
STUDENT FRIENDLY

PASTORAL

POLICIES

Student Friendly Policies

		Page
1.	Alcohol	3
2.	Bullying and harassment	5
3.	Confidentiality and Consent re medical care	9
4.	Depression	11
5.	Drugs	13
6.	Eating disorders	15
7.	Medications	17
8.	Self Harm	18
9.	Sexual assault	21
10.	Smoking	25

Alcohol

The school recognises that drinking alcohol is widely accepted in the teenage community and in many cases allowed by parents. Some parents introduce alcohol to their young adolescents in the hope that this will encourage sensible social drinking. Research shows clearly that this is not sensible for such increases the likelihood of these people having drinking problems. Australian youth have a much higher rate of underage drinking than other countries, and most older teenagers regard alcohol as an essential part of having fun socially and at parties.

Alcohol, especially binge drinking, drunken behaviour and addiction, is considered a bigger problem for young people and for adults than drugs. This can have a significant effect on relationships.

The main dangers of alcohol relate to binge drinking and drunken behaviour. Chronic alcoholism (addiction) is common in Australia, involving about 10% of adults, and most developed this addiction in teenage years. Another concern is that starting to drink alcohol in early teenage leads to a higher risk of serious binge drinking later. Regular drinking may interfere with study and lead to drug use.

For these reasons, alcohol is not allowed at school, and students should not return to school under the influence of alcohol, even if the drinking was off campus.

What can you do if you are worried about your drinking?

- Talk to your friends: What kind of a drunk are you? Are you violent? Do you do bad things that you are later ashamed about? Do you tend to take serious risks?
- Consider: Are you becoming too dependent on alcohol?
- Ask yourself – Why do you drink? Is it just because your friends do? Does it cheer you up? Does it give you a good image? Are you getting too fond of it?
- Talk to an adult you trust – your Head of House, your parents. They would want to help you and support you if you are trying to make changes in your use of alcohol.
- This is a health matter and you could discuss this with a counsellor or nurse or doctor. This is nothing to be ashamed about. It may avoid a lot of trouble later on.
- Discuss access to alcohol with your parents and friends, especially at parties.

What should you do if you are worried about someone's drinking behaviour?

- Talk to them about it. This is a matter of health and safety and well being, not morals.
- Consider how you might be able to discourage their drinking, particularly getting drunk, at parties and when you are out together. Set a good example yourself.
- Discuss reasons to cut down drinking. It might improve social relationships, study and sporting ability.
- If you think that their drinking is to cover up more serious problems like depression or social difficulties, you should consider talking in confidence about your concerns with someone you trust: a staff member, a nurse or counsellor. You can do this without revealing their name and your own confidentiality would be respected.

What will the school do if it is aware that someone is drinking at school or returning under the influence of alcohol, or has alcohol in their possession at school?

- This would initially be regarded as a disciplinary matter and the school may impose consequences as a deterrent to further use.

- The school may give a student a breathalyser test if there is any suspicion of drinking. A positive test could lead to disciplinary consequences including suspension.
- If you come back to school affected by alcohol, your parents may be informed and you may be asked to return home.
- Repeated incidents of alcohol use at school or evidence of excessive drinking could be a health problem and would lead to discussion with parents. The student may be referred for medical assessment to consider how serious the problem was and what could be done to help the student overcome it.

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT LAWS

Alcohol and young people – the law

- *“From 1 November 2011 it will be against Victorian law to serve alcohol in a private home to anyone under 18, unless their parents or guardians have given permission.*
- *Adults who break the new law face fines of more than \$7,000 – the same amount a licensee would be fined for selling alcohol to a minor. The law still allows parents and guardians to serve alcohol to their own underage children in a private home.*
- *The new law will be a part of the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 (The LCRA), which also regulates the sale of alcohol in all licensed premises such as bottle shops, pubs and clubs to people under 18. The part of the law that covers the sale of alcohol to minors by licensees will not change.*
- *The LCRA prohibits the supply of alcohol to minors in most circumstances. Minors are also prohibited from possessing and consuming alcohol in most circumstances.*

Why change the law?

- *The new law governing the supply of alcohol to minors in private homes is designed to give parents and guardians greater control over when, where and whether their children drink alcohol. It also responds directly to community concerns about the substantial harm that alcohol causes to young Victorians and their families every year.*
- *In fact, a 2009 Vic Health survey revealed 87 per cent of Victorians support the new law, and parents and guardians were even more likely to agree with the law (91 percent).*
- *This change is just one of the number of policy and legislative initiatives being introduced by the Victorian Government designed to reduce harmful alcohol consumption in Victoria.*

How will this be enforced?

