logo – e.g. Superman or Batman
- *LSD* is usually sold as a small (about 1.5 cm x 1.5 cm) square of paper impregnated with the drug; the paper may be stamped with a picture or logo – e.g. lightning bolt, pirate, Super Mario, Buddha
- *Marijuana* looks like dried grass; may be mixed with tobacco; when smoked has a strong sweet odour
- *Heroin* is either injected with a syringe or 'smoked' (inhaled from a piece of foil – known as 'smoking the dragon's tail')

Chapter 3 contains a list of relevant resources for teachers and parents.

Recognising signs of possible drug use

Any marked change from a student's usual behaviour/appearance could be an initial indicator of drug influence (although of course there could be many other reasons for such a change.)

Some general signs may be:

- bloodshot eyes
- slurred speech
- extreme mood swings
- irritability
- laziness
- apathy
- borrowing (or stealing) money
- changing friends
- staying in his/her room more than usual

Some indications occurring in a school playground may be:

- group scattering on the approach of a teacher
- something being put away quickly
- a 'cockatoo' keeping watch

Some common effects of specific drugs include:

Excessive animation, even hysteria – possibly amphetamine, 'speed'

Unable to bear light or keep eyes open – possibly heroin

Very 'laid back', even 'spaced out' behaviour – possibly marijuana

Paranoid behaviour – possibly withdrawal from marijuana

Signs associated with particular kinds of drugs		
Depressants	Stimulants	Hallucinogens
<p>In small doses</p> <p>Relief of worry/tension Feeling of happiness Calmness Soothing (sedation) Relaxation Decrease in alertness, coordination Decreased awareness of the outside world Drowsiness</p>	<p>Relief from fatigue Feeling of confidence Heightened sense of well-being Excessive activity and talking Extreme nervousness Increase in motor activity Euphoria Loss of appetite Depression as the effects of the drug subside</p>	<p>Heightened awareness of things happening inside and outside the body Anxiety or panic due to loss of control Altered perception of reality Delusions (false beliefs) Psychotic state Effects are highly unpredictable</p>
<p>In larger doses</p> <p>Deep sleep Emotional depression Deterioration of motor coordination Coma Death</p>		

Chapter 3

Curriculum support and resources

Curriculum advice

Drug education falls mainly within the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) key learning area although there is scope for integration across other key learning areas such as English, Science and Religious Education.

The Catholic Education Office, Parramatta, supports drug education by the provision of:

- an adviser to assist teachers in the development of their drug education programs; and
- many up-to-date resources, both books and audio-visuals, available for borrowing from the Catholic Education Office Library.

Professional development

The professional development of teachers in drug education is offered in various ways:

- teacher inservice
- PDHPE networks
- specific workshops
- resources such as videos and books

A list of resources available from the Catholic Education Office Library to assist teachers both in their own professional development and in the planning of classroom programs is given below.

Audio-visuals for drug education

The following resources are available for borrowing from the Catholic Education Office Library, ADC Centre, Villiers Street, Parramatta

Addition to Smoking

Smoking is more than a fashion, more than an industry. It's a ritual that holds a rare fascination for the many cultures of the world. This program covers many issues related to smoking, by looking briefly at the history of tobacco use in western society, and then focusing on the many health issues including:

- the hazardous chemicals contained in tobacco smoke
- how these chemicals enter the body
- direct and indirect effects on the health of smokers and passive smokers

This video is 15 minutes long and suitable for Year 9 – 12 students.

Alcohol Crime Connection

This video was produced by the NSW Police Service and looks at the ways the Police Service is attempting to deal with alcohol related crime.

This video is 18 minutes long and suitable for Year 10 – adults.

Alcohol – Our Social Drug

Despite the media’s constant focus on the dangers of illicit drugs, the most common and perhaps the most dangerous drug confronting young Australians today is alcohol.

Rather than hold unrealistic hopes of stopping young people drinking, drug educators now adopt a harm-minimisation approach to provide timely, accurate information about alcohol and its possible risks. This program complements this approach by using interviews with leading researchers and drug counsellors to deliver the very latest information on alcohol and young people.

This video is 20 minutes long and suitable for Year 7 – 12 students.

Alcohol and Other Drugs: Fighting Fire with Facts

Accurate drug information is particularly important in making an informed choice to live drug free and to fight the fire of drug abuse and misuse. This video gives detailed facts concerning alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Related issues such as suicide, peer pressure and co-dependency are also discussed. Young reporters interviewing the experts give this program a unique approach to presenting the information.

