



IN CRUCE SALUS

HOLY CROSS HIGH SCHOOL

Policy on the possession and use of addictive substances

This policy is informed by:

- THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY (CATHOLIC INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION)
- CODE OF CONDUCT OF HOLY CROSS HIGH SCHOOL
- THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA CONTAINED IN ACT 108 OF 1996 (HEREAFTER “THE CONSTITUTION”)
- ARTICLE 15 OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT NO. 84 OF 1996 (HEREAFTER THE SCHOOLS’ ACT)
- THE RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND CONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE HOLY CROSS SISTERS SCHOOLS 1995. REVISED IN 2012.
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: GOVERNING BODY FOUNDATION FOR A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THIS POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

The School accepts and acknowledges that a wide variety of addictive or habit-forming substances are readily available throughout society, and that our learners are, and will continue to be, regularly exposed to such substances through a variety of circumstances and opportunities. Included in these substances are the socially acceptable, such as tobacco and alcohol products, as well as a range of so-called ‘performance-enhancing supplements’: and the socially less- acceptable (cocaine, tik, marijuana and the like.) This policy speaks to all of these.

The School recognizes that young people are particularly vulnerable to substance misuse and that such misuse or abuse is directly detrimental to learners’ well-being at a variety of levels and in many ways (physically, mentally, psychologically, socially, developmentally, emotionally and personally).

2. DEFINITIONS

“**Holy Cross High School**”: means all learners and staff (including, but not limited to, teaching, coaching, administrative, support, cleaning and grounds staff) employed by or at ABCD School.

“**The School**”: means **Holy Cross High School**.

“**Drug**”: means a chemical substance that produces a psychoactive effect. This includes alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, herbal cigarettes, cannabis, inhalants, pharmaceutical drugs, illicit drugs as well as image and performance enhancing substances.

“**Substance**”: has the same meaning as “drug” as defined above.

“**Abuse**”: means the use of an illicit drug, or the use of a substance for a purpose other than it was intended for.

“**Staff**”: means all individuals employed by the school; this includes academic and teaching personnel, administrative personnel and support and maintenance staff.

3. THE SCHOOL'S VALUES FRAMEWORK

The School:

- 3.1 Recognises that a safe and disciplined learning environment is one of the critical elements to the successful delivery of quality education and acknowledges the role played by drugs in undermining this.
- 3.2 Believes that there is a high correlation between drug abuse and other anti-social and high-risk behaviour, including dishonesty, theft, violence and gangsterism.
- 3.3 Accepts that it has a part to play, along with parents, in equipping young people with information and knowledge about drugs, and substance misuse generally.
- 3.4 Acknowledges that society changes and adapts its mores and norms constantly, and that not all of society is necessarily as totally opposed to the possession and use of prohibited substances as the School is.
- 3.5 Expects, nevertheless, that parents who choose to enrol their offspring in the School, will participate in a strong partnership with the school to minimize the potential harm to learners which may be caused by addictive substances, and expects every staff member, parent and learner to support a total prohibition on the use, possession or distribution of such substances to learners.
- 3.6 Holds that purely punitive approaches to drug abuse can only produce part of the solution.

Pursuant to the above, the School holds that the use of illegal substances in the school environment cannot be allowed or condoned, and has put in place measures as elucidated hereinafter to give effect to its belief.

4. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of policy is to promote a programme within the school, the primary focus of which shall be:

- 4.1 To clarify the approach and intentions of the school with regard to drugs and drug related issues.
- 4.2 To provide information and guidance on implementing and monitoring the school's drug prevention programme.
- 4.3 To enhance learner and staff well-being, safety, health and productivity in the school environment.
- 4.4 To ensure that appropriate support, including the dissemination of knowledge, is provided to learners and staff who require help for drug related problems.
- 4.5 To minimise/eliminate the abuse and dependence on drugs amongst the school's learners.
- 4.6 To ensure a supportive environment for those who may find themselves involved in substance abuse, and to recognize their right to reasonable assistance in sourcing and making use of rehabilitative services, and to such levels of confidentiality as may be adhered to without creating a dangerous level of secrecy or lack of transparency or knowledge on the part of staff and/or other learners.
- 4.7 To recognize equally the rights of the School, staff and other learners who may be affected by the actions of anyone involved in substance abuse.
- 4.8 To outline and put in place effective prevention, management and treatment plans for drug use misuse and dependency.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In dealing with all incidents involving the use and/or abuse of substances, the school shall endeavour to adhere to the following principles:

- 5.1 The possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs, and the inappropriate possession, use or distribution of legal drugs, is not acceptable at **Holy Cross High School** and this message should be clearly and consistently communicated to the school community.
- 5.2 All information relating to drug use, misuse or dependency by a learner, should be treated sensitively and in accordance with the school's guidelines on Confidentiality.
- 5.3 Any action taken should be consistent with the school's desire to develop a safe and supportive environment that values fairness and human dignity.
- 5.4 Intervention should primarily be aimed at providing support to the user, restoring health, addressing underlying psychological issues and preventing relapse.
- 5.5 In cases of drug use and/or abuse, parents/guardians should be informed and involved at the earliest possible opportunity in any attempts to help the learner.

6. THE USE OF DRUGS

- 6.1 The consumption, use or possession of any intoxicating substance or drug (excluding prescription medication, and then only when prescribed by a registered medical practitioner) is prohibited. This includes alcohol and tobacco products, as well as performance-enhancing substances and illegal stimulants.
- 6.2 No drugs shall be allowed on the premises of **Holy Cross High School**, and should these be discovered, the necessary action will be taken.
- 6.3 Any learner found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol may not remain with the general school population and will be liable for disciplinary action as laid down in this and the School's Disciplinary Code.

7. THE TRAFFICKING, SUPPLYING AND SELLING OF DRUGS

- 7.1 The following practices are prohibited: the trafficking of substances on or in the proximity of the **Holy Cross High School** terrain; supplying substances to other learners (with or without the expectation of payment); offering substances to other learners; and the sale of substances to other learners.
- 7.2 These actions are seen as serious offences, owing to the threat they pose to the safety of other learners and staff in the school, and to the standing of the school.
- 7.3 These offences will always lead to a disciplinary hearing as laid out in the schools disciplinary policy.
- 7.4 When a learner is found guilty of selling substances, or when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that s/he has done so, the school will report the matter to the relevant authorities.

8 THE LEARNER COMING FORWARD/SEEKING SUPPORT

- 8.1 Notwithstanding the School's determination to work with parents to eradicate substance abuse, the School acknowledges the reality that not all learners will at all times achieve a healthy, drug-free life.
- 8.2 Recognizing, therefore, that there are, and will be from time to time, learners who experiment with, or who have problems with, dependence-producing substances, in any instance where a learner approaches the school for assistance, the school will endeavour to provide such assistance, provided that the approach occurs before the learner is caught in possession of, or is the subject of an investigation concerning, prohibited substances of any nature.
- 8.3 To this end, the school invites any learner with problems of this nature to communicate with the Principal or other member of staff whom s/he trusts.
- 8.4 An experienced drug and alcohol counsellor will be made available to those learners requiring help due to their substance use/abuse.

9 DRUG SEARCHES

- 9.1 In instances where a member of staff has reason to suspect that a learner has in his possession an illegal or controlled substance, he/she should approach a member of the School Management Team and discuss the situation.
- 9.2 If the member of the Management Team believes that there is reasonable suspicion that the learner is in possession of a prohibited substance, s/he may carry out a search, but only in accordance with the following prescriptions:
 - 9.2.1 The search must be carried out by a person of the same gender as the person being searched.
 - 9.2.2 Any search must take place in the presence a second adult witness of the same gender, and a search of a learner's belongings, bag, locker, etc., must take place in the presence of an adult witness AND the learner concerned.
 - 9.2.3 Should the member of the Management Team find the learner in possession of a prohibited substance, s/he should inform the learner's parents, a member of the pastoral team and the Principal, who will decide on the appropriate action to be taken.

10 DRUG SCREENING / TESTING

- 10.1 Testing for prohibited substances, whether random or focused, may be undertaken if it is deemed in the child's best interest and it is implemented in an environment that is committed to safeguarding personal

rights relating to privacy, dignity and bodily integrity. All parents of learners at **Holy Cross High School** will be given the opportunity to provide written consent to drug testing in accordance with this policy.

- 10.2 Should a drug test be considered necessary, it should form part of a structured intervention or relapse-prevention programme, and should be carried out according to the procedure laid out in ***the screening procedure guidelines***.