- *The law will be enforced where the police have evidence that it has been broken. It’s important to remember that the laws about minors and alcohol are complicated. Often, situations in which the laws may have been broken are emotional and tense, such as after a minor has been injured as a result of alcohol consumption.*

Getting permission from parents and guardians

- *Anyone who plans to supply alcohol to a minor in their home will need to get permission from the young person’s parent or legal guardian.*
- *Permission can be given verbally or in writing – but the person who will supply the alcohol needs to be very confident that they have the permission they need from the parent responsible. This is because if there is a question about whether permission had been given, the person who supplied the alcohol will need to prove that they had permission.*
- *And even when adults have permission from other parents or guardians to supply alcohol, other obligations – such as their legal duty of care – still mean that they must supply alcohol responsibly.*

(www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/teendrinkinglaw)

Bullying and harassment

Bullying occurs at all ages and places, involving children and adults, at school, at sport, in families and at work. It refers to any behaviour that deliberately causes emotional, social or physical harm to someone else. It is common for the bully to do this as a means of exercising power over someone who seems weaker and more likely to be hurt. It is worse if it is done frequently and repeatedly, and if done against a student by a group. Sometimes bullying can be subtle, done as a joke rather than deliberately meant to hurt.

Many bullies are people who have been bullied themselves, and are unsure of their place in the social world of childhood and adolescence. Bullying is usually meant to hurt or humiliate, but sometimes people who bully others are unaware of how much pain they are causing. Some do it for fun, giving little thought for the victim. Some justify it on the grounds that the victim deserves it. Many bullies are emotionally disturbed and may need counselling and help themselves.

Repeated bullying often leads to unhappiness, humiliation, loss of confidence and distress in trying to cope with it. Sometimes strategies that were suggested by people trying to help prove unsuccessful. This may make it even more frustrating for the person being bullied.

The school has a policy of fostering positive relationships between students and staff. It expects people to treat each other with kindness, courtesy and respect so that they feel safe.

The school takes bullying and harassment very seriously and encourages students to report it when it occurs. When it does occur, the staff will work together with the student community to resolve complaints promptly and fairly.

What is bullying or harassment?

There are many forms of bullying or harassment. They may be verbal, cyber, physical or social, including forcing someone to do something against their will. These include:

Verbal or visual bullying

- Putting people down through comments, jokes or mimicking
- Name calling
- Teasing about someone's appearance or beliefs or family.
- Derogatory comments on race, culture, sexuality, socio-economic status or individual difference.
- Intimidation or teasing directed towards a person with different or lesser abilities.
- Intimidating or harassing telephone calls and emails.
- Forcing people to do things for the bully. This can sometimes be a form of blackmail.
- Hurtful practical jokes.
- Writing offensive notes, letters or graffiti
- Intimidating, annoying or humiliating gestures and facial expressions
- Displaying offensive materials, photos, pictures or objects
- Spreading rumours verbally or by any other means.

- Repeated threats.

Cyber bullying (refer to Cyber Safety Policy)

- Offensive use of Email, mobile phone, texting, MSN, internet or other technology, whether directed to the victim or to others about the victim.

Physical bullying

- Pushing, tripping, hitting, pinching, kicking or other physical contact to humiliate or hurt
- Unwelcome touching or brushing against someone
- Damaging, stealing, hiding or destroying another's property or possessions.
- Invasion of personal space or property. This includes going through personal belongings, eating food belonging to someone for their own consumption, borrowing without permission, listening into phone conversations.
- Any form of sexual abuse or assault or unwanted sexual activity. (See Sexual Abuse Policy)

Social and relationship

- Repeated and deliberate exclusion from games, group activities, friendship groups or social activities.
- Hurting someone by damaging or manipulating relationships through rumour or spreading notes or pressure on others leading to rejection.
- Telling others not to associate with or like someone.
- Intimidation, extortion or making someone do something they aren't comfortable with.
- Stalking

Extortion

Pressuring and intimidating someone to act against their will. This includes giving up possessions or money, buying food or drink for bribery, doing work for others or committing offences.

Not all fights and arguments between students amount to bullying behaviour. The key factors are the intention to humiliate or hurt, whether the behaviour is repetitive or in a group and whether it represents someone exercising power over another.

What can you do if you are being bullied or harassed?

- You may be able to tell the bully that you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop. Sometimes it is helpful for them to understand how someone feels to be bullied. This could be helpful if they didn't really mean to be cruel.
- Check if you are doing something that encourages the bully. If it is just one person, remember that bullies thrive on a reaction from their victim. Perhaps you can agree with what they say and then laugh it off.
- Don't try to handle this alone. Bullies, especially when they act in groups, are often rather powerful in a school situation. Sometimes they deny to others, including their parents and

staff, that they are doing the bullying. They may say that you deserved it. No-one deserves to be bullied.

- Discuss this with a friend. They will want to support you and their friendship may help overcome the harm of a bully.
- Talk about it to other students you get on with in the unit at Timbertop or your House at Corio. Someone might be able to persuade the bullies to change their ways.
- Tell your parents about it. They may have some good ideas on what to do, and they will support you and help you cope. They may inform the school staff about what is happening and they should do so if it doesn't stop.
- Talk to a member of staff about it. You may feel most comfortable talking to a counsellor, chaplain or other member of staff for advice and strategies to cope.
- Don't forget that your Head of House (or Head of Unit at Timbertop) or Director of Student Welfare are in the best position to deal with bullying and harassment by involving those who are doing it. They will want to help so you should talk to them about it.
- Don't retaliate by spreading rumours about the bully.

What should you do if you are aware that someone is being bullied or harassed?

