

GUIDELINES

MANAGEMENT OF DRUG-RELATED INCIDENTS IN SCHOOLS

Responsibility of: School Support Services
 Effective Date: 20 September 2017
 Next Review Date: September 2019
 Target Audience: Staff, parents, students and the school community

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This document should be read in conjunction with the [Drugs in Schools](#) policy and the [Drug Education](#) guidelines.

1. INTRODUCTION

Schools must be prepared for situations where students may be suspected of possession, supply or use of drugs. They must have written policy and procedures for managing the incident in ways that ensure the health and safety of the student(s), other students, school staff and the broader school community, in accordance with relevant legislation and departmental policy.

These guidelines provide the requirements for managing drug-related incidents and will assist schools to develop drug policies that include clear consequences and roles and responsibilities that are tailored to the school's context.

Under no circumstances are principals or school staff to dispose of suspected drugs and/or drug use implements. Where a student is found to be in possession of a suspected drug or drug use implement, the school must contact the police who will organise collection and disposal.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NT
TABLED DOCUMENTS

2. DEFINITIONS

Please refer to the definitions provided in the Drugs in Schools Policy, Paper No. 24 Date: 15/2/19

Committee: R.A.B.

Tabled By: Dept of Edt

Signed: Jg

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Principals are responsible for:

- developing and implementing school policy and procedures for managing drug-related incidents in schools that ensure the health and safety of the student(s), other students, school staff and the community and are in conjunction and consistent with departmental policy and relevant legislation
- ensuring that all school staff are aware of the process to follow when managing a drug-related incident and adhere to the relevant sections of departmental policy and legislation
- notifying Quality Education and Care NT (QECNT) where incidents have occurred in a regulated service (e.g. preschool, outside school hours care attached to the school)

- informing the police in circumstances where illicit drugs are found (or Youth Engagement Officer (YEO) where applicable)
- ensuring that all handling of suspected drugs and/or drug implements by school staff is limited, and that the suspected drugs and/or drug use implements are safely secured until the police are able to arrange collection and disposal
- assessing the need for referral to other agencies and/or relevant professionals and agencies to provide support for students, staff and parents e.g. professional development opportunities, medical assessments, counselling and rehabilitation services
- monitoring and reviewing the implementation and effectiveness of responses to drug-related incidents
- reviewing school policy to ensure currency and alignment to government and departmental policies.

All school staff are responsible for:

- demonstrating positive role modelling to students and the school community
- responding to information or incidents involving student use, possession or supply of drugs at school in line with school policy and procedures
- informing the principal (or delegate) 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 procedures for the management of drug-related incidents
- recording all details of a drug-related incident, including any actions taken, and referring to the principal or delegate for appropriate action
- referring media enquiries to the principal or delegate
- reporting suspected abuse or neglect (that may be related to student drug use).

At no stage should a member of staff:

- attempt to search a student's possessions
- accuse the student of possession or use of a substance, licit or illicit.

4. MANAGEMENT OF DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS

The *Managing a drug related incident flowchart* (Attachment A refers) provides an overview of the process to be undertaken in situations where a student is suspected of drug use, possession or supply at school.

Schools may wish to add additional steps or position titles/names to the flowchart for ease of use.

4.1 Search of student belongings

Ultimately, schools are responsible for providing a safe environment for students and staff. If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is in possession of prohibited items (e.g. illicit drugs) and there is an immediate threat to safety, the principal has the authority to remove the bag until police can attend the scene and conduct a search.

At no point in time should a member of school staff forcibly search a student's bag, belongings, or pockets. Where students have failed to consent, the parents must be contacted. Where necessary, the police will be contacted to attend the premises and conduct the search.

5. SCHOOL DRUG POLICY AND PROCEDURES

A policy template has been provided as Attachment B to these guidelines.

6. FORMS AND TEMPLATES

- Flowchart: Managing a drug related incident
- School based drug policy template