



ALAWA PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY

TITLE OF POLICY: Drugs in School Policy

EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/2025

LAST REVIEW DATE:

NEXT REVIEW DATE: March 2027

TARGET AUDIENCE: Staff, Parents, Carers and Students

VERSION NUMBER: 1

1. Introduction

Alawa Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our students, staff and the community. If suspected substance or illicit drug matters arise, they will be addressed in ways that:

- minimise harm
- ensure the wellbeing and safety of students and all members of the school community
- align with Department of Education policy and legislation.

Alawa Primary School does not permit the following within school premises or during school events and activities, such as, excursions and sports days:

- the possession or sale of any substance or illicit drug – including inhalants and volatile substances
- the possession of any drug use implements – including lighters or matches
- illegal use of licit drugs, for example, alcohol, tobacco, prescribed medications
- the consumption of alcohol
- the smoking of any form of tobacco or other drug.
- inappropriate use of prescribed or over the counter medications

This policy does not apply to:

- medical or pharmaceutical drugs sanctioned in writing for students with notified medical conditions of a chronic – constantly recurring, or severe – critical or dangerous, nature. This is addressed in the administration of medications to students with notified medical conditions policy
- the use and possession of medication for the treatment of short-term illnesses and infections with antibiotics, or drugs commonly used for pain relief such as paracetamol. The

administration of these medications requires written parental consent and is the responsibility of the first aid officer in the school. Refer to the department's administration of medications to students with notified medical conditions policy

Please note: In circumstances where students are suspected of possessing or using licit drugs the police may not need to be contacted; however, consequences should be enforced by the school and can involve suspension.

2. Procedures

This section of the policy outlines the procedures that will be followed by school personnel where they suspect that any of the following has occurred:

- substances or illicit drugs have or are being used by a student or students
- students are suspected of being in possession of substances or implements used with substances or illicit drugs or both
- students are suspected of presenting substances as illicit drugs
- students are or have been present when substances or illicit drugs are being used by others.

Procedures:

- Any student suspected of being under the influence of a substance, licit or illicit drug must be treated as unwell in the first instance. For example, refer to sick bay or the first aid officer.
- Parents of students under the age of 18 will be contacted where students are suspected of the possession, use or distribution of substances or drugs.
- Police will be notified where students are suspected of possessing, using or distributing illicit drugs, drug implements or are involved in illegal use of licit substances or drugs.
- Police will also be notified in situations where an unidentifiable substance is suspected of being an illicit drug.

Consequences are dependent on the situation and the circumstances regarding the students involved and may involve suspension or detention. The principal will make determinations based on the severity of the incident and its potential for harm or impact on the school community.

Please note: in the event of a suspected substance or illicit drug related incident, all staff are expected to follow the department's Management of substance or drug related incidents process flowchart, include the flowchart as an attachment.

3. Consequences

Possession or use of licit drugs or substances:

- constitutes a serious breach of discipline
- will result in students receiving a formal warning
- will result in parents being contacted and advised of the offence and subsequent action should the behaviour be recurring
- will, if further offences occur, result in the student being suspended for a minimum of two days.

If found in possession or use of illicit drugs or substances:

- the student's use of illicit drugs or substances will immediately be reported to the student's parents and the police
- the student will be suspended for a minimum of three days
- the student's return to school will be at the discretion of the principal.

4. Curriculum and drug education programs

- As outlined in the Australian Curriculum for all year levels

5. Roles and responsibilities

Staff, parents and the community can refer to the Department's Management of drug related incidents in schools guidelines.

5.1. Principals

Principals are responsible for:

- ensuring that all drug-related incidents are managed in conjunction and consistent with department policy and relevant legislation
- ensuring the health and safety of the students, other students, school staff and the community
- ensuring that all school staff are aware of the process to follow when managing drug-related incidents
- assessing the need for referral to other agencies or relevant professionals and agencies to provide support for students, staff and parents, for example, professional development opportunities, medical assessments, counselling and rehabilitation services
- monitoring and reviewing the implementation and effectiveness of responses to drug related incidents
- determining a suitable consequence that takes into account the frequency and severity of the student's behaviour and is consistent with the school's student behaviour management policy
- reviewing school policy to ensure currency and alignment to government and department policies.

5.2. School Counsellors

School Counsellors are responsible for:

- supporting students who are at risk of harm related to the misuse of drugs
- working with the school to develop support plans for at risk students
- where appropriate, initiate referrals to outside agencies.

5.3. School staff

All school staff are responsible for:

- responding to information or incidents involving suspected student use or possession of drugs at school in accordance with the procedure outlined in this policy
- informing the principal or staff member nominated by the principal when they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is involved in drug related behaviours
- where they have reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of drugs, following the school policy and procedure for the management of drug-related incidents
- reporting suspected abuse or neglect, that may be related to student misuse of drugs.

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Drug	For the purpose of this policy, drugs include alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs and any other substance that alters brain function, resulting in changes in mood, perception, consciousness, cognition and behaviour. In some cases, drugs can also include over-the-counter and prescribed medications, such as pharmaceuticals, that can induce a drug-like state.
Drug-related incident	Situations where students are suspected of being under the influence of a drug, in possession of a drug, drug-use implement, or substance suspected of being illicit or unsanctioned or are presenting something as an illegal substance.
Illicit drug	A substance that the use, possession, cultivation or trafficking of is prohibited or illegal by law. Illicit drug use occurs when drugs are used in an illegal manner. This can include using a drug for an improper purpose or using a product or substance that is not intended to be a drug in a way which produces a drug-like state.

7. Relevant department policy

Drug education guidelines – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety/drugs-in-schools>

Drugs in schools policy – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety/drugs-in-schools>

Management of drug related incidents in schools guidelines –
<https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety/drugs-in-schools>

Suspension guidelines – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety/behaviour-and-wellbeing>

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