- Remember that bullying and harassment are antisocial and can affect the whole school community, not just the person being bullied.
- You may be able to help the person being bullied by friendship and support. This is especially important if the bullying takes the form of exclusion from the group.
- Talk to the students who are bullying. You may be able to give them some understanding that this is unfair, anti-social and unacceptable in a school community. This is especially important if you yourself feel able to confront the bully. Some students feel secure from bullying and have a responsibility for others less sure of themselves and more vulnerable.
- Talk to the person being bullied. You could persuade them to seek advice from a counsellor or help from their Head of House.
- Discuss this with your friends who are not being bullied. As a group you may be in the best position to stop the bullying.
- If the bullying persists or is seriously affecting the student, you should talk to a member of staff about your concerns. In many cases only intervention by staff can resolve the bullying behaviour. Don't be put off thinking this is dobbing on someone: it is doing the

right thing by helping the person being bullied and for the benefit of the whole school community. It may not always be necessary to name or blame the bully.

- Serious cyberspace or any form of electronic harassment should be reported immediately. It can cause great harm and it may be almost impossible for the people affected to defend themselves.
- Sometimes it may appear that a teacher is inadvertently making the bullying worse by putting the student down in class. Talk to a member of staff about this.

What will the school do if a student is being bullied?

- The school will take any report of bullying very seriously. The response will vary according to how serious the bullying is, and whether it has continued after previous efforts to help have failed.
- Any staff member who has been approached will listen and try to understand.
- They might help you to see if there is anything you can do yourself to help the situation
- They may speak to the people concerned and tell those who are bullying that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- They may offer counselling to both the bullied and the bully.
- They may involve parents, students and other members of staff where appropriate.
- They may advise the bully about the likely consequences if their harassment continues.
- They may take disciplinary action where it seems appropriate, particularly if it is deliberate and causes great distress to the victim.
- The School will do all it can to repair relationships disturbed or fractured by harmful activity and will assist each student involved in this process. Parents may also be involved in this relationship reparation exercise.

The Principal

Confidentiality and consent

Your medical record at school is confidential. It will include information provided by your parents and yourself as well as notes recorded by health staff. Your medical file is kept securely and only seen by nurses, doctors and counsellors who are responsible for your health.

Information needed by staff. There are some medical conditions however, where some information has to be given to all staff responsible for your care and safety. Examples include asthma, diabetes, a severe bee-sting or food allergy, injuries and illness that may affect sport or study. It is especially important for staff responsible for you when you are off campus on a sporting event, tour or camp.

Confidential information for Head of House. There are some health problems and treatments that only your Head of House or Unit and House Assistant need to know about. Examples include daily medications for ADHD, acne treatment, epilepsy or for depression. It is school policy that your Head of House or Head of Unit is fully informed about medical matters as they are looking after you on behalf of your parents while you are boarding/day boarding at school.

Sensitive and very private information. There are other conditions that only the medical staff needs to know about. Examples include family illness that may affect your own health, sexually transmitted disease and some emotional illnesses. Very private information may be kept separate from your medical record and can only be seen in special situations when necessary for your well being. Examples include a past history of sexual abuse, concerns about sexuality, drug use, including inclusion on the drug programme.

Your right to see your record. You have the right to see your medical record if you want to, but no-one else does, except in very rare cases when your record may be required (subpoenaed) for legal purposes. Sometimes information is given by parents or staff or friends that you would find very upsetting, in which case it might be thought best for you not to see the record at that time.

Informing parents and others. The school doctors and nurses try to keep your parents fully informed about your health and any treatment you are having. Parents are informed about consultations by the visiting doctors unless you specially ask them not to. Sporting and other injuries must be reported by law to the State Department of Human Services under work safety regulations. The school may pass on information with your permission to your own general practitioner or specialist. It is wise for your GP to know about all important health matters and treatments you have needed, including vaccinations and any bad or allergic reactions you may have had with prescribed medication.

Senior school students can state that they do not want parents to see their file or hear about their medical treatment. This would not apply if there was a life threatening or serious illness or potentially risky treatment and the school would always encourage you to tell your parents about your health for your benefit and their peace of mind.

Your medical file belongs to the school and is stored safely after you leave, at least until you reach the age of 25. Present policy is that it is kept indefinitely in case you may need to refer to it in the future.

Consent for treatment. If a nurse or doctor considered that you needed treatment for an illness or injury, they would normally discuss this with your parents first, unless it was an emergency or important to do at once. They would of course also discuss this with you and seek your permission for the treatment. This might involve antibiotics, minor surgical treatment (e.g. stitching up a cut) or referral for an X-ray or blood test, to see a physiotherapist or specialist.

Underage consent without parental knowledge. Normally any treatment at school would only be provided if both parents agreed to it. There are general ethical considerations for doctors about a young person giving consent for treatment, or refusing to have it. If you are adamant that you don't want your parents involved, and the doctor considers you are sensible and mature enough to understand about your health and any suggested treatment, you may be able to give consent yourself to treatment. This would not be considered appropriate for younger students in Middle school or at Timbertop, nor would it be considered appropriate if the illness or treatment was very serious or life-threatening. It is particularly a concern for someone needing treatment for sexually transmitted infection and for girls who request the contraceptive pill or the morning-after pill.

