

*Health and Well Being - Substance abuse prevention  
Policy and Practice*

Effective Date:	October 2018
Review Date:	October 2019
Policy Holder:	School Principal
Approval By:	Senior Leadership Team (SLT)



# *Health and Safety - Substance Abuse Prevention*

## **Purpose of this Policy**

This policy outlines the ways in which we will educate and support our Secondary students and their parents, and the procedures and sanctions in place to support the prevention of substance use. The contents of the Policy may be extended to the Primary School if necessary.

Regents International School, Pattaya (Regents) Substance Abuse Prevention Policy is consistent with the school's vision, values and philosophy.

Regents is committed to the health of its students, and through both the Growing Minds curriculum and the school's pastoral care aims to enable students to make informed, healthy and responsible decisions.

Decisions for adolescents growing up in Thailand may be made more difficult by a number of factors. Factors may include;

- the price and availability of some substances,
- the lack of age restrictions in some bars,
- our students perceived wealth in the local community,
- the many different beliefs and practices of our diverse multicultural community,
- lack of support networks that are available in larger cities and more developed countries

## **Substance abuse**

Substance abuse is the use of psychoactive substances illicitly. Some of these substances can be used for a variety of both medical and non-medical purposes, some of which may result in overdose, injury, infectious disease (such as HIV or hepatitis C), or addiction.

## **Growing Minds Programme**

The Growing Minds programme in our Secondary School develops students personally, socially and emotionally with an emphasis on developing a growth mind set. We recognise that to be successful in the future, Regents students need to develop an understanding of themselves and the changing world that they will be a part of. Growing Minds goes further than a traditional Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), incorporating the Round Square ideals, personal responsibility and global citizenship.

## **School boundaries**

The areas within the school grounds and the public areas connecting the school gates and any Regents owned or hired bus or other vehicle transporting students to or from day/boarding school or school event are considered as the school boundaries.

Any residential or non-residential activity or event organised by the school or by a school-authorized representative, whether within the school boundaries or not. This includes while on transport organised by Regents to or from an event and any activity or event where the school is being represented.

The school reserves the right to implement this policy in the context of any incident that identifies a student as being a member of Regents and consequently impacts on the reputation and image of the school.

### **Confidentiality**

Some students may choose to mention instances of substance abuse in class or to individual members of the community. While our teaching staff will want to be supportive, they need to follow our Child Protection guidelines and clearly state that they will not be able to guarantee confidentiality.

If a student discloses information which is sensitive, not generally known, and which the student asks not to be passed on, the request should be honoured unless this is unavoidable in order for teachers to fulfil their professional responsibilities in relation to Child Protection.

Any and all communication with any individual or agency (including the media) outside the school concerning drug-related incidents is decided by the Senior Leadership Team. In this case, "outside the school" refers to anyone other than Regents parents, students and teachers or any of these acting in a capacity other than that of parent, student or teacher. The school reserves the right to investigate and communicate with students and their families if a name has been disclosed.