This video is 60 minutes long and suitable for Year 8 – 12 students.

Anabolic Steroids

This program covers every aspect of anabolic steroids – their history, how they work, their side effects, long-term and short-term physical and psychological risks. It spells out why they are so potentially dangerous to growing bodies. By combining facts, statistics and interviews with professional athletes and sports physicians, the program makes a convincing case for the fact that steroids present very real health hazards.

This video is 30 minutes long and suitable for Year 7 – 12 students.

Candidly Cannabis

This cannabis education kit was produced by the National Initiatives in Drug Education (NIDE) for secondary schools. Cannabis, like all drugs, is capable of causing harm and young people are particularly vulnerable to its effects.

The kit provides a framework for educating students about cannabis. This includes basic information and current research findings regarding cannabis, classroom activities, a video, plus guidelines for teachers using the materials.

This video is 16 minutes long and suitable for Year 9 – 12 students.

Drugs Your Choice

Despite the best efforts of parents, teachers and the law, most young Australians will probably have some experience with, or exposure to, alcohol, cigarettes and possibly other drugs such as prescription drugs, marijuana, inhalants or a range of illegal drugs.

The modern drug-education approach involves harm minimisation, where young people receive timely, accurate information about drugs and their possible side effects.

This important video aims to help in this vital education process by using interviews with doctors, researcher, school social workers, police and health workers, and drug users to deliver the very latest information on drugs, encouraging teenagers to make informed decisions when deciding whether or not to experiment with drugs of any form.

This video is 21 minutes long and suitable for Year 9 – 12 students.

Ecstasy – the Agony

MDMA, or ecstasy, has become yet another drug of the 1990s. In this video, viewers learn of the side effects of this drug, including anxiety and depression, and of its potential to cause long-term physical and psychological effects. It does this through interviews and case studies, presenting the facts about this increasingly popular drug.

This video is 18 minutes long and suitable for Year 10 – adult.

Fatal Mix

This is a set of three dramatic short film portrayals of young people involved in real and believable dilemmas. By working in conjunction with an associated classroom curriculum, this video gives the viewer the opportunity to devise and develop his or her own strategies for avoiding dangerous and risky situations of the fatal mix of drugs and driving.

This video is 25 minutes long and suitable for Year 10 – 12 students.

Harm Minimisation: an Approach for Australian Schools

This video has been made for teachers, parents, school counsellors and other people with an interest in how schools can respond to drug-related matters. It was designed to show how school health programs contribute to the harm-minimisation framework. It does not prescribe activities, but rather provides varied examples of how the work of secondary schools contribute to reducing and minimising drug problems in the domains of curriculum, policy, welfare, and parent and community relations.

This video is 26 minutes long and suitable for adults.

In the line of fire (smoking)

Young people are strategically important to tobacco companies. For every 50 Australians who die each day from smoking, 190 Australian school children will try their first cigarette.

Despite widespread dissemination of information about smoking and despite a continuing decline in the social acceptability of smoking, substantial numbers of young men and women begin to smoke and become addicted. When young people no longer want to smoke, the epidemic itself will die.

This video presents the background to this epidemic in a way that raises questions for young people. The video (and associated booklet for facilitators) can be used in youth groups and local centres by young people to discuss the issues that affect them now.

This video is 19 minutes long and suitable for Year 8 – 12 students.

Inhalants and Human Physiology

Unlike drugs that are injected or swallowed, inhalants travel directly to the bloodstream, brain and heart, bypassing the filtering functions of the liver which often removes some of their poisonous ingredients. Inhaled vapours reach the brain at full toxic strength, thereby causing more damage to the body than most illicit drugs. Vivid testimonials by inhalant abusers enhance the educational value of this program.

This video is 13 minutes long and suitable for Year 7 – 12 students.

Marijuana and the Mind: Addiction and Intoxication

Mental changes sustained by marijuana users are revealed through laboratory demonstrations, interviews with doctors and other health care professionals, and documented experiences of recovering addicts. The most obvious change is the loss of short-term memory. ‘Attention deficit’ is another mental loss. Marijuana also changes perception. Time and shape are distorted and stationary objects may seem to move. The consequences of such mental changes whilst driving a car are discussed. Dr Meyer states: ‘The drug can ruin lives just as surely as heroin or crack; it only takes longer’.