In general, senior students can state that parents are not to be informed about the contraceptive pill, the morning after pill and in most cases treatment for sexually transmitted infections.

This would be between you and your doctor. Clearly the school would normally want your parents to know and consent to any treatment given at school.

The Principal

Depression

Everyone is unhappy sometimes. Sadness and grieving is natural after bad events, especially when it involves loss of family member or friend. This is normal and friends and family usually prove to be the best people to support and provide comfort.

Sometimes a person may be persistently unhappy for many weeks or months. This is what we mean by being depressed or having depression. Sometimes people may be depressed even when there has been no obvious reason for this. This may be due to a serious emotional or mental health disorder, when it may be true medical depression. This is quite common in young people and often there are other members of the family who have also suffered depression, so it may have a genetic or inherited basis. There are other possible causes including overwhelming stress and drug use.

Sometimes depressed people may have outbursts of anger, or may become anxious. They may be tired during the day but have difficulty in sleeping at night. They may lose interest in sport and social activities or perform well below ability in school work. They may lose confidence in themselves, feel they are no good, lack motivation, feel nothing is worth while.

When this occurs there is often nothing a person can do about it without help. It is nothing to be ashamed about, and it is not the person's fault. Depression can be overcome with professional help, whether through counselling therapy alone or with medication.

What can you do if you feel that you are depressed or very anxious?

- Recognise it can happen to anyone, it is not your fault and nothing to be ashamed about.
- Seek help. Tell your parents, your Head of House or Unit, someone you trust, a nurse or counsellor at Kennedy Centre or the San at Timbertop. They will want to help.
- Don't delay getting help. The sooner you start the sooner you will feel better.

What should you do if you are worried that someone you know may be depressed?

- Talk to them about it. Support them when they need it.
- Be understanding and give them space to think things through.
- Discuss with your friends the best way to help the person. Friends are often the best people to help someone who is very sad, but there is a limit to what they can do if the person is truly depressed.

- Encourage them to seek help. Advise them that they should see a counsellor or nurse or doctor.
- If the person does not seek help and you are still concerned about their welfare, discuss this with your Head of House or Head of Unit at Timbertop. Sometimes friends in the House or Unit are the first people to know that something is wrong and can get help early rather than waiting for matters to get worse.

What will the school do if it is aware that someone is depressed?

- A staff member would talk to the student about getting help.
- The student would be encouraged to see a counsellor or doctor. In some cases if the problem appeared serious but they didn't want to go, they may be required to do so.
- The matter would be kept confidential, but parents would be informed if the depression seemed serious. This would be done after discussion with the student, taking their wishes into account.
- The safety of the student is always the first consideration.
- If the problem could not be quickly resolved in the School environment and the student needed ongoing therapy, the question of returning home to receive this treatment would be considered. In that case, the student would return to school when an assessment indicated that it was best for the student to return and that any help needed could be given as a Boarder.

The Principal

Drugs

These include illegal drugs such as cannabis (marijuana, chuff, dope) amphetamines (speed, Ice, ecstasy) cocaine, GHB, LSD (Acid), magic mushrooms, and others, as well as abusing some legal medical drugs that may be supplied illegally, or taking them excessively or having them for the wrong purpose when they are not needed. These include steroids, valium and many others.

The school has a strong policy on drugs. This is because such drugs can cause harm to the health and well being of students, both in their day to day life and in the long term. For example, regular use of cannabis can cause reduced ability to study, lead to loss of motivation and has other harmful effects including becoming paranoid. Use of drugs may have a bad effect on a person's family and on those around them.

It is particularly dangerous to start using drugs when you are young due to immaturity of the brain. Research in Australia for example, has shown that young teenagers who smoke cannabis may develop depression later in teenage years. Cannabis can cause psychosis (schizophrenia) and may lead to addiction, both to cannabis itself and to stronger drugs like heroin.

Most students are aware of these bad effects of drugs (though they may think it would not happen to them). Knowing this however, may not stop some from trying them and even using them frequently. The drug policy is designed to discourage any use, and for those who have tried a drug, to prevent further use and becoming dependant on the drug or addicted to it.

What can you do if you are worried about your own use of drugs?

- Talk to your friends about it. They will probably encourage you to stop and want to help by not sharing drugs with you or using them near you.
- Talk to an adult you trust. This is a health matter, and staff as well as nurses, counsellors and doctors would want to help you.
- Talk to your parents about it if you can. They may be worried or shocked but they will certainly want to help. They may suspect you are using drugs and it will be a relief to talk to you about it.
- Decide that you really can give up. You may need help to do so.
- If you do decide to stop, pick a date to stop. Let your friends know this. Discuss this with your parents and doctor or counsellor.
- Decide how you will do it. It could be very difficult if you do it alone, but much easier with help.

What should you do if you are concerned about someone using drugs?

- Talk to them about it. They may need or want someone to discuss this with someone else and would be more prepared to listen to a friend than an adult.
- Make sure that no-one encourages them in their use of drugs, especially when drinking or at parties.
- Encourage them to ask for help, perhaps from a counsellor or doctor.

- If you do think it is a serious problem and the person seems unable or unwilling to stop, consider sharing your concern with a member of staff or a nurse or doctor. You may not need to give the student's name.