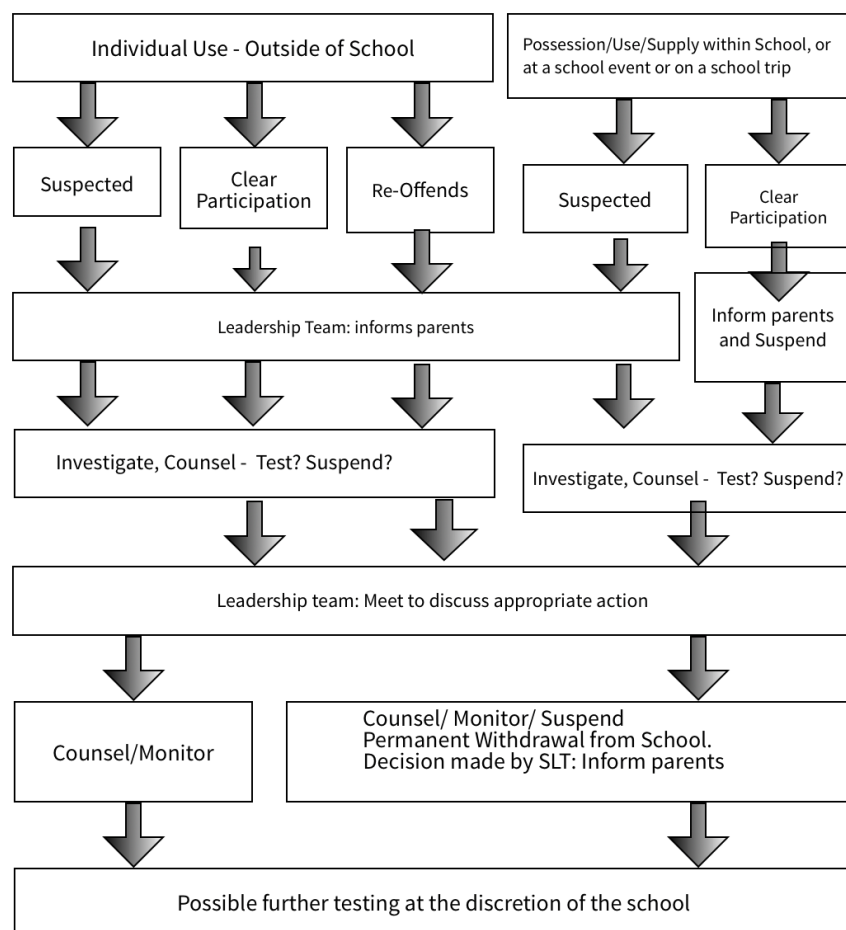
### **Substance abuse Education**

Each year group in Secondary has a full programme of study, individually tailored to their stage of development and includes a range of issues such as dealing with conflict, mental health awareness, sex education and substance abuse awareness. Our Growing Minds programme aims to 'grow' our students holistically and, in doing so, hopes to ensure students leave Regents ready to transform their futures, make appropriate decisions in life and make a positive difference globally. In addition, other subject disciplines, such as Science and Physical Education aim to give the students factual information about a range of different substances and develops students' ability to make informed, healthy and responsible decisions.

### **Procedures/Sanctions**

At Regents, we will consider very carefully the implications of any action we may take. At all times the needs of the individual as well as the school community are taken into consideration and we believe in close co-operation with parents. In the case of substance use and misuse, the stance will be one of support rather than rejection. However, the school has a clear position on the supply of substances on the premises or at school-sponsored events. Whenever the cumulative academic and social behaviours of a student suggest to staff the possibility of substance misuse, a case conference will meet to map out an appropriate response. The school behaviour policy clearly states that serious cases will be dealt with by SLT and the sanction is at their discretion. If this is a repeat of a transgression then a more serious sanction will be implemented.

Each situation is different, but there has to be some consistency of approach. The flow diagram outlines the steps that would be taken in various situations.



### Searches

**Personal Searches** - When a student is suspected of concealing illegal or other illicit substances it may be necessary for an appropriate member of the Leadership Team, with a staff witness to carry out a search; this includes the searching of outer clothing and inside pockets. Every effort should be made to persuade the person to hand over voluntarily any paraphernalia.

**Searches of School Property** - The Leadership Team, with a staff witness may search school property (for example, school lockers) if they believe illicit substances or paraphernalia to be stored there.

**Searches of Personal Property** - The Leadership Team, with a staff witness may search personal property (contents of bags, content of electronic devices) if there is any suspicion or allegation made.

**Searches in a Boarding House** - If a thorough or formal search is required to take place in a boarding house, then it will be carried out by the Head of Boarding with a second member of the Senior Leadership Team and with guidance from the Head of House.

After any search involving students, parents / carers will be contacted, regardless of the outcome of the search.

### **Drug Testing**

As part of the school's support for students and their parents, the school reserves the right to administer drug tests upon any reasonable suspicion of substance misuse. Potentially harmful substances include but are not limited to: illegal drugs, prescription and over the counter drugs, alcoholic beverages, inhaled stimulants.

Random testing will be used at the discretion of the Leadership Team.

A positive result would not automatically lead to the student being asked to leave the school. However, if the student remained in school an action plan would be put in place to assist the student and his/her family. Part of this plan would include counselling from a local Bangkok/Pattaya Counsellor. If a student returned to school after a positive test, he/she would be subject to further testing at the total discretion of the school. If a subsequent test proved positive, the student may be asked to leave the school.