This video is 22 minutes long and suitable for Year 8 – adult.

Mouseology (addiction)

This video is a cartoon which examines the insidious nature of addiction to cigarette smoking using the comic device of trained laboratory mice. It shows young people how addiction can begin and how difficult it can be to quit the habit.

This video is 8 minutes long and suitable for Year 6 – 8 students.

Night (drink driving)

The video explores the issue of drink driving through a dramatisation of an end of year fancy dress party. The conclusion can generate further exploration of this important issue.

This video is 10 minutes long and suitable for Year 9 – 12 students.

Rethinking Drinking

This kit aims to minimise the physical, social and emotional harm that occurs for young people as a result of their own or other people's use of alcohol. It provides both video and learning activities to assist students to make responsible choices about alcohol use and to help them gain an understanding of the consequences of misuse.

The first video is 18 minutes long and the second is 14 minutes long. Suitable for Year 9 – 12 students.

Risk taking and you

This video examines why teenagers are so inclined to take senseless risks and challenges them to explore risk taking in their own lives. Using both real life interviews with teenage risk takers and compelling dramatisations, the differences between healthy and unhealthy risk taking are clearly illustrated. Special attention is paid to risks such as AIDS, teenage pregnancy, drinking and driving, smoking and drug use. It is accompanied by a teachers guide with appropriate activities.

Every year, fifty million Americans smoke 500 billion cigarettes and more than one million young people start smoking, according to the American Medical Association. This program documents the attitudes of young people towards smoking, how and why so many teenagers smoke, the addictive nature of nicotine, and the many health problems associated with tobacco use.

This video is 90 minutes long and suitable for Year 8 – 12 students.

What drug is that? (adult education)

'What drug is that?' has been prepared to inform teachers, parents, and others involved with young people about the appearance of drugs and their effects.

While there are many drug education videos available, few actually show what the drugs look like. This video aims to meet this need. The video features presentations by experts in the field and was made possible with the assistance of the Victorian Police and their Forensic Science Centre.

The video shows a wide range of legal and illegal drugs which are classified by their effect – depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens and steroids. Drugs covered include heroin, cannabis, amphetamines, cocaine, ecstasy, LSD, volatile substances, alcohol, tobacco and minor tranquillisers.

This video is 20 minutes long and suitable for adults.

Resources for Drug Education in Primary Schools

Teaching and learning activities are found in:

Primary Steps – Educating 5-14 year olds about drugs, Caroline Bui, Australian Drug Foundation, 1998

The Primary School Drug Pack – Healthwise, Australian Drug Foundation, \$145, (03) 9328 3111; also available for loan from the Catholic Education Office Library, Parramatta, (02) 9840 5735

Using Drugs for Good or Ill – The Tay-Kair Kit, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, 1989; also available for loan from the Catholic Education Office Library, Parramatta (02) 9840 5735

NSW Board of Studies K-6 PDHPE Syllabus (Draft) and Support Document, Board of Studies (02) 9367 4111

Heart Health Kit, National Heart Foundation (02) 9219 2444

Life Education Australia – visit and materials

Chapter 4

Professional and community support

Diocesan resources

The **Marist Education Centre** consists of three teams which offer parent education programs and assist secondary and primary schools in catering for students at risk through behavioural, social and emotional problems.

The parent educators and the **Parramatta Diocesan Parents Representative Council** have resolved to provide a regular, diocesan-wide parent seminar on the issue of illegal substances.

Secondary Student Support Officers have knowledge of local community, resources and referral networks. They also can provide support to staff.

Community Resources

ADIS (Alcohol and Drug Information Service) is a 24-hour hone line that offers advice, information and, if necessary, referral on any drug-related matters. Sydney Metropolitan call 9361 2111; country callers 1800 422 599 toll free.

CEIDA (Centre for education and Information on Drugs and Alcohol) call 9818 0444. The centre's aim is to contribute to the health of all people in NSW by resourcing agencies and the community to minimise drug-related harm. It offers an information service with a specialist library on drugs and alcohol. It also provides training for health and other professionals, and produces a wide range of print and audio-visual resources.

Health Education Unit, Faculty of Education, University of Sydney, call 9351 6310. This unit can provide information on drugs and alcohol and has also produced books and lists to assist in school and community education.