What will the school do if a student is found to have used drugs or is strongly suspected?

- The Head of Campus will discuss this with you.
- You will probably be required to do a urine test to check if you have been using any drugs recently. This is a condition on being at school and has been approved by your parents when you entered the school
- Your parents would normally be informed if you are required to do a urine test.
- The test will be normally be supervised by Kennedy at Corio or the San at Timbertop. This is done in confidence, the results going to the School doctor only. The doctor would then inform you, the Head of Campus and the Director of Student Welfare of the result. The test result would not be recorded in your Medical file.
- If the test is positive or if there is no doubt that you have used a drug, you may be asked to return home to discuss this with your parents.
- You would be placed on probation when you return to school
- You will be referred to the Head of Campus or his delegate who will meet you (and your parents if you agree and they would like) to clarify whether you need help to stop using the drug. If so you would be encouraged and offered help. This now becomes a health rather than a disciplinary matter.
- You would be put on the school drug testing programme. This involves testing urine randomly (you can never tell in advance when you will be asked to do a test, so it's never safe to use a drug). This is supervised by Kennedy or the Timbertop San. The result of the test goes to the School doctor, so it is confidential. If the test is positive you will be told first and then the Director of Student Welfare will be informed.
- The consequence of a positive test while on the programme is the decision of the Principal and may involve suspension or leaving the school.
- You should regard the drug testing programme as being designed to help you to remain at school and to keep off drugs. It is a powerful way to help you refuse drugs (rather like the threat of the booze bus for P platers) and an opportunity to discuss any difficulties with the School Counsellor or others who would be able to help.

What will the school do if a student is found to be dealing in drugs at school?

- The school will expel the student. Dealing in drugs is regarded as antisocial and destructive to the school community and harmful to students who are supplied with the drugs.

The Principal

Eating disorders

Many young people feel that their body shape is not ideal. Most girls would like to be slimmer, even those who are already too thin. Many boys would like to have bigger muscle development, even those who have perfectly normal well developed bodies.

This explains why many young people decide to diet, hoping to improve their body appearance. They may seriously reduce calories, rely largely on vegetables for food, cutting down on fats or carbohydrates. They often feel this is “healthy eating” and even be encouraged to continue by their parents.

This can lead to unbalanced nutrition and a good deal of unhappiness and frustration. Teenagers need a very high energy intake from food, but magazines and the media tend to scare us into thinking we are becoming obese and promote dieting by what they call healthy eating. They sometimes do more harm than good. Dieting is NOT healthy eating unless supervised by a dietician for a specific health disorder.

Fortunately few people keep up this unhealthy and unbalanced diet for long, and most soon give up. A few people however are very happy with their weight loss and become obsessed with it, wanting to lose more and more. Progressive weight loss may ultimately lead to the state of anorexia and severe ill health. Some people do other things to maintain weight loss like secret vomiting or taking laxatives to cause diarrhoea (but neither of these work and can be dangerous). It is common for such people to exercise excessively to burn up calories.

The longer this dieting behaviour goes on, the harder it is to stop : it is like an addiction.

Some people cover up their weight loss with baggy clothes and hide food rather than eat it. Friends often know this is happening before parents or school staff suspect it, and worry about how to help.

What can you do if you are worried about yourself?

- This is a health matter and the sooner you get help, the sooner you will get better. Don't delay talking to someone about it.
- Talk to someone you trust. Your friends may be worried about you and want to help, but are not sure what to do. They will probably be relieved to know that you are doing something about it
- A friend may help you to talk to a member of staff or a nurse.
- You should talk to your parents. They will probably suspect something is worrying you but may not know what it is. They will certainly want to help you.
- You may find it easiest to talk to a nurse or doctor or counsellor first, but you must be prepared to talk to your Head of House or Head of Unit as they will want to make sure you are alright.
- It is very hard to break a diet habit. Nurses and doctors understand how difficult it is, so don't feel bad about it. Remember you are not alone.

What should you do if you know someone is eating very little or vomiting and losing weight?

- You are probably in the best position to help a friend in this situation, and your help may be an essential first step for your friend to get better.
- You should talk to a member of staff, preferably the Head of House or Unit about your concern. Do this as soon as possible.
- You should tell your friend that you are going to speak to someone about your concern. Your friend will probably plead with you not to, or even get angry, saying that there is nothing wrong with them. That is a common reaction and shouldn't put you off. At least you have been honest with your friend and are acting to help them.
- If you feel more comfortable to speak to a nurse or doctor you can do so in confidence. However, if there is a serious problem of dieting or vomiting, it is essential for the Head of House or Unit and Head of Campus to know about it to make sure the person is well looked after. The nurse or doctor would inform whoever needs to know.
- You may find it helpful to know something about anorexia if you are to help your friend. Seek advice yourself about it from a nurse or doctor. It is a dangerous condition if left untreated.

What will the school do if someone is dieting excessively or vomiting or losing weight?

