



STEDIN COLLEGE AND PRIMARY SCHOOL

DRUG TESTING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

1. The government has mandated South African schools to conduct drug testing on school learners.
2. This is appropriate as schools must do all they can to minimise the likelihood of their learners using illicit drugs.
3. Reducing and preventing the use of drugs in our schools, significant barriers to academic achievement will be removed, and a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for each learner and teacher will be promoted.
4. Some learners and their parents may resist the idea of drug testing, while others will support and encourage drug testing.
5. Vulnerable learners have the potential to “cross the line” due to peer pressure, and the “perceived threat” of being selected for a random drug test provide them with a valid excuse to resist peer pressure to take drugs.
6. Drug abuse should be perceived as a major health issue as the use of drugs can have far reaching and more serious effects on adolescents that they would have on adults. Chemical changes caused by drugs in the brains of adolescents may have long-lasting and irreversible effects.
7. Studies have linked marijuana (dagga) with long term deficits in verbal skills and what can be termed as “arrested mental development”*.
8. The continued use of drugs can cause damage to the liver and heart, and can lead to memory impairment, overdose and death.
9. Once a drug problem has been identified within a supportive environment, the learner can be guided to appropriate counselling services and treatment facilities.
10. All learners have the potential to be exposed to the effects and influences drugs in the wider community, and exposed to the opportunities to try both legal (alcohol and tobacco) and illegal drugs.
11. Problem drug users will have an impact on their families, the greater community and on society.
12. Drug addiction will impact on every learner’s academic performance , on their relationship with their family, peers and friends. It also limits their opportunities to reach their full potential.
13. The introduction of drug testing should be welcomed as a powerful and effective tool to reduce the misuse of illegal drugs by learners.

PURPOSE OF THE DRUG POLICY

1. To clarify the school’s attitude towards drugs and drug-related issues and its intentions regarding drug prevention, incident management and drug education.
2. 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.

3. 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.
4. 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

1. The selection of participants will be done randomly and selections will be made from time to time throughout the school year. (At least twice a term)
2. 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.
3. The mechanism will not give the school the discretion to waive the selection of a learner randomly selected for a drug test.
4. If a learner whose number is drawn is absent on the test date the learner's number will be held and included in the next regular test from that learner's pool.

RANDOM SELECTION OF LEARNERS FOR TESTING

1. Names will be drawn from two pools of participating learners. The first pool will include learners in grades 7 to 9. The second pool of learners will include learners from grades 10 to 12. (To be implemented in later years)
2. Each learner is 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 will be held by the principal, the head of discipline and/or an appointed delegate.

TARGETED/SUSPICION-BASED DRUG TESTS

1. Should there be reasonable suspicion of drug use, the school may require any learner to submit to a drug test to ascertain that a learner is using or has used prohibited drugs.
2. Reasonable suspicion must be based on specific physical, behavioural or performance indicators of probable drug use. The following 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 or a drug on the learners detectable by senses such as the smell of marijuana (dagga).
 - Possession of illegal drugs, prescription drugs (including CBC oil) for which the learner does not have a medical prescription, or drug paraphernalia.
 - Possession of refillable vaping paraphernalia which can be filled with cannabis containing liquid.
3. A report from any source indicating reasonable suspicion that a learner is in violation of the policies of the school should be conveyed immediately to the principal and/ his appointed delegates.
4. The principal and his appointed delegates must determine that the circumstances constitute reasonable suspicion of drug use before the learner is required to take the drug test.
5. The principal and his delegates are required to write in reasonable detail the facts, symptoms or observation 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 have to provide a urine sample when requested to do so by the school for the purpose of a drug test. The written consent will remain in force for the entire time that a learner is at the school.
2. If a learner is 18 years of age or older, the learner can 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 external counsellors.
3. Details of the testing schedule, selection for both random and targeted testing, and the selection process, should be kept confidential and this information should be restricted to the minimum number of school personnel as possible.
4. Testing should not take place on the same day, or at the same time, each week/month/term, and every effort must be made to ensure that learners have no way in determining or anticipating when testing will take place.
5. 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.
6. One member of the two-person 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.
7. School staff or any external person involved in the testing process – including administrative staff responsible for administrative procedures and record-keeping, must be made aware that the learner's details and test results are highly confidential, and should be made to sign confidentiality agreements.
8. Before the learners is administered the test, the learner must be informed of what is about to take place and the consequences of a positive test result.
9. A test report should be completed for every test and archived in a secure place on completion
10. 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.
11. The report is to contain 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.
12. The report must be signed off and checked by each member of the test team.
13. If the integrity of the test kit or the sample have been compromised in any way, a new test kit should be obtained and the testing officer must inform the learner that another sample will need to be taken.

