



Drug Testing Policy

Policy of drug testing and illegal drugs
at German European School Singapore

Created: May 2015, revised: January 2018

Approved: BOG Meeting, 19 March 2018

Owner: Principal's Office

Contents

1. The reasons for GESS to implement a policy of drug testing	2
2. Possession, consumption and/or trafficking of illegal drugs	2
3. Nature and form of drug testing	3
4. What happens after testing?	3
5. QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE WITH REGARD TO ILLEGAL DRUGS AND TESTING	4
a) Why does German European School Singapore have a drug testing programme?	4
b) How does drug testing fit into our school community?	4
c) What are the drug laws in Singapore?	4
d) Is there a drug problem in Singapore?	5
e) Does German European School Singapore have a drug problem?	5
f) Do other schools in Singapore test for drugs?	5
g) Schools send the urine or hair sample out of Singapore, why is that?	5
h) What are the main advantages and disadvantages of urine and hair testing?	5
i) Who is tested and how are those to be tested identified?	5
j) Who manages the testing and who takes the test samples?	5
k) If my child takes a drug available from pharmacies for medical reasons, will the test be able to differentiate between controlled drugs and others?	6

1. The reasons for GESS to implement a policy of drug testing

Singapore is very strict regarding the possession, consumption and trafficking (which includes the selling, giving, administering, transporting, sending, delivering, distributing or offering to do any of the above) of illegal drugs and they have severe laws against the above mentioned contact to drugs and drug-related articles (pipes, syringes and other apparatus). Especially teenagers can find themselves facing more and more potential situations in which they may become vulnerable and may be placed under pressure from either their peers or others to try a drug. Unfortunately, drug dealers find all kinds of ways into the user market and are focused on young people.

2. Possession, consumption and/or trafficking of illegal drugs

The use and abuse of drugs by children is an area of major concern - not just for the authorities and parents of children concerned, but also for those responsible for their education. We at the German European School Singapore take this issue very seriously. Singapore law imposes very tough penalties on those caught consuming, possessing or trafficking illegal drugs, and grants sweeping rights to the authorities enforcing these laws. Penalties include imprisonment and death penalty. Neither foreign nationals nor students are exempted from these laws. If found in possession or trafficking unlawful drugs in Singapore, students may be simply removed from Singapore and denied future entry into the country, or more severe penalties can be imposed.

We support our students with the best education about how to avoid drugs, because we want to make sure that they know about this topic and that they know the consequences by using drugs and the consequences by Singapore government. By having this programme, our students always have the opportunity to refer to our school rules to use this as the reason for saying no to drugs, if someone convinces them.

3. Nature and form of drug testing

The School Bye-law (section 5.8) provides that the school may conduct drug tests on students of grade 7 and above in cases where there are good grounds of suspicion as well as at random. The Principal shall decide on the procedures of the test; students selected must participate.

Before accepting the offer of a conditional place in the German European School from grade 7 onwards, parents are required to sign a consent form allowing the student to be tested for consumption of illegal drugs at any time. A list of illegal drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act may be offered by the school's office, when requested. Students are required to sign an acknowledgement of their parents' consent.

The testing of students is overseen by the Principal, and is undertaken by the school's nurses in the school.

Parents of students who have been selected and tested will receive confidential letters informing about the following:

- a) that their name has been drawn and
- b) the date the testing took place

If any student who was picked for testing refuses to comply with the testing procedure or either one or both of the student's parents refuse to allow the student to be tested, the parties will be informed that the student needs to leave our school at once. The student will then be treated in the same way as a student who has taken the test and whose result has proved positive.

4. What happens after testing?

The test results normally take about one week to return. During the waiting period between the testing and the outcome of the result, the selected students are monitored and supported if necessary. Upon the return of the test results, the selected students and their parents are informed of the outcomes. The outcomes will only be known by the Principal. If the result is negative, no further action is taken other than to note that there has been a testing which resulted in a negative outcome. If the result is positive, the student will have to leave GESS at once. The school is not required to inform the authorities of the positive test, but may do so at any time. The school shall not be held liable for any consequences of the aforesaid actions which it may decide to take.

5. QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE WITH REGARD TO ILLEGAL DRUGS AND TESTING

a) Why does German European School Singapore have a drug testing programme?

A drug testing policy has been part of our School Bye-Laws, which forms part of the Student Contract, which parents acknowledge and agree to during the admissions process. This policy and practice have been regularly reviewed to ensure they stay relevant and drug testing has been conducted before. Also the experiences with teenagers of other schools in Singapore underline that having a drug testing programme is important to protect our students.