- Any member of staff who hears that someone is eating very little and losing weight or who is vomiting will take this very seriously and respond promptly.
- Head of House, Director of Student Welfare at Corio or Head of Unit and Head of Campus at Timbertop will be told so that they can ensure the student is well cared for.
- The student's confidentiality will be respected but protecting their health comes first.
- The student will be told of the concerns for their health and the need to have a medical assessment.
- Parents will be informed about the school's concerns.
- The school will arrange (or ask the parents to arrange) a medical assessment to check if there is a serious health problem.
- After this assessment, and in discussion with the parents, a decision will be made whether the student should stay at home for care or whether the school can provide the necessary care as a boarder.
- If a decision is made that it is safe for the student to return to boarding, a plan will be made that includes a meal plan, an activities and sport plan and a decision on what staff will be responsible for supervising these plans, providing any counselling, and monitoring progress. These arrangements will be discussed with the student and parents. The Head of House will be kept informed about progress.
- If a decision is made that the student could not be looked after as a boarder, parents would arrange treatment. Return to school will depend on further assessment when the student's doctor and parents feel that there has been improvement in health and eating behaviour with no vomiting.

The Principal

Medications

The school has a policy on medications to make sure they are taken as needed and not misused. The policy varies with the type of medication.

Medications that may be needed at any time for immediate use. These include asthma puffer, Epipen.

If you have asthma and may get an attack when you are away from your House, you should carry your puffer. If you have an Epipen for a bad allergic reaction you must carry it with you at all times. Tell the nurse at Kennedy or San that you have these essential medications. Your parents are required to provide an action plan for these conditions to ensure you are safe at all times.

Medications that need to be taken regularly for a serious medical condition. These include insulin, asthma preventatives, epilepsy medication. Most older students would keep their medication in their possession and be responsible for it, but younger students may need supervision by the House Assistant.

Medications that should be taken regularly for a medical condition but may be easily forgotten or perhaps misused. These include antibiotics for an acute infection, acne medication, Ritalin or dexamphetamine, medication for depression. These may be held by the House Assistant or nurse at Timbertop and you would be expected to ask for it, or she might chase you up if you forget. Some people at any age tend to be forgetful, but older and reliable students may arrange to take responsibility themselves.

Medications that may be needed only from time to time. These include pain killers such as Panadol or Nurofen, migraine medication, antihistamines. These are held by the House Assistant or nurse at Timbertop, to be provided as needed. This rule has been made because there have been cases of misuse, including hoarding and overdose by other students. You could ask if you could carry just one dose in case you need it in a hurry (e.g. at start of a migraine attack) but you must never hoard medications.

Special cases. These may include self prescribed “over the counter” medications like cold and cough medicines. If you have brought these medications into the school, you should be discuss these with the nurse at Kennedy or at Timbertop. She would want to know about them to ensure safety. In most cases you would be expected to take responsibility for these medications yourself.

“Health” and herbal remedies. These include a large range of pills including vitamins and mineral supplements and other remedies. Some may have been prescribed by a doctor or Chinese herbalist or health shop, some provided by parents. Many are harmless, some are not, others interact with prescribed medications which the student may need while at school. Being labelled “Natural” doesn’t mean they don’t contain powerful chemicals found in some plants, so it is important that the nurses and doctors know if you are taking these substances.

If you or your parents want you to have these remedies while boarding at school, you should be discuss them with the nurse at Kennedy or at the San at Timbertop. In most cases the responsibility for taking these remedies will rest with you.

The Principal

Self Harm

Self harm means deliberately injuring oneself. It may also include overdosing on drugs or medications or putting one's life at risk in other ways. Sometimes it is just foolishness or a sign of anger, but it can be a warning sign of deep distress.

Self harm is most often done by cutting or scratching, especially on the arm, but also may involve burns, self-made tattoos or punching hard objects. There are many reasons why someone may do this, but it is usually in anger or frustration. It may be a sign of needing help. Occasionally someone who is severely depressed will harm themselves.

Sometimes people do it secretly in groups when someone may be influenced by friends to do it. This may be called "copy-cat behaviour."

Self harm usually leads to distress or lack of trust amongst friends who become upset that someone would do this, or perhaps carry out even more serious injury.

Occasionally people may later cut themselves deeply and repeatedly or go on to do something much more serious including attempting suicide.

It is for these reasons that even though the person may not mean to injure themselves badly, it must be taken seriously by the school and by other students.

What can you do if you worried about harming yourself?

- It may take courage to seek help, but do it. Staff members will understand and want to help.
- Talk to someone you trust. It is best to talk to a member of staff, or a nurse or counsellor.
- Don't hide it from your parents; they will want to help you even if they are worried when they find out.
- Resist persuasion from friends who may suggest you join them in cutting.
- Don't forget that cutting may cause scars, and cuts may become infected. If you share a blade, you run the risk of blood transmitted serious infection.

What should you do if you know someone is self-harming or thinking of it?

- Talk to a staff member, preferably someone senior, Head of Unit or House, Head of Campus, Director of Student Welfare, or a nurse about your concern. This is seldom a matter that can be resolved amongst friends, and the person does need help. Perhaps two or three of you might go together to share the responsibility.
- Tell the person who is self harming that they should seek help from staff at school, or from parents. Offer to go with them to support them.
- Tell the person self harming that you must tell a staff member for their own sake and also for the school community.

- Don't discuss this with other students.