11 VOLUNTARY DRUG TESTING PROGRAMME

- 11.1 As part of the school's commitment to minimising the use of drugs, all pupils will be given the opportunity to be part of the School's drug testing programme, though participation will remain voluntary and no pupil will be unduly coerced or forced to be part of the programme.
- 11.2 The School Counsellor is responsible for the running of the programme, which aims to create a drug-free culture within the school, and to empower learners to say "no" to drugs. The expectation that they may be tested is a strong incentive to stop using drugs, or to desist from starting in the first place. It is also an opportunity to identify drug users at an early stage.
- 11.3 In order for a learner to be part of the programme, both the learner and his/her parents/legal guardians must sign the consent form and return it to the Programme Co-ordinator.
- 11.4 Learners who have signed up for the programme will be randomly selected for testing, by a suitable process as devised by the School. The testing will then be carried out in accordance with the procedure laid out in ***the screening procedure guidelines***.
- 11.5 If a learner tests positive on a drug test:
- 11.5.1 His/her parents will be informed.
 - 11.5.2 Together with one of the school's counsellors or some other competent person, the learner and his/her parents will discuss an intervention that aims to address the reasons why s/he is using prohibited substances. The process may involve referral to an outside specialist for psychological assessment and intervention.
 - 11.5.3 Measures will be put in place to support the learner, so that s/he does not continue to use drugs.
 - 11.5.4 Follow up drug screens will be part of this intervention.
 - 11.5.5 The learner will be cautioned that if s/he tests positive on a follow up drug test, the incident will be reported to the school's Management Team who may decide to implement disciplinary procedures.

12 DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTION FOR DRUG USE / POSITIVE SCREENING

- 12.1 It may be necessary for the Principal to request that a disciplinary enquiry be conducted to investigate instances of substance abuse in the school. In such cases the disciplinary hearing will be conducted in accordance with the school's policy on Disciplinary Hearings and may result in punitive action.
- 12.2 The following sanctions will serve as guidelines when a learner either tests positive for the use of drugs or is involved in incidents of substance abuse:
- 12.3 1st positive testing / incident
- 12.3.1 Referral for psychological assessment by a substance abuse specialist.
 - 12.3.2 Implementation of an intervention plan which has been tailored to the demands of the circumstances in which the learner/family finds itself, with the parents' involvement.
 - 12.3.3 Follow up drug screens as part of a structured intervention programme.
 - 12.3.4 Support measures to prevent continued use of prohibited substances.
 - 12.3.5 A final warning for substance abuse.
- 12.4 2nd positive testing / incident
- 12.4.1 This will result in a disciplinary enquiry followed by a disciplinary hearing as laid out in the school's disciplinary policy.
 - 12.4.2 Punitive sanctions could include a recommendation for suspension or expulsion
 - 12.4.3 All learners will be offered all reasonable support within the capacity of the school to provide it, in order to help them break away from the use of illegal substances.
 - 12.4.4 No learner will be turned away should s/he request assistance.
 - 12.4.5 However, in cases where the learner does not wish to make use of the help offered to him/her, or is caught contravening any part of this policy (as distinct from coming forward and seeking help

before being caught), the school will have no choice but to take the necessary action as laid out in the school's disciplinary policy.

12.4.6 Where a learner is found to be in violation of the rules set out above relating to possession and/or use of prohibited substances, that learner should expect, particularly if s/he has made substances available to any other learner within the school, that a Disciplinary Committee of the Governing Body will be convened and will be entitled to recommend any sanction provided for in the Code of Conduct or the SA Schools and related acts, up to and including the expulsion of the learner concerned.

12.4.7 When a learner has disclosed or been found to be affected by, in possession of, or having used prohibited substances, and s/he fails to comply with any rehabilitation programme to the satisfaction of the School, s/he should expect to appear before a Disciplinary Committee of the Board of Governors.

13 PROCEDURE FOR STORAGE AND DISPOSAL OF CONFISCATED DRUGS

Should a prohibited substance be confiscated, the following course of action shall be followed:

- 13.1 If the substance is controlled, but not illegal, such as Alcohol or Tobacco, the substance may be disposed of in a manner as deemed fit by the adult dealing with the incident.
- 13.2 If the substance is illegal, it should be placed in a sealed bag or envelope in the presence of another adult witness.
- 13.3 This sealed bag or envelope should then be placed in a safe / cupboard which can be locked, and to which no unauthorized person has access.
- 13.4 The South African Police Service should then be contacted to collect the illegal substance and dispose of it according to legal procedures.

