

Drug and Alcohol Policy 2026

Forming part of: Giant Steps Tasmania's *Health and Safety Manual*

Policy Statement

Giant Steps Tasmania supports and follows the Tasmanian Drug Strategy 2024-2029, which states:

“The Strategy takes a health-focused, strengths-based approach to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs use. The Strategy provides a framework that will encourage collaborative action and activities across agencies, organisations and the community.”

The vision of the new Strategy is “to create a Tasmania that is inclusive and safe for all people, without stigma or discrimination, where people are treated equitably and make informed health decisions when it comes to alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, and can access support where and when they need it.” <https://www.health.tas.gov.au/health-topics/alcohol-and-drugs/projects-and-initiatives-alcohol-and-drugs-tasmania/tasmanian-drug-strategy-2024-2029>

Additionally, the School follows the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Tasmania Police, the Department of Education, the Catholic Education Office and Independent Schools Tasmania, regarding Managing Drug-Related Incidents in Tasmanian Schools 2020-2024. <https://www.police.tas.gov.au/programs/mou-between-police-and-schools/>

When any revised version of the MoU becomes available, Giant Steps Tasmania will ensure that any amendments to the Memorandum are reflected in subsequent revisions of this Drug and Alcohol Policy.

Definition

Drug A substance which produces a psychoactive effect. This can include tobacco and nicotine (in cigarettes or vapes), alcohol, pharmaceutical drugs and illicit drugs. Within the context of this policy, it does not include medication for which students or staff members have a prescription from a registered medical practitioner and which they are taking according to the prescribed dosage.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all members of the school community are aware of the school's attitude towards the use of drugs and alcohol and are aware of the supports that exist to help the school keep students safe.

Implementation

The School, guided by the toolkit developed by the Tasmanian Department of Health, adopts a supportive, health-focussed approach to issues around drugs and alcohol and therefore this policy is Included in the Enrolment Pack and is available on the School's website.

Support and resources are provided to families periodically via the newsletter and are also a focus of Parent Group Meetings. The Department's Toolkit is available:

https://www.health.tas.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-02/smoke_free_and_vape_free_-_a_toolkit_for_a_whole_school_approach_20240203_accessible.pdf.

Making sure children are safe is the shared responsibility of community, parents, the school and students themselves wherever possible. Students at Giant Steps Tasmania are taught about staying safe and the harm caused by drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping in an age and developmentally-appropriate way.

Giant Steps Tasmania has the following approach to the use of drugs and alcohol:

- Drug use, possession or distribution by students, staff or parents is not tolerated at Giant Steps Tasmania.
- Tasmania Police will be called if drugs are brought onto the site.
- No-one is allowed onto the school premises if they are, or appear to be, under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs.
- Tasmania Police and/ or the Ambulance Service will be called if anyone is, or appears to be, under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs onsite at Giant Steps Tasmania.
- Tasmania Police will be called if anyone who is, or appears to be, under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs refuses to leave the school site when requested to do so by a member of staff.
- No student is allowed to have, or to drink, alcohol at school or on any school excursion or school-related activity even if they are over the age of 18.
- Staff, parents, carers and volunteers must not use illicit drugs, smoke, vape, or drink alcohol while on school grounds or on any school excursion or school-related activity.
- Persons driving Giant Steps Tasmania's school vehicles must have 0% alcohol, irrespective of whether they are transporting students.
- Consumption of alcohol is not permitted at social and/ or fundraising events held on-site at Giant Steps Tasmania.
- It is illegal for any person under 18 years of age to smoke or vape.
- In Tasmania, smoking and vaping is illegal within 10 metres of school playgrounds, on playing fields and sports grounds.

The Principal, teachers and other members of Giant Steps Tasmania staff have a duty of care to students, which includes advising Tasmania Police of any illegal or criminal activity that has occurred, is occurring or is suspected on school premises as soon as possible. Giant Steps Tasmania will take the advice and direction provided by the police at that time.

A student may give information about drug misuse to a staff member in confidence, but the staff member cannot keep such information to themselves if they are a 'prescribed person', and if, in carrying out their official duties or in the course of their work (whether paid or voluntary), they come to believe, or suspect, on reasonable grounds, or know that a child has been or is being abused, neglected or is at risk. Under the *Children, Young Persons and Families Act 1997*, mandatory reporting responsibilities apply.

If a suspected illicit drug is located on school premises:

- Staff take temporary possession of the suspected illicit drug, record it and store it securely until handing it over to the police at the first possible opportunity.
- Under no circumstances is any suspicious substance tasted or sniffed.
- Staff may not destroy or dispose of any substance seized.
- In the interests of safeguarding the health and safety of staff, unknown substances are handled to a minimum and with extreme care.
- Protective gloves are worn when handling suspected illicit drugs or drug paraphernalia.

It is the responsibility of the Principal to inform the Board of any drug-related incidents occurring at Giant Steps Tasmania.

Authorised by:	Paul Bowman
Position:	Chair of Board
Signature:	
Date:	
Original Policy developed by:	Chris Jacobsen
Position:	Fairlight Educational Consulting
Date developed:	February, 2023
Date of this review:	January - February 2026
Reviewed by:	Chris Jacobsen
Position:	Fairlight Educational Consulting
Staff consultation period:	February, 2026
Date for next review:	March, 2028