What will the school do if it is aware that someone has self –harmed?

- The Head of Campus will be immediately informed about this.
- The first response will be to make sure that the student receives any medical attention needed.
- The most important consideration is to make sure the student remains safe.
- Other students, particularly in the same Unit or House, are often affected when another student harms themselves. They would be reassured and supported and offered counselling.
- Parents will be informed and the student will return home as soon as possible so that their family can be involved.
- Arrangements will be made to assess why the student self harmed, what help they may need and whether there is risk of further self harm. Sometimes this can be done quickly and the student may return to school immediately. It is recognised that friends can be very supportive.
- The decision when to return to school will be made by the Head of Campus after discussion with the student's parents. This decision would be based on the assessment that the student is safe to return to school, whether they can receive the help they may need there and how this may affect other students in their unit or boarding house. The welfare of all students would be taken into account.
- A 'Return to School Plan' would be established by the Chief Medical Officer, The Director of Student Welfare (Corio/Timbertop) or Head of Campus, in conjunction with Head of House (at Corio) a Head of Unit (at Timbertop) prior to the student returning to School. A student may not return until this plan is approved by the Head of Campus. This is to ensure safety.
- Occasionally the incident has been so severe or upsetting for others that it may be unwise for the student to return to school.
- (The School reserves the right to determine if a student is to return.)

The Principal

Sexual assault

The school has a very clear policy on what to do if someone has been sexually assaulted. This is to make sure that the student is cared for properly and protected from any further harm. This applies to both boys and girls and whether the assault has come from another student or an adult at school, and also from someone outside the school. It applies whether it has occurred at school or off campus.

What is meant by sexual assault and rape?

- Sexual assault is any physical act or verbal harassment of a sexual nature that is unwanted or may cause emotional or physical harm or damage to social relationships.
- In addition to penetrative sex, it includes unwanted touching or kissing, genital exposure, being forced to view pornography, as well as sexual teasing or verbal and cyber harassment by MSN, texting Email or photographs.
- Even sexual behaviour which starts off with mutual acceptance and pleasure, but goes too far and exceeds what one or other partner had wanted, or if it goes on after one partner wants to stop, could be regarded as sexual assault or rape.
- Any sexual activity involving someone who is under the age of 18 and the other is either more than two years younger or two years older is regarded in law as rape by the older person, even if it was by mutual consent.
- Sexual activity when a victim is drunk or on drugs may be regarded as rape or sexual assault, even if the person seems to have agreed to it at the time.
- Spiking drinks for any reason, and especially for sexual reasons, is a very serious crime.

What can you do if you have been assaulted (or even if you think you may have been assaulted)?

- You should not feel ashamed or guilty.
- You must tell someone about it as soon as possible. The longer you leave it the harder it will be to tell someone or do something about it.
- You should tell someone you trust. Perhaps the first person you feel comfortable to talk to would be a friend, but you really need to talk to an adult and don't forget you can talk to any staff member. A friend may help you to talk to an adult who is in the best position to respond.

- If there has been sexual penetration (e.g. mouth or genital) you may need to have tests for infection. These should be done as soon as possible: then you won't need to worry about this. If there is any possibility of getting pregnant, see a nurse at the medical centre without any delay. A nurse or a doctor can be very helpful and understanding. They would respect your confidentiality.
- When you have told a responsible staff member, they will make sure you are looked after and tell you what needs to be done to help you.
- The school wants to make sure you are alright and well cared for. It wants to make sure you are safe. Any action against the person who abused you, depending on whether you are at further risk, is secondary to this.

What could you do if you are worried that you may have assaulted someone?

- You should talk to someone you trust, especially a counsellor or nurse or doctor. They would treat this as confidential. They may be able to reassure you or suggest the best way to resolve the situation.
- You may be able to talk to the person you feel you may have abused. This may make you both feel better about the incident.
- You may learn from this how to treat others with care and respect in future.

What should you do if you suspect or know someone who may have been assaulted?

- It is everyone's responsibility to help each other at school, especially if they are in trouble. This is so, whether you are friends or not.
- You should encourage the person who may have been assaulted to talk a member of staff about it.
- You may be able to help them to do so by going with them to support them.
- If they don't go, you should discuss your concerns with a responsible member of staff.
- You don't have to say who was responsible for the assault.
- This is not dobbing, it is supporting a member of the school community.
- If you suspect something has happened but cannot approach the student about it, you could discuss this with a responsible member of staff.
- If you do see a member of staff, your name can be kept confidential.

What will a member of staff do when they are told about someone who has been sexually assaulted or abused?

