

Drugs & Alcohol Policy

St Margaret's Berwick Grammar (**SMBG**, the **School**) is committed to providing a safe, healthy and supportive school environment that promotes student wellbeing and responsible decision-making. The possession, use, distribution or sale of drugs, alcohol or related paraphernalia presents significant health, safety and legal risks and is strictly prohibited within the school environment.

This policy aligns with current Victorian legislation, including the **Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 (Vic)** and **Tobacco Act 1987 (Vic)**, and must be read in conjunction with the school's separate **Smoking and Vaping Policy**, which governs all matters relating to tobacco, e-cigarettes and vaping products.

Definitions

Drug

For the purposes of this policy, a *drug* is any substance—legal or illegal—that alters physical function and/or psychological behaviour and has not been prescribed for the individual by a medical practitioner. Examples include:

- alcohol
- tobacco and vaping products (refer to separate **Smoking and Vaping Policy**)
- cannabis
- narcotics
- stimulants
- hallucinogens
- inhalants
- e-liquids or e-juice
- prescription medications used improperly

School Environment

The school environment includes:

- all St Margaret's Berwick Grammar campuses
- all school transportation
- all school-related activities, including camps, excursions, sporting events and off-site functions
- any location where students are under the duty-of-care of school staff or their nominees

Policy Statement

Prohibited Conduct

Students, staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors must not:

- possess, consume, distribute or sell alcohol or illicit drugs
- misuse prescription or over-the-counter medications
- possess drug-related equipment (e.g., bongs, pipes)
- be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while participating in school activities

Smoking, vaping and possession of e-cigarettes are governed by the **Smoking and Vaping Policy**, which reflects current Victorian requirements prohibiting smoking and vaping on school premises and within 4 metres of school entrances, and at all school-sanctioned events.

School Responsibilities

SMBG will:

- provide age-appropriate drug education

- maintain a safe and healthy environment
- implement appropriate sanctions when school rules relating to drugs or alcohol are breached
- comply with all relevant legislation, including licensing requirements for alcohol at school functions

Responses to Drug or Alcohol Incidents

Responses may include:

- notification and consultation with parents/guardians
- notification of police where required
- provision of counselling or wellbeing support
- referral to external support services
- suspension or expulsion, consistent with school **Responsible Behaviour Policy**

School Functions

A *school function* is any event approved or endorsed by the Principal or School Council.

Functions on School Premises

When considering whether alcohol may be consumed on school premises, the school will consider:

- compliance with the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 (Vic)
- whether students will be present
- whether the event is a private function
- whether external organisations are hiring or leasing facilities
- duty-of-care arrangements for any students present

Functions Off School Premises

When considering alcohol consumption at off-site functions, particularly where students are present, the school will ensure:

- students are accompanied and directly supervised by parents/guardians or designated staff
- the venue holds an appropriate liquor licence
- alcohol service complies with all legal requirements

Critical Incident Response (Drug-Related)

Immediate Response

- Prioritise student safety and welfare
- Contact Student Office and emergency services if required
- Collect factual information (who, what, where, when, how, how much)
- Secure substances safely or isolate the area
- Monitor affected students continuously

Responding to Groups

- Approach calmly and non-threateningly
- Avoid punitive language at this stage
- Do not chase students (especially in inhalant-related incidents)
- Focus on cooperative individuals
- Engage the group in problem-solving

- Ensure safety for all, including staff

Short-Term Management

- Document all facts
- Inform Principal and relevant House/Campus staff
- Contact parents/guardians and offer support
- Debrief staff and students as appropriate
- Determine what information, if any, should be shared with the wider school community or media

Relationship to Smoking and Vaping Policy

Smoking and vaping are regulated under a separate **Smoking and Vaping Policy**, which reflects current Victorian law prohibiting smoking and vaping:

- on school premises
- within 4 metres of school entrances
- at all school events and excursions, including off-site activities

The Smoking and Vaping Policy also outlines procedures for managing vaping incidents

Policy Governance

Responsible Officers: Principal / Heads of Senior Girls and Senior Boys

Resources

Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 (Vic)
 Tobacco Act 1987 (Vic)
 Responsible Behaviour Policy
 First Aid Policy & Procedure
 Medical Emergency (Accident) Management
 Smoking and Vaping Policy
 Employee Code of Conduct
 Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
 Duty of Care Policy

Review

This policy is approved by the Executive and is reviewed every three years and/or earlier where required.

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