Schools for expatriates in Singapore are in an exceptional position because of the Singapore laws in relation to drug use. The consequences of a positive drug test and a teenager being convicted of a drug offence in Singapore are wide, with the possibility that a family may lose its source of income, home and would need to be relocated. Additionally, our teenagers are going through a time with many changes, where they might want to explore and try things. We need to give them the strength and safety of boundaries to say no and we give them a reason, because they can always rely on the fact that it is too risky because their school is testing for drugs.

b) How does drug testing fit into our school community?

We need to be aware of that our students will not be in the safe area of the school and their homes all day. We cannot always make sure to know what they are doing after school. Singapore is an international and very vibrant city with new influences for our students every day. With the drug testing programme we want to create awareness for this topic and want to show that drug use or any contact with drugs is unacceptable in our community.

c) What are the drug laws in Singapore?

Singapore has severe drug laws. The Misuse of Drugs Act (Cap 185) creates various offences for drug trafficking, consumption and possession. For people caught dealing (trafficking) in illegal (controlled and specified) drugs there is a mandatory death sentence. For people caught consuming and/or possession of illegal drugs (controlled and specified drugs), the sentence is also harsh: prison, caning or fines, or all three penalties. In the West there are categories of soft and hard drugs, whereas in Singapore there is no differentiation. All illegal drugs are dealt with severely. For a list of the controlled drugs and specified drugs, please refer to the Misuse of Drugs Act. (The Misuse of Drugs Act by the Singapore government as well as a list of controlled substances in Singapore can be viewed on request send to the Principal's Office. Please visit the homepage of the *Central Narcotics Bureau* or the *Singapore Statutes Online* for more information and updates on the Misuse of Drugs Act.)

If a controlled drug is smoked, administered or otherwise consumed outside Singapore by a non-Singapore citizen or non-Singapore permanent resident arriving in Singapore by land, sea or air, and such consumption is proven as a result of urine tests conducted by the relevant authorities (including any immigration officer), such person may be prohibited from entering or remaining in Singapore. It is also an offence for a person to have in his possession any pipe, syringe, utensil, apparatus or other article intended for the smoking, administration or consumption of a controlled drug. The authorities are authorised to conduct a search of the school premises should they suspect that there is to be found any controlled drug, controlled

substance or article liable to seizure or a person who is suspected to have committed any drug offence.

d) Is there a drug problem in Singapore?

Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association has many years of experience in working with drug trafficking. Being close to the golden triangle, this country has developed a cooperative network with other countries within the region, to fight drug trafficking. It is our opinion that Singapore does not have a drug problem that is out of control. However, we are surrounded by countries with drug issues and despite the penalties a supply of illegal drugs does reach Singapore.

e) Does German European School Singapore have a drug problem?

GESS does not have a drug problem because the School has a zero-tolerance policy on drugs. The testing programme is aimed to assist in preventing such an issue arising.

f) Do other schools in Singapore test for drugs?

Yes, most of the other large international schools in Singapore test for drugs.

g) Schools send the urine or hair sample out of Singapore, why is that?

If a sample is tested in Singapore and is found to be positive, the laboratory is bound to inform the relevant Singapore authorities. By sending the samples out of the country the results are kept confidential within the school.

h) What are the main advantages and disadvantages of urine and hair testing?

Urine testing can test for a wide range of drugs and is relatively cheap to administer. However, the collection of samples is time consuming and intrusive, and there are drugs on the 'market' that can mask drug use, and samples can be adulterated unless the sample giver is observed. Hair testing can also test for a wide range of drugs. Although it is a more expensive procedure, the collection of samples is quick and non-intrusive. Samples cannot be adulterated. Drug use over several months can be detected.

i) Who is tested and how are those to be tested identified?

Only students from grade 7 onwards can be selected. We select either randomly or in cases where there are good grounds of suspicion. The legal guardian/s of students selected at random and on grounds of suspicion are notified by letter that they have been selected and tested. Parents of students selected because of concerns are invited to meet with the Principal after they have been tested. In the event of parents living in different locations, we will do everything in our power to make it possible that both will be informed simultaneously. We want to keep this a cooperative process on the base of the good communication between the parents and the school.

j) Who manages the testing and who takes the test samples?

Testing of students is overseen by the Principal. The school's nurses will execute them in the school, when the Principal and/or one of the Vice-Principals is present during the test.



CELEBRATE YOUR
Roots
DISCOVER YOUR
Wings

k) If my child takes a drug available from pharmacies for medical reasons, will the test be able to differentiate between controlled drugs and others?
The testing will identify a range of controlled drugs only. Drugs taken for medical reasons should be declared at the time of testing.