

# Drug and Alcohol Education Policy

## *Policy Statement*

Villanova College strives to:

- a) protect all of its students from the actual and potential harm of alcohol abuse and the illicit use of drugs;
- b) educate the whole school community (students, parents, staff) in the value of a healthy lifestyle, and in the threat posed by drug and alcohol abuse to this healthy lifestyle;
- c) respond appropriately to the use of alcohol or illicit drugs by students.

## *Rationale*

The College's response to the reality of alcohol abuse and illicit drug use in our society is based on the belief expressed by St. Augustine that every person is called to the ideals of wisdom and spiritual truth. By contrast, the abuse of alcohol and use of illicit drugs risks fostering the addictive urge in the human personality and can lead to the destruction of human life itself.

## *Implementation*

The ready access to illicit drugs in the wider community is a serious problem confronting all schools. Despite vigilance, exposure to drugs is a reality. Alcohol abuse (in particular binge drinking) is another community-wide problem affecting young people.

The College aims to protect its students by prohibiting and reducing the likelihood of access to alcohol and illicit drugs at school and at all student activities associated with the school. Refusal to tolerate either the possession or use of alcohol or illicit drugs by students in the school environment responds to the need youth have for protection from potentially dangerous substances and experiences. Vigilant protection from the self-harm of alcohol or drug abuse is a hallmark of the school's approach to its students.

The College also seeks to educate its students in the value of a healthy lifestyle, and in the threat posed by drug and alcohol abuse to this healthy lifestyle. Students need to have the positive ideal of healthy lifestyle presented to them, and to develop awareness of the benefits of a drug-free life. Students also require factual information about addictive substances. They require support in developing social and legal awareness about such issues. Students particularly need awareness of the seriousness, ease and speed of drug addiction and of the horrifying consequences for one who becomes addicted.

Education at Villanova at the various stages of schooling takes account of the ready availability of illicit drugs and alcohol and the reality of experimentation with potentially harmful substances by teenagers. Realistic guidance from adults and the development of the student's independent judgment assists in minimising the harm that can result from the ready availability of these substances.

Villanova strives to provide education for parents and staff in the social realities surrounding alcohol abuse and illicit drug use.

In dealing with instances of drug or alcohol use at the College, at College functions, or at student activities associated with the school, the Principal and staff employ a restorative approach that

seeks to make good any damage done to individuals or to the community as a whole. The College seeks to make these occurrences an educative opportunity for those concerned. This approach includes the offender who may have a dependency or be suffering some physiological harm.

No mandatory outcome is specified for any specific incident of alcohol or illicit drug use, since each case will have its own special circumstances. However, offenders may be asked to find another school to continue their schooling, if the Principal, in consultation with Senior Staff, judges this to be the best overall restorative outcome for them and/or all others concerned. The involvement of the police may also be required in accordance with legal responsibilities.

***Policy Approved by Council: 6 August 2008***

***Policy Reviewed and Approved by Council: 19 June 2013***

***Policy to be Reviewed: 2018***