WESDARC (Western Sydney Drug and Alcohol Resource Centre) call 9623 9000. This centre offers both professional development for teachers and student-centred programs on drug-related issues. They will develop a program to suit your needs. There may be a cost depending on the situation and the time involved.

Local Area Health information and assistance

Western Area Health Service (Parramatta to St Marys) call 9845 6445 (Tricia Lutz)

Wentworth Area Health Service (Penrith/Blue Mountains to Richmond/Windsor area) call 4724 3167 (Mr Kevin Hedge)

Westmead Hospital (Drug and Alcohol Clinic) call 9845 6445

Chapter 5

Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to the two-year development of these materials. Their time, effort and experience are noted with appreciation.

Illegal Substances Working party (Interim Guidelines) 1997

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Responses to Interim Guidelines and to Drafts of Policy Development Documents

Many helpful comments and suggestions were received from principals and their coordinators. In addition, the feedback from Marist Education Centre staff, the parent representative council coordinator and numerous CEO staff have provided valuable perspectives which are incorporated in the documents.

Appendix 1

(Taken from *Drug Education in Schools: CEC, NSW Statement of Principles and Direction*, 28 April 1999)

Key principles to guide drug education in schools

- Drug education programs in Catholic schools must recognise the dignity and uniqueness of each person and integrate the key gospel values of faith, forgiveness, hope, compassion and justice. The key aim is the acceptance of responsibility for self and others.
- Drug education programs should involve both the child and his or her family. Such programs must recognise that some families will require particular support if drug abuse is to be effectively addressed. Such support will require interagency cooperation – that is, assistance from government and non-government health, social welfare and juvenile justice agencies.
- Drug education programs, in combination with other pastoral care initiatives, need to work towards increasing the self-esteem, sense of purpose and hope of each child and young person. All children need to be given a sense of self-worth and connectedness with society.
- Drug education programs in Catholic schools need to offer support to all students commencing with the early years of schooling. In particular, support needs to be provided so as to assist all students to choose not to misuse drugs. Support structures for all students need to be guided by attitudes of compassion, communication, listening, mutual support and patience. Students must be helped and encouraged to:
 - make informed responsible personal decisions about drug use;
 - evaluate the use of legal drugs, such as alcohol;
 - seek advice about the use of legal drugs in accordance with community and ethical standards; and
 - avoid the use of illegal drugs.
- Drug education in Catholic schools must seek to prevent the uptake of harmful drug use and aim at reducing drug use by school students. Christians believe that their bodies are given to them as temples of the Holy Spirit and that freedom and dignity demand that they not abuse their bodies in any way. Drugs and alcohol should not be misused but used beneficially. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Galatians 5:1; Proverbs 9:1-2 from *Towards Wholeness* 7-10, p. 133).
- School-based drug education should focus on the achievement of educational outcomes for all students including those consistent with broader public health outcomes.

- Drug education is best delivered as part of a whole-school approach incorporating a curriculum context, policy and practices, and links to the wider school community. (Refer to *Effective School Health Promotion – Towards Health Promoting Schools*, 1996, NHMRC Health Advancement Committee).
- School drug education programs should, wherever possible, engage and involve parents and wider community in planning and implementing stages. ('Parents are the first and foremost decision makers and decision making teachers for their children', *The Catholic School*, 1998).
- Drug education is most effective when taught in a teacher-delivered, sequential, age-appropriate program. (Refer to *Review of Health Promotion/Initiatives in Schools NSW Health*, NSW Health Department, 1998).
- Drug education must be supported by appropriate government resourced interagency intervention and rehabilitation strategies and programs.

Responding to drug abuse

All responses to students who are misusing drugs must have the core aim of rehabilitation.

When drug abuse is identified the immediate tasks must be the:

- prevention of harm to both the drug abuser and others;
- maintenance of appropriate confidentiality and communication with parents;
- identification of the chief causes / sources of abuse by the individual;
- liaison with other relevant intervention and support agencies;
- application of available resources to address, in conjunction with other relevant agencies, identified harm and the causes / sources of harm; and
- action in conjunction with other relevant agencies, to address and manage the needs of people who are drug dependent and the needs of their families.

The CEC, NSW, notes that practical and beneficial interagency intervention consistent with the above-cited response strategies is resource intensive. In order to address and overcome drug abuse, the community, through parliament, must be prepared to resource (fund) workable remedial strategies and programs.

