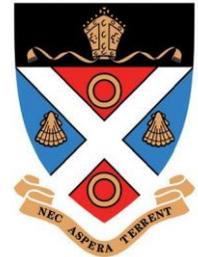


# DRUG TESTING POLICY



ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE

## INTRODUCTION

South African schools have a government mandate to conduct drug testing on school learners, and it is entirely appropriate for schools to do all they can to minimize the likelihood of their learners misusing illegal drugs.

By reducing and preventing the use of drugs in our schools, we will remove a significant barrier to academic achievement, and promote a safe and secure learning environment for every member of the school community.

While some learners may resist the idea of drug testing, others will endorse it. Learners who have the potential to “cross the line”, primarily as a result of peer pressure, are a large and vulnerable group, and the perceived threat of being selected for a random drug test provides them with a valid excuse to resist peer pressure to take drugs.

Drug abuse should also be recognized as a major health issue. Chemical changes to the brain, caused by the use of illegal drugs, can have far more serious effects on adolescents than on adults, and many of the physical changes in the brain caused by drugs may be long lasting, and, in some cases, may be irreversible. Studies have linked marijuana (dagga) use with long term deficits in verbal skills and ecstasy use with long term memory impairment. Like vision and hearing tests, drug tests can alert educators and parents to potential problems that continued drug use may cause, such as liver and lung damage, memory impairment, addiction, overdose, even death. Once a drug problem has been identified within the supportive environment of the school, the learner can be guided to appropriate counselling services and treatment facilities.

Most young people, including those in primary schools, are likely to be exposed to the effects and influences of drugs in the wider community, and to be exposed to opportunities to try both legal (alcohol, tobacco) and illegal drugs. There are complex motivations behind the decision to first experiment with alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs. Although only a relatively small percentage of those who experiment with illegal drugs will become long term, problem drug users whose addiction will impact negatively on their families, their communities and on society, in the short term drugs have the potential to impact negatively on every learner's academic performance, on their relationships with family, friends and peers, and to limit their opportunities to achieve their full potential.

If the introduction of drug testing helps to reduce the misuse of illegal drugs by school learners, it should be welcomed as a powerful and effective tool.

## PURPOSE OF THE DRUG POLICY

- To clarify the school's attitude to drugs and drug related issues and its intentions regarding drug prevention, incident management and drug education.
- To ensure that the school's response to incidents involving drugs are appropriately dealt with in accordance with ethical procedures and documented protocols that complement the values and ethos of the school.

- To give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the operational activities of the school's drug testing, drug prevention and drug education programmes, and the management of incidents involving illegal and unauthorised drugs.
- To enable staff to manage the drug testing programme and drug related incidents on the school premises with confidence, consistency, and in the best interests of all who are involved.

## **RANDOM AND TARGETED DRUG TESTS**

- The selection of participants to be tested will be done randomly and selections will be made from time to time throughout the school year.
- The school will implement a mechanism for selecting learners for random drug tests that results in an equal probability that any learner from a group of learners, subject to the selection mechanism, will be selected.
- The mechanism will not give the school the discretion to waive the selection of a learner randomly selected for a drug test.
- If a learner whose number is drawn is absent on the test date that learner's number will be held and included in the next regular test of that learner's pool.

## **RANDOM SELECTION OF LEARNERS FOR TESTING**

- Names will be drawn from two pools of participating students. The first pool will include learners in grades 8 to 10. The second pool will include learners in grades 11 and 12. Each learner will be assigned a number that will be placed in the respective pool for the draw. School officials will have no control over whose number is drawn. One cross reference list of names and numbers will be maintained by the Principal and or his appointed delegate.

## **TARGETED / SUSPICION BASED DRUG TESTS**

The School may require any learner to submit to a drug test if there is a reasonable suspicion that the learner has used or is using prohibited drugs. Reasonable suspicion must be based on specific physical, behavioural or performance indicators of probable drug use. The following circumstances shall constitute grounds for reasonable suspicion:

- Direct observation and/or confirmation by a member of the school community of drug use or possession.
- Abnormal or erratic behaviour indicating drug use.
- First-hand information provided by reliable and credible sources of use or possession.
- Physical symptoms indicating drug use, including but not limited to slurred speech, loss of balance.
- The presence of a drug on the learner detectable by the senses such as the smell of marijuana (dagga).
- Possession of illegal drugs, prescription drugs for which the learner does not have a medical prescription, or drug paraphernalia.

A report from any source indicating reasonable suspicion that a learner may be in violation of the Drug Policy should immediately be conveyed to the Principal or his/her appointed delegate. The Principal or his/ her appointed delegate must determine that the circumstances constitute reasonable suspicion of drug use before the learner is required to take a drug test.

The Principal or his/her delegate is required to write in reasonable detail the facts, symptoms or observations that form the basis of such reasonable suspicion.

