



ST. MARY'S *Catholic High School, Dubai*

ANTI-SMOKING, ANTI-VAPING & DRUG ABUSE POLICY

2025-2026

Anti-Smoking, Anti-Vaping and Drug Abuse Policy

Introduction

The school enforces a **ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY** for drugs, smoking, vaping and related substances in accordance with UAE law and KHDA/MoE regulations.

The Anti-Smoking, Anti-Vaping and Drug Abuse Policy have been formulated through consultation with the Governing body, school staff, parents, students, and local health authorities. It acknowledges the responsibility to promote health, safety, and wellbeing, and seeks to empower students, staff, and parents with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to make informed and responsible choices about smoking, drugs, and substance misuse.

This policy aligns with the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) guidelines, applicable UAE laws and regulations.

For the purpose of this policy, “drugs” include:

- Legal substances: alcohol, tobacco, energy drinks, caffeine, vapes/e-cigarettes.
- Medicines: prescribed and non-prescribed.
- Illegal drugs: substances prohibited under UAE Federal Law.

“Drug misuse” refers to the possession, distribution, or use of substances in ways not medically or legally intended.



Scope:

This policy applies to all students, teachers, staff, parents, visitors, supply staff on school premises, school grounds, immediate vicinity of the premises and during school sponsored activities.

Policy Framework and Alignment

The School recognises its duty to promote children and young people's wellbeing and is also required to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- The school follows safeguarding, health and safety, and child protection requirements.
- All staff, parents, and students will be made aware of the zero-tolerance approach to illegal drugs on school premises or during school-related activities.
- In line with UAE Ministry of Education guidelines and KHDA directives, this policy aligns with national and international best practices.

Definitions

Smoking: The act of inhaling and exhaling the smoke of tobacco or any other substance.

Vaping: The act of inhaling and exhaling vapor produced by an electronic cigarette or similar device

Tobacco Products: Includes cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, dokha, and only other product containing tobacco.

Electronic Smoking Devices (ESDs): Devices that can be used to deliver nicotine or other substances to the person inhaling from the device, including electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, vape pens, and hookah pens.

Alcohol: Any beverage or product containing ethanol, in the school context, this also covers food items, medicines, or other products that contain alcohol.



**NO SMOKING
NO VAPING**

Objectives

- To ensure a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment by preventing the use, possession, or distribution of drugs, psychotropic substances, alcohol, NOS cannisters, stimulants, and tobacco products - including electronic cigarettes (vapes) - on school property and within the school community and during school-related activities.
- Increase knowledge and understanding, clarifying misconceptions about the short and long-term effects of drugs, laws relating to drugs, the impact of drugs on families, communities, and personal behaviour, the prevalence and acceptability of drug use among peers, and the moral, social, and emotional issues surrounding drugs.
- Develop young people's personal and social skills to make informed decisions to stay safe and healthy including finding information and advice and devising coping strategies.
- Encourage students' in need of support to come forward and to educate others into acting and speaking in the best interests of those who might need help.
- Develop skills to resist peer pressure and make positive lifestyle choices.



Year 1 – Year 2:

Students understand that medicines and household substances can be helpful when used properly but can be dangerous if used incorrectly.

Year 3 – Year 6:

Students demonstrate an understanding of the risks associated with smoking, vaping, alcohol, and commonly available substances, and can accurately distinguish between legal and illegal substances.

Year 7 – Year 13:

Students develop a deeper understanding of the legal, health, and social consequences of drug use, with an emphasis on informed decision-making, resilience, and preparation for adulthood. They understand the physical, mental, social, and legal impacts of drug use, including UAE laws and the potential effects on education, careers, and life opportunities.



Content and Curriculum

Anti-Smoking/Vaping/Drug education will be taught across subjects including PSHE, Science, Physical Education, ICT, English and Psychology.

Delivery methods include:

- Class discussions, debates, and reflection.
- Role-play and drama to build confidence and refusal skills.
- Guest sessions from Dubai Police, Anti-Narcotics, MOHAP.
- Awareness campaigns, assemblies, and newsletters for students and parents.
- UAE National Anti-Drug Campaigns – Strategy includes various programmes and initiatives designed to strengthen community resilience against drug use. The federal cabinet aimed at achieving a drug-free UAE by 2031.

School Rules

The school regards the possession, sharing, bringing into school, distributing, sale or use of illegal drugs, smoking paraphernalia, NOS cannisters, tobacco or tobacco-related products, solvents, alcohol, vapes as serious disciplinary matters and could result in the student being permanently excluded, in line with KHDA involvement.