In particular, schools and school systems need to be resourced so that:

- School students can be assisted not to use and / or abuse drugs whether legal drugs or illegal drugs.
- Schools can be assisted to provide, for children and young people who abuse drugs, access to specialist rehabilitation programs in a manner and form consistent with each school's duty of care to all its students.

- School systems can be assisted to provide special provision for any student who may, at a particular time, constitute a risk to other children and/or a risk to himself or herself.
- School and school systems can develop effective interagency intervention strategies inclusive of health, welfare and juvenile justice services sourced from either or both government and non-government agencies. In particular, schools require access to well-resourced and relevant student and family counselling services.

Appendix 2

School development in health education – principles for drug education in Australian schools

The following principles were developed by the University of Canberra as a collaborative initiative of states, territories and the Commonwealth of Australia and coordinated by the School Development in Health Education Project. The principles were refined through a national process of broad consultation and presented for comment and critical analysis at the third International Conference on Drug Abuse Prevention in Schools in Brisbane in 1991. The principles have been widely trialed by all states and territories and underpin the development and delivery of their drug education programs.

- Drug education is best taught in the context of the school health curriculum.
- Drug education in schools should be conducted by the teacher of the health curriculum.
- Drug education programs should have sequence, progression and continuity over time throughout schooling.
- Drug education messages across the school environment should be consistent and coherent.
- Drug education programs and resources should be selected to complement the role of the classroom teacher, with selected external resources enhancing, not replacing, that role. Approaches to drug education should address the values, attitudes and behaviours of the community and the individual.
- Drug education needs to be based on research, effective curriculum practice and identified student needs.
- Objectives for drug education in schools should be linked with the overall goal of harm minimisation.
- Drug education strategies should be related directly to the achievement of the program objectives.
- The emphasis of drug education should be on drug use likely to occur in the target group, and drug use which causes the most harm to the individual and society.
- Effective drug education should reflect an understanding of the characteristics of the individual, the social context, the drug and the interrelationship of these factors.
- Drug education programs should respond to developmental, gender, cultural, language, socio-economic and lifestyle differences relevant to the level of student use.

- Mechanisms should be developed to involve students, parents and the wider community in the school drug education program at both planning and implementation stages.
- The achievement of drug education objectives, processes and outcomes should be evaluated.
- The selection of drug education programs, activities and resources should be made on the basis of an ability to contribute to long-term positive outcomes in the health curriculum and the health environment of the school.

(Taken from *Principles for Drug Education in Schools*, an initiative of the School Development in Health Education Project, University of Canberra, Faculty of Education, 1994, Ballard et al)

Appendix 3

(Draft document produced by the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 1999)

Drug education and incident management in the school sector

The Commonwealth Government, in cooperation with state and territory governments and other key stakeholders, has a two-pronged, complementary approach to preventing drug misuse by school students:

- preventative school drug education programs; and
- development of national protocols and associated supporting initiatives to help school communities develop better ways of handling drug use in the school community.

The Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs works in close cooperation with the Department of Health and Aged Care in managing the Commonwealth's approach.

Approximately \$7.5 million has been provided over three years for the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs to develop and implement a national School Drug Education Strategy. This strategy is a component of education measures under the National Illicit Drug Strategy.

Subject to budget appropriation in 1999, the Commonwealth Government has flagged a further commitment of \$10 million to be allocated to school drug education. The additional funding is intended to target:

- the extension of professional development of teachers and pre-service training for teachers;
- information and education for parents on drug matters; and
- projects to establish school and community partnerships, including new ways of delivering drug education and information on healthy lifestyles.

The Council of Australian Governments agreed in April 1999 to strengthen its attack on drug pushers and its response to drug use within schools. This was part of a broader agreement on the need for national action involving explicit rejection by governments of the use of illicit drugs and the harm this causes. This cooperative approach will be continued through a new ministerial taskforce to develop the national protocol on management of drug issues and drug-related incidents in schools. The taskforce will comprise Commonwealth, state and territory education officials, Catholic and independent school sector representatives and a parent representative.

The development of a national protocol and associated supporting materials for drugs in schools will complement the activities of the national School Drug Education Strategy. It will also draw on the work already done by states and territories and provide opportunities to enhance these activities, including professional development, resources and other materials.

The protocol will assist in providing a consistent message nationally, especially to parents, about how schools will respond and what help is available if a student does become involved in a drug-related incident at school.