



## **School Policy for Smoke-Free and Healthy Learning Environments**

### **Rationale**

The school is committed to ensuring a healthy, safe, and supportive learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. Exposure to smoking—including cigarettes, vapes, e-cigarettes, shisha, tobacco products, and nicotine-based devices—poses significant health risks and negatively impacts wellbeing, learning, and behavior.

In accordance with UAE Federal Law, local government health regulations, and best practices for student protection and wellbeing, the school adopts a zero-tolerance policy toward smoking or possession of smoking-related materials on school premises. This includes all buildings, grounds, buses, school-sponsored events, and external activities.

The policy aims to protect students from harmful substances, discourage early initiation of smoking, promote healthy lifestyle choices, and ensure compliance with the school's responsibility to maintain a Smoke-Free School.

### **Objectives**

This policy aims to:

1. Promote a smoke-free school environment that protects students and staff from exposure to smoking and harmful substances.
2. Prevent the use, possession, sale, or distribution of cigarettes, vapes, e-cigarettes, shisha, tobacco, or nicotine products within school premises or activities.
3. Educate students and parents about the health risks associated with smoking and vaping, fostering lifelong healthy habits.
4. Establish clear and fair procedures for managing smoking-related violations in accordance with school regulations.

5. Provide intervention and support for students involved in smoking to encourage cessation, rehabilitation, and healthier choices.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All students enrolled in the school
- All teaching and non-teaching staff
- All visitors, service providers, and school partners
- All school buildings, grounds, transport, and school activities (on or off campus)

## **Definitions**

- **Smoking:** The act of inhaling, exhaling, or using cigarettes, cigars, pipes, shisha, vapes/e-cigarettes, or any nicotine-based device.
- **Vaping:** Use of an electronic device that delivers nicotine or similar substances by inhalation.
- **Tobacco Products:** Any product containing tobacco or nicotine including cigarettes, shisha, and related paraphernalia.
- **Possession:** Having smoking materials in one's clothing, bags, pockets, or personal belongings.

## **Policy Statements**

1. Smoking, vaping, or possession of smoking-related materials is strictly prohibited on school grounds, buildings, buses, or during school-related activities.
2. The school enforces preventive, educational, disciplinary, and support interventions to promote a smoke-free environment.
3. Violations will result in consequences based on school regulations, considering the student's age, severity, and intent.
4. All stakeholders share responsibility in maintaining a safe, healthy school community.

## **Preventive Measures**

### **Awareness & Education**

- Regular awareness campaigns on risks of smoking and vaping.
- Integration of health education topics into the curriculum (Science, Health, PE, Wellbeing).
- Parent seminars on early signs of smoking, prevention, and communication strategies.
- Staff training to identify signs of smoking behavior.

### **Environmental Safety Measures**

- Clear signage: **"This is a Smoke-Free School Environment."**
- Supervision in areas where smoking risks are higher (bathrooms, secluded corners, toilets, outdoor spaces).
- Random inspections of bags, lockers, and common areas when necessary.
- Strict control of access to school premises during breaks.

## **Procedures for Handling Smoking-Related Incidents**

### **Reporting**

Any incident or suspicion must be reported immediately to:

- The Principal
- Student Behavior Coordinator
- School Counselor / Psychologist

Reports are kept confidential.

### **Initial Investigation**

- Student is asked to provide their account of the incident.
- Staff may inspect belongings (bags, lockers) with witness presence.
- Evidence (vape device, cigarette, lighter, etc.) is collected and securely stored.

- The school nurse may assess the student if health concerns arise (e.g., dizziness from vaping).

### **Parental Notification**

Parents must be informed on the same day about:

- The incident
- Evidence collected
- Next steps and consequences
- Required intervention or counseling

### **Documentation**

The following must be recorded:

- Description of the violation
- Statements from involved students/staff
- Evidence
- Disciplinary actions taken
- Interventions provided

All records are kept confidential and stored securely.

### **Consequences for Violations**

Consequences are based on severity, intent, recurrence, and the student's age.

#### **First Violation**

- Formal warning
- Confiscation of materials
- Parent conference
- Counseling session / awareness module
- Behavior contract

## **Second Violation**

- In-school suspension
- Mandatory counseling and cessation support
- Additional community service within school
- Behavior monitoring plan

## **Third or Severe Violation**

- Possible out-of-school suspension
- Mandatory referral to external health professionals
- Comprehensive behavior intervention plan
- Review by School Disciplinary Committee
- Possible long-term sanctions (depending on severity and ADEK-type standards)

## **Intervention and Support**

The school prioritizes support over punishment, especially for developing students.

### **Counseling and Cessation Programs**

Students involved in smoking violations must:

- Attend counseling sessions with the School Counselor or Psychologist
- Participate in a Smoking Cessation Support Program
- Engage in behavior modification sessions
- Receive continued monitoring

### **Referral to Specialists**

In recurring or severe cases, referral may be made to:

- Psychologists
- Health professionals
- Specialized cessation programs

Parent cooperation is required.

## **Responsibilities of Stakeholders**

### **School Staff**

- Monitor student behavior
- Report incidents
- Enforce the policy consistently
- Model healthy behavior

### **Parents**

- Support anti-smoking values at home
- Cooperate with school interventions
- Monitor behaviors and belongings

### **Students**

- Follow school rules
- Support peers in avoiding smoking
- Report unsafe behaviors

## **Confidentiality and Data Protection**

- All incidents are handled with discretion.
- Student information is protected according to school and UAE data regulations.
- Only authorized personnel may access incident records.

## **Policy Dissemination**

- Policy is shared with parents at the start of the school year.
- Included in the Student Handbook and Staff Handbook.
- Posted visibly on school premises and website.

## **Policy Review**

The policy will be reviewed annually or when new UAE/ADEK regulations are released to ensure ongoing compliance and effectiveness.

Prepared by:

Francis S. Yaneza, Rpm, RGC  
Guidance Counselor

Approved by:

Paul Benedict N. Yacap  
School Principal