## TESTING GENERAL

1. The school obtains written consent of parents/guardians for learners to be tested for drugs and to have to provide a urine sample when requested to do so by the school for the purpose of a drug test. The written consent shall remain in effect for the entire time the learner is at the school.
2. If a learner is 18 years of age or older the learner be asked to sign a release of information form, to allow information about his/her drug test to be shared with the parent/guardian and if necessary with internal and/or external counsellors.
3. Details of the testing schedule, selection criteria for both random and target testing, and the selection process, should be kept confidential and this information should be restricted to the minimum number of school personnel possible. Testing should not take place on the same day, or at the same time, each week/month, and every effort must be made to ensure that learners have no way of determining or anticipating when testing will take place.
4. Testing should always be conducted by a team of two people, with one person acting as the testing officer and one person acting as a witness to the testing process.
5. One member of the two-person testing team must be the same sex as the learner who is being tested, and that person should witness the passing of the urine sample from the body into the sample collection container to ensure that the sample is not exchanged, replaced or manipulated in any way to get a negative test result.
6. School staff or any external personnel involved in the testing process - including administrative staff responsible for administrative procedures and record keeping - must be made aware that the learners' details and test results are highly confidential, and should be required to sign confidentiality agreements
7. Before the test commences, the learner must be informed of what is about to take place and the consequences of a positive test result.
8. A test report should be completed for every test and archived in a secure place on completion of the testing process. Each test report should be cross referenced with the same unique reference number as the reference number written by the testing officer on the test kit. The report should include the details of the person being tested, details of any medication or supplements which the learner claims to have ingested in the last 48 hours, any comments about the test those members of the testing team or the learner wants put on record, and the test result. The report should be checked and signed off by both members of the test team on completion of the testing process.
9. If the integrity of the test kit or the sample has been compromised in any way, a new test kit should be obtained and the testing officer must inform the learner that another sample will be required.

## PROCEDURE

### Passing of the Sample

- The learner will be handed a sample collection container, which he will carry to the toilet area accompanied by a same-sex member of the testing team (the witnessing chaperone), who will observe the passing of the sample.
- During the testing process, access to the toilet area should be restricted to members of the test team and the learner being tested.
- The witnessing chaperone should not offer/ agree to hold or carry the sample container for the learner either before or after the sample is passed.
- The witnessing chaperone will explain to the learner that in order to ensure the learner has provided the sample, the witnessing chaperone must have a clear view of the middle of the learner's body, hands and forearms. If necessary the witnessing chaperone will direct the learner clearly and directly to remove those parts of the clothing that prevents this view. This may include the shirt being pulled up to mid torso, sleeves being rolled up to the elbows and trousers pulled down to mid thigh.
- If the toilet area is not large enough for both the witnessing chaperone and learner to be inside at

the same time with the door closed, the witnessing chaperone will ensure that the door remains open and there is a clear and unobstructed view from the doorway. Direct observation of the urine passing from the learner into the collection container is critical to ensure there is no interference with, substitution or contamination of the sample during the course of the collection. Be aware that the learner may react to observation by turning away from the witnessing chaperone, who should then adjust his position to ensure an unobstructed view.

- After passing the sample the learner will readjust his clothes and may want to wash his hands. The witnessing chaperone should tell the learner to place the sample collection container with the sample in it on any secure flat surface (the floor, or the top of the toilet cistern) where it cannot be knocked over and where both the learner and the witnessing chaperone have a clear and unobstructed view of the sample at all times.
- The learner, accompanied by the witnessing chaperone, will carry his sample back to the processing area and will place the sample collection container containing the urine sample on a secure flat surface where the testing officer will commence the analysis procedure.

### **Selection of the Test Device and analysis of the urine sample**

- Testing equipment should be unused and still sealed.
- The learner will be shown a choice of two sealed test devices and asked to select one.
- The learner will visually observe the sealed test device he/she has selected being opened and removed from its wrapper by the testing officer.
- The learner will observe the testing officer insert the test device into the urine sample for the designated period of time
- After the designated period of time, the testing officer will remove the device from the urine sample and place it on a non-absorbent (e.g. it can be placed on top of the empty foil wrapper) flat surface for a period of five minutes to await the results. It is recommended that a stop watch or timer is used for this purpose.

*(note: it is up to the school whether the learner is asked to leave the testing area and return to the classroom at this stage, i.e. before the results appear on the test device; or whether the learner has to stay with the test team until the results of the test have been determined.)*

- After a period of five minutes the results of the test will be checked and agreed on by both members of the test team, and the test result will be written in the test report.
- All the information in the test report will then be checked by both members of the testing team who will then both sign the report.
- Please note : the identification codes above the test strips read as follows :

Left to right -      AMP (pink) Amphetamines  
                              COC (purple) Cocaine  
                              M-AMP (red) Methamphetamine or Tik OPI (blue)  
                              Opiates - Heroin, Morphine THC (green) - Dagga

You do not need to send the samples to a laboratory for analysis unless there is a specific reason that further proof or a second analysis is required

# Informed Consent Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name of parent/guardian),

the custodial parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ (print name of learner), am aware of, and fully understand, the Drug Testing Policy of St Andrew's College.

As the custodial parent / guardian of the above-named learner, I hereby agree that he will co-operate in providing a urine sample for the purpose of a drug test, whenever requested to do so, within the specifications of the school's Drug Testing Policy.

I accept the method of obtaining a urine sample, the testing of the urine sample for prohibited and illegal substances, and all other aspects of the drug testing process as explained in the Drug Testing Policy.

I further consent to the disclosure of the testing information and test results, should this be deemed necessary, in consultation with the school, and as explained in the Drug Testing Policy.

This consent is given pursuant to all privacy statutes and is a waiver of rights to nondisclosure of such test records and results.

This consent will remain in effect for the duration of the time that the above named is a learner at St Andrew's College.

Signature of Custodial Parent or Guardian:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to our school receptionist Mrs Sino Bili, for the attention of Mr Lewis Manthata email [s.bili@sacshool.com](mailto:s.bili@sacshool.com)