### **Refusal to Participate in Random Testing**

If a student or parents of a student refuses to comply with the drugs testing procedures a meeting must take place with a member of the Leadership Team. If after this meeting a student or parents of a student still refuse to allow the drugs testing to take place, the student will be deemed to have taken the test and to have recorded a positive result. The student will then be treated in the same way as other students who have recorded positive results.

Where a student is proved to be involved in the distribution of harmful substances or related paraphernalia outside the school's jurisdiction, the school may consider applying the same consequences.

### **Administration of the Drugs Tests**

The school nurse will administer the drugs tests under the direction of the Leadership Team.

### **Targeted Drugs Testing**

The school will administer a drugs test on any Secondary aged student that it has reason to believe is involved in the misuse of drugs. It may be that the school is concerned that drugs related issues affect a students' behaviour or academic performance, but the reason for the drugs test is not limited to these issues. The use of targeted drugs testing is to ensure that students are not able to continue to use illicit substances.

### **Substance Use Procedure**

Sometimes students and families recognize a problem of chemical dependency and seek appropriate steps to end that pattern. In cases where the student and family come to the school indicating such a problem exists, the school and family will work together to assess the students particular needs and seek resources to help end the dependency. Such cases will be handled on an individual basis.

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### **Why has Regents Introduced Drug Testing?**

Teenage children go through many emotional changes as they gradually mature and a normal part of this process is to explore new experiences. As a good school working in partnership with parents we feel the need to put in place some safe boundaries for teenage explorations. The introduction of drugs testing and the consequences of a positive test make a clear statement that exploring drugs is unacceptable.

### **What are the Drug Laws in Thailand?**

There are severe anti-drug laws in Thailand that expressly prohibit the possession, use and supply of illegal drugs. Students who break these laws will have committed a juvenile criminal offence for which there are severe punishments.

### **Does Pattaya Have a Drug Problem?**

The school has increasingly become aware of the relative ease with which certain drugs can be obtained in some parts of the city. Coupled with this is the openness with which one drug in particular is smoked and the lack of any kind of policing. We know that there is peer pressure in the nightclub and bar scene to try certain drugs. Our main reason for introducing drug testing is to support our students so that can assertively say, 'No – my school tests for drugs'.

### **Does Regents Have a Drug Problem?**

Due to the ease of which some drugs can be obtained in the city we have proactively taken steps to identify suspicious behaviours which may indicate recreational drug use. The reason for introducing a testing programme is to assist in preventing such an issue arising.

### **Do other Schools Test for Drugs?**

Yes. In line with other NAE schools in South East Asia and through our membership of FOBISIA (Federation of British International Schools in Asia) we are aware that many long established and reputable schools routinely test their older students for drugs.

### **Why is the School also using Hair Sample Drug Testing?**

It is possible to get false positive results with urine drug testing kits. The hair drugs test is more reliable and tests exposure to drugs over a longer period of time. This test will only be used for a student who records a positive urine drugs test. However, the tests are conducted outside of the country which gives a three week wait for results.

### **Who is Responsible for the Drug Testing Arrangements?**

The Leadership Team will oversee the drugs testing arrangements. The School Nurse will administer the drugs test and the head of year team will be available to support students.

### **Will the Drugs Test Record a Positive for Medicines?**

The drugs test is specific to controlled drugs and will not show a positive for prescribed and over the counter medicines. Each student will be asked to declare any medication taken in the last 48 hours before the test.

**Updated October 2018**

**APPENDIX**

**The Thai Law**

On November 24, 2016, the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) approved the adoption of new amendments to Thailand's Narcotics Act.

The Narcotics Act institutes 5 categories of drugs as follows:

Category 1	Heroin; Amphetamine; Methamphetamine; MDMA (Ecstasy); LSD
Category 2	Cocaine; Codeine; Methadone; Morphine
Category 3	Narcotics in the form of medicinal formulas containing narcotics of Category 2;
Category 4	Narcotics which consist of chemicals used for producing narcotics in Category 1 or 2, such as acetic anhydride, or acetyl chloride and;
Category 5	Cannabis, psychoactive mushrooms, and the kratom plant

Depending on these Categories, and amounts, the sale of drugs can lead to penalties of 4 - 15 years or life imprisonment, a fine of 80,000 to 300,000 baht or 1-5 million baht or even the death penalty. For possession, penalties can include imprisonment for a term of 1 year to 10 years, or to a fine of 20,000 - 200,000 baht, or to both.