



BLOUBERG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

SOUTH AFRICA

Substance Abuse and Drug Testing Policy

This policy has been informed by the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 and Government Gazette, 13 December 2002, No. 24172.

This policy will be used in conjunction with Government Gazette, 19 September 2008, No. 31417.

Created: June 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. PREAMBLE**
- 2. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**
- 3. AREAS IN WHICH THIS POLICY APPLIES**
- 4. ROLE OF THE SCHOOL**
- 5. THE ABUSE OF SUBSTANCES**
- 6. CONFIDENTIALITY**
- 7. DRUG SEARCHES**
- 8. DOG SEARCHES**
- 9. DRUG TESTING**
- 10. USING ILLEGAL DRUGS AT SCHOOL**
- 11. DRUG DEALING**

1. Preamble

All South African schools were declared drug-free zones when the Regulations for Safety Measures at Public Schools (GG22754) was published in 2001. This means that no person may be found in possession of illegal drugs on school premises. This was reiterated in Government Gazette no. 24172, which states that the possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs, and the inappropriate possession, use or distribution of legal drugs is prohibited in South African schools.

As seen from the above, substance abuse is an unfortunate reality of the world in which we live. By means of this policy, Blouberg International School will attempt to deal with substance abuse in a responsible and constructive manner.

Blouberg International School views the possession, use and exchange of illegal drugs and related equipment, as well as the use and exchange of tobacco and alcohol in a serious light. Students found in contravention of this policy can expect to face disciplinary measures in line with the Code of Conduct. These may include, but are not limited to, suspension, expulsion and, where necessary, the handing over of the matter to the South African Police Services for investigation.

2. Statement of Principles

Blouberg International School acknowledges that most students do not use drugs. However, a wide variety of harmful substances are easily accessible to students in the broader community. Armed with this knowledge, the School endeavours to ensure a safe environment for all students (i.e. one that is free of harmful substances). To this end, the School is continuously seeking ways to encourage students to resist the temptation of experimenting with such substances.

The School will always endeavour to work together with parents/ guardians to ensure the very best for their children. Should a student be found to be misusing, abusing, or in possession of illegal substances, the School will seek to assist the student within its capacity to do so.

Dealing in, possession of, or the inappropriate use of alcohol, tobacco or potentially harmful substances, or the possession of drug-related equipment by any member of the School community will not be tolerated. This includes the use of products such as e-cigarettes and vape pens.

This policy serves to clarify the School's approach to the possession, use and exchange of illegal drugs and to give guidance to staff entrusted in implementing the policy, in order to ensure that incidents are well-managed and of benefit to the student/s involved.

3. Areas in which this policy applies

This policy applies in full to any student:

- On the School premises
- Participating in or attending any activity organised by Blouberg International School
- Participating in or attending any school-related activity
- Commuting to or from school or any of the aforementioned activities
- Whenever a student represents the School or can be identified as a member of the School.

4. Role of the school

Blouberg International School will endeavour to empower students and staff by presenting useful information regarding substance abuse. Information presented to students will be age-appropriate.

Should the need arise, the School will supply information about support structures to parents/ guardians. An on-campus counselling service will be made available to students. The involvement of outside organisations on a consultative basis may also be arranged as appropriate.

5. The Abuse of Substances

With the exception of medication prescribed by a medical practitioner, the use of mood-altering or habit-forming substances by students is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

Students may not:

- Use, possess or deal in prohibited substances. Such substances include, but are not limited to, dagga/marijuana/cannabis (and related by-products), ecstasy, cocaine, heroin.
- Use or possess prescribed or over-the-counter medicines in an inappropriate manner
- Possess solvents, inhalants or other chemical agents, or use these inappropriately
- Use or possess tobacco, alcohol or other drugs, including e-cigarettes
- Use or possess drug-related equipment (e.g. cigarette lighters)
- Use or possess performance enhancing substances
- Be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs
- Consume alcoholic beverages.

The School has a responsibility to intervene if a student's substance abuse outside School influences his/her health, achievement, behaviour or attendance. The School will also intervene if such actions are likely to influence other students.

6. Confidentiality

Staff have a legal obligation to inform the parents/ guardian of the student/s involved if a student discloses to a them that they or another student are involved with or dealing in substances.

A student finding him/herself involved in substance abuse may use the services of the School counsellor. In line with the ethics of the counselling profession, the school counsellor will not always be at liberty to disclose the contents of these sessions to staff or parents/guardians.

Blouberg International School reserves the right to inform the school community of any situation involving transgressions of the Code of Conduct if deemed so necessary. This includes the possession, exchange or abuse of substances. Should such circumstances arise, the school will strive to protect the privacy and dignity of the student/s concerned.

7. Drug Searches

Random drug searches of individual students are prohibited. However, a search may be carried out if it forms part of a structured intervention and is conducted in a reasonable manner, and there is reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of a prohibited substance. Should such a search be necessary, it needs to take place in the presence of the student and a support person of his/her choice, as well as an adult witness of the same gender.

8. Dog Searches

Dog searches of high school students, their lockers and classrooms may be carried out periodically as a deterrent. No advanced warning of such a search will be given to students. Any student found with drugs in their possession will be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

9. Drug Testing

Random drug testing is not permitted. A drug test may, however, be conducted where there is a reasonable suspicion that a student is using drugs. The test must be conducted by the Principal or his/her delegate.

A student may be tested at random if such a request is made by his/her parent/ guardian. This will only be done if a student displays and behaviour that may be indicative of drug use, or if a fair and reasonable suspicion has been established. The School will respond as detailed in this policy and the Code of Conduct if the test reveals evidence of substance abuse or if direct evidence of substance abuse is presented (e.g. parents find illegal drugs at home).

Should a student refuse to be tested, this will be viewed as an admission of guilt, unless there is a reasonable and irretrievable reason for this rejection. The student will be asked to leave the School and may not return until an independent, negative test result is produced. The School cannot be held accountable for any potentially dangerous behaviour.

9.1. Procedure if a student tests positive for drug use

- The student's parent/ guardian will be notified immediately and asked to remove the student from the premises.
- The student will be required to enrol in a drug rehabilitation outpatient's programme. The student will only be readmitted to class once the School has received written enrolment in such a programme. The suspension of any student who tests positive for drug use remains at the discretion of the Principal.
- If the School requires reports as part of a relapse prevention programme, these must be furnished, with the student's written permission and solicited in the presence of their parent/guardian if the student is a minor, to a designated and trained staff member. Should a student refuse to cooperate, their enrolment will be terminated and their school fees forfeit.
- The student will be required to be re-tested six (6) weeks after the initial test was conducted. Should this test be positive, it will be assumed that the student's substance abuse problem is of such a severe nature that full-time enrolment in a drug rehabilitation programme is required. The student's enrolment at the School will be terminated and their school fees for the term will be forfeit.
- The student will not be permitted to attend any field trips or after school activities until a negative test result is produced.

10. Using Illegal Drugs at School

The School will respond as detailed in this policy and the Code of Conduct if direct evidence of substance abuse is presented (e.g. a student is caught abusing substances at School).

11. Drug Dealing

Drug dealing is a criminal offence. Any student found dealing in drugs will be suspended with immediate effect. Any criminal evidence will be reported to the South African Police Service.