

Drug Policy

If you need help or support, contact:

- Dean, Mr Stuart Meldrum
- Director of Wellbeing, Ms Sally Cassidy
- Director of Learning, Dr Katrina Stats
- Adviser and Special Projects, Dr Rachel Buxton
- Chaplain, Rev'd Canon Steve Daughtry
- Drug and Alcohol Services of SA: 1300 13 1340 (confidential counselling and information)
- Headspace: 1800 063 267
- any of the other external services listed near the end of this policy

Statement of Commitment

The College is a living and learning environment where every student, staff member, and visitor must be respectful and considerate of others. The College operates on the basic principle that resident students are adults and must be responsible for what they consume. The use of illegal substances, and the misuse of prescribed medication or other legal substances, can have significant consequences for individual health and wellbeing, and effects on others, and such behaviour is not condoned by the College.

The use of illicit substances and misuse of prescribed medications or other legal substances does not diminish a resident student's personal responsibility for observing community values, rules, and expectations.

Where there is drug misuse, students will be supported to seek professional help and advice in a sensitive manner.

All activities at St Mark's are covered by relevant Commonwealth and State laws, and the College's own policies and procedures.

Who is covered by this Policy

This Policy applies to all St Mark's College staff and students, and to visitors and guests, on College grounds.

It also applies to everyone (College staff, students, and their visitors and guests) attending and/or participating in College or College-related events and activities, whether held on or outside College grounds, including online.

Definitions

College – St Mark's College Inc of 46 Pennington Terrace, North Adelaide SA

Resident – All residents of the College

Student – A student member of the College

The Policy

The health, safety, and wellbeing of our students and staff is our highest concern.

The possession or use of illegal substances, or misuse of legal substances, is not permitted at any time by any individual on College premises or attending an event or taking part in any activity associated in any way with the College.

If the College becomes aware of drug possession or usage, or misuse of legal substances, because a student has sought medical or pastoral/wellbeing assistance, or through another person seeking help for them, the College will provide support to the individual(s) concerned to enable them to obtain the appropriate professional help. Do not hesitate to get medical or other help if that is needed.

If, however, the College becomes aware in any other way (e.g., through a complaint) of the possession or usage of any illegal drug in our community, or the misuse of legal substances or their possession for purposes of misuse, this is liable to be treated as a serious disciplinary (and potentially a criminal) matter. Consequences may include suspension or expulsion from the College.

The promotion, sale, offering, or dealing of any illegal drug (or legal substance which is liable to be misused) will always be treated as a serious disciplinary (and potentially a criminal) matter. Strong penalties will apply (ordinarily, expulsion from the College).

The Dean (Stuart Meldrum), Director of Wellbeing (Sally Cassidy), Director of Learning (Katrina Stats), and Chaplain (Steve Daughtry) are all available to help. If you are using drugs, seek help now, either through College staff or through one of the bodies listed later in this policy. Don't leave it too late.

All matters relating to drug use will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. While the College will always remain consistent with Australian law, its priority is the health and safety of all residents. It will therefore, wherever possible, facilitate access to services to minimise harm and enable rehabilitation.

The College understands that the consumption of illegal drugs and misuse of prescription medication has the potential to affect decision-making and affect the personal safety of all students. The College has a duty to protect the safety of all, and will impose consequences for misconduct when necessary. The College's first priority will always be the safety of all members of the College.

Visitors to College found to be possessing, using, selling, offering, promoting, or dealing illegal substances or legal substances (including medications) which are liable to be misused will be asked to leave, and may be banned from College and reported to the relevant authorities.

Illegal Substances and Prescribed Medications and other misused substances

There are a range of illegal substances and prescribed medications and other substances that can have serious, including fatal, consequences if misused. These include:

- Sedatives (e.g., codeine, heroin, GHB, opioids)
- Stimulants (e.g., ecstasy, amphetamines including "ice")
- Hallucinogens and other drugs (e.g., cannabis, nitrous oxide).

Many of these can be either prescribed by a doctor or bought illegally. Some may be bought legally for other uses. It is the responsibility of everyone to be aware of the risks and legality associated with any substance they consume.

Storage of Prescribed Medications

If a student is prescribed medications by their doctor that can be used for non-medical reasons, the College understands that this is private information and suggests that the student:

- keep medications in a locked box in their room;
- keep this information private and not inform other students or visitors of their medications, unless they are supporting the student and their medical condition;
- consider informing the Dean, the Director of Wellbeing, the Director of Learning, or the Head of College. This information will be kept strictly confidential;
- report theft or misplacement of these medications to the College and police immediately.

Roles and Responsibilities

The College is responsible for implementing this Policy and responding to reports of drug possession or use.

Every person covered by this Policy (see **Who is covered by this Policy** above) is responsible for familiarising themselves with and adhering to this Policy, and is responsible for their own behaviour.

Behaviour Management

If a resident student or a staff member of the College is thought to be possessing, using, offering, selling, promoting, or dealing in illegal substances, or misusing, offering, selling, promoting, or dealing in prescribed medication or other substances that are liable to be misused, a complaint or other information may be given to the Head of College or Dean in person, by phone, or in writing.

Penalties, as described above, apply.

Seeking Support – within the College

The College encourages anyone who is concerned about themselves or their peers to seek support as soon as possible, so that they can be helped and supported.

The following people at the College have received appropriate training in this area:

- Head of College
- Dean
- Director of Wellbeing
- Director of Learning
- Adviser and Special Projects
- Chaplain
- Assistant Deans
- Residential Advisors.

Seeking Support – other sources

Aside from the sources of support at College, there are many other support services for anyone who would like to learn more about drug use and addiction.

Support persons at the College can help anyone affected to access these services. Services include:

- Drug and Alcohol Services of South Australia: sahealth.sa.gov.au/DASSA
- Headspace: headspace.org.au/explore-topics/for-young-people/alcohol/
- University of Adelaide counselling service: adelaide.edu.au/counselling/
- University of South Australia counselling service: i.unisa.edu.au/students/student-support-services/counselling/
- Flinders University counselling service: students.flinders.edu.au/support/hcd/counselling
- Legal Services Commission of SA: lsc.sa.gov.au/
- SA Police – Emergency assistance (including ambulance): phone 000; non-urgent police assistance: phone 131 444

Education and training

The College recognises its obligation to take all reasonable measures to ensure that up to date and relevant information is made available to resident students about the effects, both short and longer term, of using illegal substances and the misuse of prescribed medication and other substances.

All students must participate in College-provided education programs on drug and alcohol awareness and harm minimisation.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis at the start of each year, prior to publication in the student Handbook, to ensure that it is compliant with best practice management and the College's legal obligations.

This policy may be reviewed and revised at other times also.

Policy last updated: January 2025

Policy authorised by: Head of College

Date to be reviewed: January 2026