- The school is a strict no-smoking, no-vaping, no-drug and no-alcohol zone.
- NO students must bring, distribute, supply, use or share illegal substances on school premises or during school activities held outside the school.
- Misuse of medication or energy drinks is strictly not allowed.
- Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs, or unauthorised medication on school premises or during school activities is strictly prohibited.
- Any breach will result in disciplinary action in line with the school's behaviour and safeguarding policies.
- Prescribed medicines must be:
 - ✓ Submitted to the school clinic in original packaging with doctor's instructions.
 - ✓ Administered by the School Nurse or trained staff.
- Staff, parents, and visitors are also bound by this policy while on campus.

School may also need to tackle incidents associating with smoking/vaping that include:

- A child smoking, vaping in school or on school property.
- A child reported to be vaping in the local community.
- A child selling vapes to other pupils or peers.
- A child with vapes in their possession at school.
- Safeguarding incidents related to 'vapes.



The Role of Students

Students of SMCHS have an important role in meeting the objectives of this policy, and need to be aware of the following:

- Smoking, Vaping or use of drugs is prohibited on school property and at school-sponsored events. This includes use of any electronic smoking device to vape any substance.
- Possession of smoking, drugs, vaping paraphernalia, including devices and e-liquids, is not allowed on school property or at school events.
- Students are expected to avoid smoking, vaping during school hours, even off campus. Smoking and Vaping is prohibited during any school trips, activities or extracurricular events.
- Students are prohibited from distributing or selling any smoking, vaping-related products on school property or to other students.
- While on school grounds or attending school events, students are expected to refrain from behaviours that promote smoking, vaping culture and norms, including conversations, clothing, social media posts, etc.
- Students should inform staff if they witness smoking/vaping or suspect someone is violating the school no-smoking, no-vaping, no drugs policy.
- Violating the school no-smoking, no-vaping, no drugs policy policy may result in specific disciplinary actions as outlined in the policy. Potential consequences may include parental notification, mandated education sessions, suspension, or others depending on severity.
- Students struggling with nicotine addiction should proactively seek counselling and resources to quit through school nurses. The school will aim to provide supportive interventions.
- Disciplinary measures will be applied in a fair, consistent and age-appropriate manner to enforce a safe, smoke-free, drugs-free and vape-free environment.

Medication & Special Medical Needs

- Students requiring regular medication must have an Individual Medical Action Plan approved by the School doctor and parents.
- Prescribed medication may be administered during school hours under the supervision of trained staff from the school clinic and with parental consent
- Medication records will be maintained securely.
- On trips, a designated staff member supervises prescribed medication.



Random Bag and/or Locker Checks

- Random student bag and or locker checks will be conducted to reinforce safety.
- Bag checks will be:
 - Carried out respectfully and fairly.
 - Conducted in the presence of at least two staff members (one senior).
 - Where possible, the student concerned will be present.
- Any suspected substances will be:
 - Sealed, labelled, and documented.
 - Handed immediately to Dubai Police.
 - Parents will be notified, and an incident report will be completed. A disciplinary letter will be issued and other actions taken with regulatory and external authorities.



Parent Engagement

The school recognises that effective partnership with parents is essential -

- Supporting their children through open communication and guidance about the risks of smoking, vaping, drugs and alcohol.
- Encourage healthy habits and balanced routines.
- Recognising early signs of drugs or tobacco use.
- Partner with the school by attending wellbeing workshops and awareness programs.



Staff

Employees are responsible for ensuring

- They abide by this policy and comply with the smoking prohibition requirements.
- Smoking is not permitted, at any time, in any part of the school or in grounds within the immediate vicinity including entrances and exits.
- Smoking is not permitted in school owned or in school buses.
- Smoking breaks during work time are not permitted.
- Not to portray smoking as acceptable and particularly since staff are viewed as role models by the pupils.
- Smoking whilst on school business during working time is not permitted in any building or any workplace irrespective of ownership.
- All staff are expected to refrain from smoking on all school trips, activities and events at all times.
- Visitors/members of the public must be made aware of the policy as appropriate, any breaches of the policy will be addressed. If an offender continues to smoke after they have been asked to stop, the offender must be asked to leave the premises.
- School will enforce this policy as part of its 'terms and conditions of employment'.
- Employees in breach of this policy will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy.

Working with Outside Agencies

The school collaborates external partnerships with:

- Dubai Police Anti-Narcotics Department for awareness campaigns. The school will notify the Dubai police if students are found to be in possession of illegal drugs/smoking paraphernalia whilst in school. (The school is obliged to involve Dubai Police and KHDA if a student(s) are suspended/excluded for a fixed term on account of known use of drugs/smoking or other illegal substances.)
- DHA / Ministry of Health and Prevention (MOHAP) for health education.
- KHDA/MoE wellbeing initiatives.
- Licensed NGOs and community organisations for counselling and parent support.