- Any staff member who becomes aware that a student may have been sexually assaulted will take the matter very seriously and listen when the student tells them about it. This will occur whether the incident took place at school or off campus. It will be followed up promptly.
- If the information is given by another student, their name would remain confidential if the student requested this.
- If a student who has been assaulted would prefer to speak to a different person (e.g. a female staff member or nurse) then they will be given this opportunity.
- It is usually best if there are two staff members present during the discussion, if not at the first disclosure, then when it is discussed further. The school takes this very seriously and wants to provide the best help possible
- The question of confidentiality will be discussed with the student, including the fact that the staff member is obliged to discuss the information with an appropriate experienced senior staff member (e.g. the Head of House, or Head of Student Welfare and Head of Campus) who would also respect the student's confidentiality.
- The question of whether parents should be informed will be discussed with the student. If there has been a serious incident, then it is school policy that parents be informed so they can help and support their daughter or son.
- At all times the safety and comfort of the student who has been assaulted is the primary consideration. If there is any possibility of injury or sexual penetration, the student will need to have a medical examination as soon as possible, including when appropriate, tests for sexually transmitted infection. This can be done at Kennedy or by a doctor the student or family choose outside the school.
- The possible legal consequences of the assault would be discussed with the student.
- If the assault has occurred within the family or the family hasn't acted to protect their child, the school may be required by law to report the matter to the Department of Human Services. This would be discussed with the student.
- If the person who has made the assault is a student at the school, he or she would be interviewed as soon as possible and given the opportunity to discuss this in confidence. The student's Head of House and Head of Campus would be informed.
- Both the victim of assault and the person accused of the assault would be offered counselling.

Documentation in school files.

Documentation about the alleged assault, including information about the person accused of the assault, will be kept in a separate secure file, not in their medical or school record. The students, including the student accused of making the assault, would be informed of this and given the opportunity to read what is recorded in their file and discuss any information they think is wrong or inaccurate.

Do parents have to be told?

Your parents will want to help you, so they would expect to be told about this. If you have difficulty telling your parents, a member of the staff could help you. The school must inform parents about any serious matter that concerns their child.

Older students do have the right of confidentiality and in some cases parents may not need to be informed

What about the person accused of sexually assaulting someone?

If the person is a student or someone else connected with the school, they would be interviewed by a senior member of the school staff as soon as possible. What follows this depends on a number of things. Very occasionally a student is accused in error or acted foolishly but did not intend to cause harm, and would need counselling. The student who was assaulted may not want any action to be taken against the person assaulting them, and their wishes would be taken into account.

If the person who assaulted the student is an adult, including a family member, adult friend or anyone connected with the school, the school may need to inform the police or take action to protect the student.

For students at the school there are serious consequences for sexual assault, including expulsion.

The Principal

Smoking

Young people smoke cigarettes for many reasons: they enjoy it, it is something to do socially and share with friends, it makes them feel calmer when under stress. Many have become dependent on smoking for these reasons but some have become addicted to nicotine.

Everyone knows that smoking is bad for health but most people think they will stop before it affects them. Unfortunately many don't manage to do so.

For these reasons the school has strict rules on smoking and parents support these rules. Sometimes smoking only occurs off campus, at parties or in the holidays. It is still bad for you, a bad influence on younger people, it may affect someone with asthma and is a waste of money.

Passive smoking, especially in confined places, can be harmful, especially for someone with asthma.

What can you do if you are worried about your smoking habit?

- Discuss this with someone you trust. This is a health matter and anyone trying to give up would be helped to do so.
- If you discussed your smoking habit with a trusted staff member, they would treat it as a health matter and not as a disciplinary matter.
- Decide whether you really do want to stop. This is a major first step.
- Pick a definite date to stop. Let all your smoking friends know this.
- Make sure your friends who smoke know you are quitting – they will avoid smoking in your company or offer you cigarettes. They might decide to quit with you.
- Discuss quitting with an expert - a counsellor, doctor, nurse, on how to quit and what help you may need to do it. If you are just smoking in weekends, or just a few cigarettes a day, you are probably not really addicted to nicotine yet, so it may be easier than you think.
- Remember there are less and less people smoking now so lots of people are giving it up. There are a number of programmes to help you stop: they work.
- Spend time with your non-smoking friends. Recognise the danger times when you feel like smoking and plan to do something else instead.
- It may be easier to give up at school with support of friends and parents than later when you are on your own.

What should you do if you are concerned about someone who is smoking?

- Talk to them about it and give reasons why it would be worthwhile giving up. Perhaps it would improve physical fitness, be more acceptable socially, avoid the worry about getting caught at school, make them eligible to be a dorm leader or prefect. It is their decision however whether to quit.
- Support them if they do decide to quit.
- If you smoke yourself, consider quitting together, perhaps to help your friend as well as yourself.
- If you don't smoke yourself, spend time with them to distract them from smoking and show them that smoking is not a social necessity.

What will the school do if someone is known to be a smoker?

- It will discourage people from smoking by clear rules and consequences.
- It will be a requirement for students to seek help to stop smoking by joining the focus group which is run weekly by trained fitness personnel. They will maintain regular contact and support the student through a physical/mentoring programme. If smoking is largely a sign that the student is under stress the student would be helped with this. There are healthier ways to manage stress.
- School counsellors and doctors and nurses are always happy to help the smoker to quit. They would understand that there are times (such as exams or a family crisis) when it may be very difficult to quit.

The Principal

These Policy documents were prepared by Students in conjunction with Professor Fergus Cameron, Senior Medical Officer, and approved by The Director of Student Welfare, Heads of Campus and the Principal.

Students from Middle School, Timbertop and Senior School, including School Prefects, were involved in this consultative process.

The aim was to make the 'official School Pastoral Care Policies' student friendly.

October, 2013
