

SUNWARD CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

DRUG POLICY

Amended 27 November 2025



Sunward Christian Academy has a zero-tolerance policy towards the possession, use of or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs on the school premises. Use, possession, or distribution of tobacco products, alcohol, vaping devices (including all components and liquids), or any illegal substance is strictly forbidden.

Therefore, the school will not tolerate:

- the use or possession of any illegal or prohibited substance.
- the possession of drug-related equipment such as cigarette papers, pipes, matches, lighters, bottle ends, foils or other similar items.
- performance enhancing drugs.
- the inappropriate use of solvents, inhalants, aerosols and similar agents.
- the consumption of alcohol, the smoking of tobacco and vaping.

If any learner is involved in dealing, selling or possession any of the above-mentioned substances, action will be taken in accordance with this and other school policies.

As part of the greater community, the school has chosen to confront issues related to drug abuse head-on and deal with them in a structured and considered manner, in partnership with the parents/guardians to ensure the best outcome for learners. Substance abuse is detrimental to one's physical, social, emotional, mental, and spiritual health and has serious and far-reaching consequences that impact a learner's education, relationships with family and friends and which also prevent them from reaching their full potential. Beside the effect on the individual, substance abuse affects fellow learners as well as the reputation of the school and what it stands for.

Management of drug-related searches and seizures in school

Section 8A of the South African Schools Act permits the principal or his/her delegate to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug, for the purposes of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug, providing that all reasonable steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs staff will:

- ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout.
- seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/ find and witness present.
- store it in the school safe.
- without delay, notify the police, who will be asked to collect it and then store or dispose of it, in terms of Section 31 of the Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act No. 51 of 1977).
- record full details of the incident, including notes of any discussions with the learner(s). These should include date, time, place and people present.

The police incident reference number should also be included.

Searches will be conducted in accordance with Section 8A of the South African Schools Act. Searches of learners while they are at school may be carried out if there is reasonable suspicion that the learner is in possession of a prohibited substance. A search will be done as part of a structured intervention in a decent and orderly manner by persons of the same gender, should a search be necessary. The school will seek consent and ensure that a second adult witness is present. If consent is refused, consideration as to whether the police are to be called will be given. Searches will be conducted in such a way as to minimise potential embarrassment or distress.

Drug testing

The school considers a safe and healthy environment the right of all learners. Staff and parents need the necessary support systems to enable them to deal with drug or substance abuse problems. This includes the abuse of alcohol, illegal drugs, pharmaceutical drugs and slimming aids. The approach to drug abuse/addiction will be rehabilitative rather than punitive, provided the learner and his/her family comply with the requirements laid down by the Learner Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy. Should a learner test positive, the cost of the drug kit will be added to their account; a negative test will be paid for by the school.

Learners may be tested based on a disclosure by a whistle-blower, or at the request of parents, or if traces of drugs or alcoholic liquor are found on the school premises, or if a learner displays any behaviour that is deemed contrary to the norm, or if there is any other reasonable indication to carry out such a test.

Testing will be implemented as part of a structured intervention or relapse prevention programme in an environment that is committed to safeguarding personal rights relating to privacy, dignity, and bodily integrity. Testing will be carried out according to the school testing policy, medical treatment procedures and ethical guidelines. The results of the testing will be kept confidential but will be shared with the learner's parent or guardian.

Should a learner refuse to be tested, this will be deemed an admission of guilt, and the learner will be asked to leave the school and may not return until an independent negative test result is produced.

The principal or his/her delegate may randomly administer a urine or other non-invasive test to any group of learners based on fair and reasonable grounds in which they are suspected of using illegal drugs, after considering all relevant factors contemplated in section 8A, subsection 3 of the South African Schools Act.

A learner may be subjected to a urine or other non-invasive test for illegal drugs if:

- the test is conducted by a person of the same gender.
- it is done in a private area and not in view of another learner.
- one adult witness of the same gender as the learner is present.
- the sample is clearly and correctly labelled with full particulars.

The principal or his delegate must:

- within one working day, if practical, inform the parent of a learner that a random test or search and seizure was done in respect of his or her child.
- inform the learner and his or her parent of the result of the test immediately after it becomes available.

STEPS TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE EVENT OF DRUG ABUSE AND/OR POSSESSION

Counselling

Learners who voluntarily request help and/or those referred by parents or staff will be sent to the school counsellor. Support through biblical counselling will be given. After this, the school counsellor may assist the family by recommending the best possible course of action. Where possible, this will be managed in a way that least impacts the learner's school career.

Rehabilitation

If a test reveals evidence of substance abuse, the steps outlined below will be followed. In other circumstances, where direct evidence of substance abuse is presented, for example, parents discovering drugs or substances in the home, a learner abusing such substances at school or at extra-curricular functions etc., the same steps will be followed.

1. In any of the above situations, the parents/guardians will be notified immediately and requested to remove the learner from the school premises. Suspension of learners who test positive remains at the discretion of the principal.
2. The learner must be enrolled in and submit to a drug rehabilitation outpatient programme which will include:
 - The treatment option as determined by all parties working in collaboration for the benefit of the learner.
 - The learner agreeing to urine testing or other non-invasive testing which will take place on an ad hoc basis. The timing and control of such testing is the school's responsibility.
 - An expectation that the learner will improve with respect to behaviour, academic achievement, and school attendance.
 - Support by the parents/legal guardians of the treatment.
 - An undertaking by the designated rehabilitation and treatment institution to supply the school with progress reports addressed to a designated member of the school staff. Reports are to be issued with written consent of the learner and parents/guardians.
 - If necessary, the rehabilitation programme can be adapted after negotiation with the relevant parties.
3. An appropriate agreement for rehabilitation programme will be drafted by the school, and signed by the learner, the parent/legal guardian, the principal, and the counsellor.
4. Only once written evidence of enrolment in such a programme is provided and the stated conditions are met will the learner be re-admitted to school.
5. Learners in the rehabilitation programme will be re-tested after a six-week period from initial discovery. Should this test be positive, it will be assumed that the learner's substance abuse problem is of such a severe nature that the learner will require full time enrolment in a rehabilitation programme and their enrolment at the school will be terminated.

Refusal to comply with the above will result in the offender facing disciplinary action which will result in the school implementing disciplinary procedures.

Should parents/legal guardians and/or the learner take it upon themselves to stop treatment, the school will consider the rehabilitation programme suspended and the school reserves the right to implement disciplinary procedures.

Signed by learner: _____ **Signed by parent:**