PROCEDURE

1. The learner will be handed a sample collection container which he/she will carry to the toilet area in the sickbay, accompanied by a same-sex member of the testing team (the witnessing chaperone), who will observe the passing of the urine sample.
2. During the testing process, access to the toilet area should be restricted to members of the test team and the learner being tested.
3. The witnessing chaperone should not offer or agree to hold or carry the sample container for the learner either before or after the sample is passed.
4. The witnessing chaperone will explain to the learner that he/she must have a clear view of the learner's midriff, arms, forearms and hands. The learner may be requested to remove clothing that prevents a direct view of the urination process. This may include the shirt being pulled up to mid-torso, sleeves being rolled up to the elbows and trousers/skirt being pulled down to mid-thigh.

5. Direct passing of the urine sample into the collection container is critical to ensure that there is no interference with, substitution or contamination of the sample during the course of collection.
6. The learner may react to the observation by turning away from the witnessing chaperone, who should adjust his/her position to ensure an unobstructed view.
7. After passing the sample, the learner must place the sample container with the sample in it on the cistern or in the basin, or on any secure flat surface where it cannot be knocked over, and where the learner and witnessing chaperone have a clear and unobstructed view of the sample container at all times.
8. The learner can then adjust his/her clothes and wash his/her hands.

SELECTION OF TEST DEVICE AND ANALYSIS OF URINE SAMPLE

1. Testing equipment should be unused and still sealed.
2. The learner will be shown a choice of two test devices and asked to select one.
3. The learner will visually observe the test device which he/she selected being opened and removed from its wrapper by the testing officer.
4. Once the sample has been taken, the learner will observe the testing officer insert the test device into the urine sample for the designated period of time.
5. After the designated period of time, the testing officer will remove the device from the urine sample and place it on a non-absorbent flat surface for a period of five minutes to await results. A stopwatch or timer may be used.
6. The learner must stay with the testing team until the results of the test are determined.
7. All the information in the test report will then be checked by both members of the testing team, and the results entered into the report. Both members will sign the reports
8. The test device tests for the following with codes:
 - a. AMP – Amphetamines
 - b. COC – Cocaine
 - c. M-AMP – Methamphetamines or Tik or Crystal Meth
 - d. OPI – Opiates – Heroin, Morphine
 - e. THC – Marijuana, Dagga

**Arrested Mental Development - According to Psychology Today, Collins English Dictionary and Emotional Intelligence Training, the term arrested development refers to the stoppage of physical development, emotional development or mental development before reaching adulthood.*



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INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT

I, _____ (Name of parent/guardian),

the custodial parent/guardian of _____ (print name of learner), am aware of and fully understand the Drug Policy of Stedin College and Primary School.

As the custodial parent/guardian of the above-named learner, I hereby agree that he/she will co-operate in providing a urine sample for the purposes of a drug test, whenever requested to do so, within the specification 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 in accordance with all privacy statutes and is a waiver of rights of non-disclosure of such records and results.

This consent will remain in effect for the duration of the time that the above-named learner is at Stedin College and Primary School.

Signature of Custodial parent/Guardian:

Date: _____