14 EDUCATION AND PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

14.1 Education of Learners:

14.1.1 The objective of preventative education is to reduce or delay the likelihood of experimentation with drugs, by providing information about the dangers of their use and misuse, as well as to reduce the stigma attached to alcohol and drug use, misuse and dependency.

14.1.2 It is also designed to encourage those who are experiencing problems to get the help they need.

14.1.3 Drug education should ensure that learners acquire age- and context-appropriate knowledge and skills, in order for them to adopt and maintain a lifestyle and behaviour patterns that will protect them from drug use, misuse and dependency.

14.2 Education of Parents / Guardians:

Education and information on drug use, misuse and dependency, as well as the School's policy on drug use, should be made accessible to all parents and guardians of learners.

14.3 Education of Staff:

Training on drug use and misuse, as well as dependency management and support, should be provided to all staff. Staff should also be given the knowledge and tools to recognise the signs and symptoms of drug use. The school should also ensure that all staff are aware of the contents of this policy.

15 REVIEWING THE SCHOOL'S DRUG POLICY

This policy should be viewed as a living document, to be reviewed and evaluated annually, and updated and amended when necessary. The objective of this is to get a balanced and representative overview of the effectiveness and shortcomings of the drug prevention programme, from all the role players, and use that information to improve the programme.

Annexure 1: Policy on the possession and use of addictive substances



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SUBSTANCE ABUSE LIMITATION PROGRAMME

Agreement form

1. PARTICIPATION IN HOLY CROSS HIGH SCHOOL SUBSTANCE ABUSE LIMITATION PROGRAMME

I/we as parents/legal guardians of a pupil enrolled at **Holy Cross High School**, agree to the participation of ourselves and our son/daughter/ward in the substance-abuse limitation programme of the school. We understand and accept that the program will be run within the following parameters:

- 1.1 Random screening for substances prohibited in terms of the **Holy Cross High** school substance-abuse policy is undertaken at the sole discretion of the principal or his/her delegate.
- 1.2 The learner may seek assistance with substance-abuse at any time before being tested, in which case the approach will be treated confidentially and no disciplinary steps will be taken against the pupil.
- 1.3 There is no obligation on the school, or any individual in it, to inform in advance either the parents or the pupils of the intended testing.
- 1.4 The school will carry the cost of the initial random test applied to any pupil in the school.
- 1.5 Should a pupil return a positive test in respect of any prohibited substance, he or she may be required by the School participate in a counselling and support programme, which may entail further screening for substance-abuse.
- 1.6 Should such screening take place, the cost of re-testing those who have previously tested positive, will be borne by the parents/guardians.

I/we agree further that:

- 1.7 Should medical intervention or psychological support prove to be necessary, the cost of such interventions will be for our account.
- 1.8 Should a pupil test positive for prohibited substances **without** having sought help **prior** to the test, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, neither can immunity from disciplinary action.

2. UNDERTAKING

In keeping with the spirit of the **Holy Cross High** School substance abuse limitation programme, we also undertake:

- 2.1 To set clear boundaries for our son/daughter/ward concerning the use of tobacco products, alcohol, performance enhancing substances and other prohibited substances.
- 2.2 To desist from providing any prohibited substance (other than tobacco and alcohol) to our child, and those substances only under our **direct, personal supervision** and in an environment where he/she cannot be identified as a member of the ABCD School community.
- 2.3 To refrain from providing any of the substances mentioned in the school's substance-abuse policy to anybody else's child, whether in our home or elsewhere.
- 2.4 To ensure close adult supervision and control at any social function which is held at our home or which may be arranged or organised by us.

2.5 To bring to the attention of the relevant parents, any use of prohibited substances by their offspring, should we become aware of such abuse.

2.6 To host other pupils, and to allow our son/daughter/ward to be hosted in other homes, only after the arrangements have been confirmed between the respective parents.

3 REGISTER OF SUPPORTIVE PARENTS

Mindful of the magnitude of the social problems related to alcohol- and other substance-abuse in our communities, we agreed to the publication of our names on the register of Holy Cross High School parents who are committed to implementing the substance limitation programme of the school in its entirety.

Yes No

Father/Guardian

Mother

Pupil

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____