Response Protocol

If a student is identified as a user or suspected user:

- Immediate referral to the Senior Leadership Team, supported by the school counsellors
- Timely parental notification and involvement.
- Proper documentation and reporting in line with KHDA and MOE regulations.
- Referral to health authorities or law enforcement when required by law or in cases of serious concern.
- Supportive interventions will be prioritised, including counselling and behaviour support plans.

Support for Students

- Early Help and Rehabilitation will be prioritised with restorative justice.
- Student Support Service team provide confidential guidance and support.
- Parents will always be informed and involved when concerns arise.
- At-risk students will receive:
 - Counselling and referrals provided alongside
 - disciplinary measures.
 - External referrals, if needed.



Incident Management

Each case will be investigated as an individual case, so that all circumstances can be fully taken into account.

In the event of a drug-related incident:

- **Medical emergency** : The School Doctor and Nurse provide immediate care, call 999, if critical.
- **Immediate action**: Remove the student from the situation, ensure safety of others.
- **Confiscation**: Any suspected substance will be sealed, labelled, signed by witnesses and handed directly to Dubai Police or relevant UAE authorities.
- **Investigation**: Conducted confidentially and fairly, with medical input from the School doctor where needed.
- **Reporting**: Notify Senior Leadership Team, Parents, and UAE authorities.
- **Documentation**: Complete an Incident Sheet



Making a Decision

- Allow time and space to consider the seriousness of the situation.
- Is the drug involved legal or illegal? Is the student co-operative or not? Are others involved? Notify parents/carers.
- Focus on the young person rather than the substance. Any decision should take into account what is best for the student, what is best for the school and lastly what is the legal position for all involved?
- Seek advice from professionals / appropriate agency to inform the decision

Responding to the Incident

- Each incident should be considered on its own merit, and a variety of responses will be necessary.
- An incident report sheet must be filled in each time.

INCIDENT SHEET		
Incident Details		
Date	Time	Year
Location	Description	
Impaired?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Drugs present?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Witnessed?		
Other involved?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Student involved?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
School Response		
Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Response Method	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Action Taken		

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Governing Body / Senior Leadership Team:** Oversight and review of the policy.
- **Counsellor:** Oversee curriculum delivery, staff training, resources, and provide emotional support.
- **School Doctor:** Provide medical expertise in handling drug-related incidents.
 - ✓ Oversee medication protocols and supervise the School Nurse in administering prescribed medication.
 - ✓ Conduct student health assessments where substance misuse is suspected.
 - ✓ Liaise with DHA for referrals when required.
 - ✓ Advise parents and staff on preventive health education related to drugs, smoking, and substance misuse.
- **School Nurse:** Administer prescribed medicines safely, maintain records, and support the doctor in student health needs.
- **Teachers / Staff:**
 - Deliver lessons, identify and report concerns, support prevention initiatives.
 - Staff must not attend school under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
 - All staff will receive training on drug awareness, safeguarding, and incident management.
 - Designated staff will receive training on handling evidence and reporting procedures.

- Specialist training will be provided to first aiders and staff responsible for administering medication.
- **Parents:** Reinforce awareness at home and cooperate with interventions. Read informative communication, monitor children when you notice sudden or drastic behaviour changes.
- **Students:** Wellbeing Champions engage positively and uphold the code of conduct.
- **Others:** Assignment of toilet staff, security staff, and corridor duty under a school initiative to monitor and deter smoking, vaping, and other prohibited activities.

Equal Opportunities

- Drug education will be accessible to all students regardless of ability, gender, nationality, or background.
- Lessons will respect cultural and religious sensitivities while ensuring compliance with UAE law.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The policy will be reviewed annually or as required by changes in legislation or UAE law or KHDA/MoE guidelines change.
- Regular reviews will be conducted by the Counsellors and Senior Leadership Team.
- Effectiveness will be evaluated through student feedback, staff reflections, and parent surveys.





INCIDENT SHEET

Student Name: _____

Class: _____

Incident Details

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____

Drug Involved: _____

Evidence (Please circle) KEPT DESTROYED

Witnessed by: _____

Others involved: _____

Student's Belongings searched: YES NO

School Response

Emergency: YES NO

Parents notified: YES NO

Others Notified: _____

Actions to be Taken: _____

Approved by: School Management

Next Review Date: June 2026