



Drug and Alcohol Policy

**This policy was developed and is adopted by consensus of the coordinators at Preshil- The Margaret Lyttle Memorial School
May 2016*

PRESHIL VISION STATEMENT

At our core remains an unshakeable commitment to encouraging all children to progress at their own pace towards their own goals and to be respected as individuals in their own right. It is a commitment to our children to be nurtured and challenged in an atmosphere that inspires creativity and independent thinking in all areas of life and does not, overtly or subtly, use competition or punishment to motivate through the fear of failure.

As global citizens we encourage an awareness of world issues and encourage effort to make a positive difference. We believe that education should prepare students to be thoughtful, peace-loving and active citizens of the world. Preshil will remain a school that puts kindness, compassion and social relationships at the centre of its operations.

RATIONALE

Preshil has an interest in the health, personal and legal wellbeing and legal obligations of its students and staff. All students have the right to feel safe and supported in their school community. Issues such as alcohol and other drug use and misuse will impact on the school and the community. Preshil accepts the need for a comprehensive and coordinated approach to drug education across the whole school community. Preshil acknowledges that it is only one part of a community response to drug issues.

Preshil aims to develop and maintain a health-promoting environment. The possession, use, selling and distribution of substances such as tobacco, alcohol, inhalants, inappropriate use of prescription drugs and all illicit drugs at school constitute a health and safety risk, breach of school rules and a breach of the law.

Preshil offers education on drug and alcohol use and misuse through the Health and Physical Education programme and such channels as the Victoria Police.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

Preshil aims to enhance the emotional, physical and social health of students. Wherever possible, the school will inform and support families and link to student support services for counselling and treatment.

Harm minimisation

In keeping with national and state policy and associated research, we take a position of harm minimisation in relation to the management of suspected drug-related incidents. The goal of managing any suspected drug-related incident is to ensure the wellbeing and future educational careers of the student/s involved, as well as the wellbeing and educational careers of the whole student community and staff. Harm minimisation does not condone or encourage drug use. It aims to support and promote healthier lifestyle choices and to reduce the risks associated with drug use.

Medication and prescription drugs

Parents/guardians of students who require long-term medication to be administered at school should complete a medication form and medicines should remain at the office at all times while at school. To ensure a suitable management protocol, the drug should be taken within sight of a Preshil staff member.

Asthma

Parents/guardians of students who suffer from asthma are to provide the school office with an Asthma Management Plan filled out by a doctor. Asthmatic students are to carry their own asthma medications with them at all times.

Smoking

Preshil is a smoke-free environment and students are not permitted to possess, use, distribute or display tobacco products at school. The law does not permit anyone under 18 years of age to buy tobacco products. Staff, parents and visitors are also required to abstain from smoking on or around the school. Under an amendment to the *Tobacco Act 1987* from 13 April 2015, smoking is banned within four metres of an entrance to all primary and secondary schools in Victoria, and within the school grounds. Any breaches may result in confiscation.

Alcohol

The law does not permit alcohol to be consumed in licensed premises, public places or private residences by those under the age of 18 years unless they are under the direct supervision of a parent, guardian, carer or other responsible adult to whom parents have given documented consent.

Alcohol at School Functions

Preshil would prefer school community members to be of a zero blood-alcohol content while attending school activities. Students may neither possess nor consume alcohol while associated with a school activity (see above section for events where parents are present and alcohol may be available).

Illegal drugs

Alcohol, inhalants, harmful substances and illegal drugs

The possession, supply or use of an illegal drug is an offence against the law. If a student is found in possession of an illegal drug or under the influence of an illegal drug, while on the Preshil grounds, their parents/guardians will be informed and police will be notified.

If a student's illegal drug activities are reported to the school or the school becomes aware of such activities, the school will appropriately investigate such claims as part of its duty of care. Parents will be informed/involved in the investigative process.

Consequences of unauthorised drug use

Where a student is found to be inappropriately using or is involved with a drug substance, the school will take into account the nature and circumstances of the offence. The physical, mental, emotional health and wellbeing of a student is a high priority. The school will notify and consult with parents/guardians, but may also:

- Notify police
- Need to act to ensure the safety of the student and the whole school community
- Refer to an external specialist drug and alcohol counselling agency
- Suspend a student from school
- Suggest transfer to another school [in the case of serious or repeated offences]

Where a student is drug affected

In the event of a student appearing to be under the influence of a drug, the student will generally be removed from class and the school administration will seek medical advice, or request that parents who collect the student seek medical advice. The school will attempt to notify parents/guardians as soon as possible.