

MORDIALLOC COLLEGE

TOBACCO EDUCATION & SMOKING

POLICY

Rationale:

Mordialloc College is committed to being a smoke free school and supporting the health and wellbeing of staff and students. In line with the Department of Education and Training policy on drug education, we operate under a harm minimization approach. Smoking is prohibited in Victorian Government Schools. This means:

- All school activities are smoke-free
- Students, staff and parents are not to smoke in school premises, on grounds and at school functions and activities
- An ongoing communication strategy should be designed to inform the whole school community of the reasons for a smoke free policy
- All members of the school community should be aware of their role in implementing a smoke-free environment

Aims:

Establishing a smoke-free environment requires a whole school approach inclusive of parents and the wider community. Our policy and practice is based on the following guidelines to ensure a comprehensive approach:

1. Mordialloc College is a smoke-free environment
2. Tobacco prevention and management will be delivered as part of a whole school approach to health and wellbeing
3. Tobacco education will be delivered in the context of the school health curriculum
4. Effective tobacco education is based on staff receiving ongoing whole school professional development
5. The college aims to ensure that parents and other persons are involved as partners in tobacco education
6. The college recognises that student use of tobacco products is primarily a health issue
7. Students who are vulnerable to becoming regular smokers should be identified early in their "smoking pathway" and given the opportunity to undertake intensive support from the student wellbeing team
8. Students will be supported not to smoke at school
9. Parents/guardians will be involved in the management of a young person's tobacco use
10. The college will work with community-based agencies in the management of tobacco use - eg Quit, Central Bayside Community Health Service, City of Kingston.
11. The college will regularly evaluate tobacco prevention and management strategies

Electronic Cigarettes

E-cigarettes are electronic devices which heat and vaporise liquids that may or may not contain nicotine and/or flavouring agents. The vapour is inhaled, simulating the act of smoking.

It is illegal to obtain, possess or use e-cigarettes, or their cartridges, which contain nicotine in Victoria. On this basis students, teachers and employees of the Department are banned from possessing or using e-cigarettes, or their cartridges, containing nicotine on school grounds.

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Whilst it is not illegal in Victoria to obtain, possess or use e-cigarettes that do not contain nicotine. Mordialloc College bans all e-cigarettes, including those that do not contain nicotine, on the basis of student health and safety and that it may be difficult to determine if nicotine is being used.

Implementation:

Prevention

Prevalence rates of smoking amongst young people and the fact that smoking is responsible for 80% of drug related deaths in Australia establishes strong rationale for pursuing a preventative approach. Students are to receive information and skill development through health education in Year 7 - 10.

Parents/guardians will be supported through information and strategies to support their children in not becoming smokers through newsletter items, pamphlets, parent drug education and where appropriate, individual assistance through the Wellbeing staff.

Students will engage in health promotion activities through the curriculum to ensure they have a thorough understanding of the risks associated with smoking.. Staff will continue to receive professional development to ensure they are equipped to intervene and manage young people who choose to smoke at school or as they travel to and from school or on school related activities.

Management

For students who engage in smoking either at school or on school sponsored activities, a series of interventions will apply. All interventions are based on the belief that smoking is primarily a health issue and recognises the rapid dependent nature of nicotine. The college aims to support young people to remain smoke-free through the school day or on school-sponsored activities.

Levels of Intervention:

First Intervention

1. Staff member discovering student smoking informs the Year Level Coordinator
2. YLC notifies parents and provides information including literature re smoking
3. Refer to Wellbeing staff for an assessment around smoking and wellbeing (usually SSN).

Further Intervention

1. Staff member informs Year Level Coordinator
2. Parents/guardian notified
3. Evoke discipline response, including possible loss of privilege.

Note: When a young person fails to show cooperation and motivation to adopt the rule that Mordialloc College is a smoke-free school it may be appropriate to evoke disciplinary responses. This is to be done in consultation with parents/guardians.

See attached Flowchart

This policy was last ratified by School Council in

August 2017

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Draft Letter to parents/guardians

DearYour son / daughter has been smoking at school or on a school sponsored activity.

This is the first/second incident of this nature and it is part of our procedure to contact parents/guardians. Mordialloc College is a Smoke Free school. This means

- *Schools are smoke-free environments.*
- *All school activities are smoke-free.*
- *Students, staff and parents must refrain from smoking in school premises, on the school grounds, or at school functions and activities.*

Tobacco smoking is a health epidemic. It is the largest single preventative cause of death and disease in Australia and it kills around 15,000 Australians every year. It is estimated that four in five deaths from drug related causes (tobacco, alcohol, licit and illicit drugs) are due to cigarette smoking. Smoking costs the community over \$31 billion per year. Most adults who smoke first tried cigarettes when they were teenagers and 90% of adults wish they had never started. In 2011, the overall rate of current smoking among Australian students aged 12 to 17 years was 6.7%. Since 1999, smoking rates among students have dropped by more than half (www.quit.org.au, 2014).

We are concerned for the health of your child, as well as the health of other students at the school. Dependence on tobacco smoking can occur rapidly, and young people are often not fully aware of their own degree of addiction. Consequently, we believe it is important that parents are informed when their child is experimenting with tobacco products. We wish to work collaboratively with parents and young people to manage and stop the use of tobacco at school.

As your son/daughter was caught smoking on school premises we are writing to notify you of the current school policy. Your son/daughter will be required to attend "Stage One Intervention", facilitated by our College nurse/ health educator. The session will include discussions on the consequences of smoking (health, legal and financial).

Please find enclosed some information that may assist you in speaking with your child. If you would like further information, or wish to discuss any issues, please feel free to contact me on the above telephone number during school hours.

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Smoke Free Schools Procedure for Student Smoking Incident



Student found smoking on school premises, on a school activity or in school uniform

Notify

- YLC via email
- YLC places student's name on electronic register (Compass)
- The YLC notifies parents of the incident
- The YLC notifies the Secondary School Nurse (SSN) via email if first incident on marsh.ann.p@edumail.vic.gov.au



1st Incident

Student attends a compulsory interview with SSN or D of SWB to:

- Be informed of the Smoke Free Schools Policy
- Assess level of tobacco use
- Discuss issues about health and smoking
- Provision of smoking literature.
- Wellbeing assessment
- Student to discuss strategies to adhere to the Smoke Free Policy including managing dependency
- Send literature to parents about encouraging their child not to smoke

SSN/D of SWB refers back to YLC if student is

2nd Incident +

1. YLC imposes a sanction / loss of privilege.
2. Parents are sent literature about supporting their children to be non smokers
3. Sanctions may include students undertaking exercises from the activities in the Smoke Free Schools including: assessment of level of dependence, completing Not Smoking at School contract, Why smoke?, a plan to manage cravings or developing a poster to promote smoking cessation

Students can also self refer to SSN for confidential support around smoking