

Smoking and Vaping (e-cigarette) policy

Rationale

This policy is adapted from the Department of Education and Training's Smoking and Vaping Ban policy and has been adapted to include Westall Secondary College's response to students who choose to smoke cigarettes or use e-cigarettes (vapes) in school. The policy seeks to support our staff, students and parents/carers in having a clear, agreed understanding of the health implications of smoking and vaping, as well as highlight the school's clear response to incidents when they occur in school.

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to support public health objectives and ensure there is no smoking or use of e-cigarettes (commonly known as 'vaping') on school premises (buildings and grounds), within 4 metres of school entrances or at school sanctioned events held off-premises.

Summary

- In Victoria, a person must not smoke or use e-cigarettes on school premises or within 4 metres of any pedestrian access point to school premises.
- Inhaling vapour from an e-cigarette is known as 'vaping'. When using an e-cigarette, the user inhales and exhales the vapour, which can look similar to smoking a cigarette. The prohibition on smoking includes the use of e-cigarettes (vaping) and applies whether or not the e-cigarette contains nicotine.
- Cigarettes and e-cigarettes cannot be sold to people under 18 years of age.
- It is a legislative requirement that schools display suitable 'No Smoking' signs at all pedestrian access points (entrances) to the school grounds. The legislation defines smoking to include the use of an e-cigarette.
- In Victoria, a person must not smoke in a motor vehicle if a person under 18 years is also present in the motor vehicle.
- Smoking and vaping are also not permitted during school events and excursions held off school premises.

Details

A person must not smoke cigarettes including e-cigarettes (regardless of whether they contain nicotine), within school premises and within 4 metres of any pedestrian access to school premises. Smoking in these places is a fineable offence.

Schools must display 'No Smoking' signs and enforce the ban to prohibit smoking and vaping on school premises (including buildings and grounds) and within 4 metres of school entrances.

The smoking and vaping ban applies to:

- anyone present on school premises during and outside of school hours including students, teachers, contractors, parents or carers or the wider community, such as sporting groups
- all activities that take place on school premises including pre-schools, kindergartens, outside school hours care, cultural, sporting or recreational activities and school fetes.

Smoking and vaping are also not permitted during school events and excursions held off school premises.

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Schools must:

- display 'No Smoking' signs at each pedestrian access point to the school premises. Free 'No Smoking' signs can be ordered and downloaded through the Department of Health and Human Services website — refer to the Resources tab
- display the signs in such a prominent position at each entrance to make it clear that the area at or within 4 metres of that entrance is a 'no smoking' area.

Principals or their delegate should:

- ensure that the whole school community is aware that smoking and vaping are not permitted on school premises and within 4 metres of school entrances. This may be achieved through the signage required at each entrance. If further measures are required (due to non-compliance), notices in the school newsletter, on the school website and direct communication with specific staff, students, parents/carers or visitors who are non-compliant may be required
- remind the school community that smoking and vaping are not permitted at school-sanctioned events held off school premises
- where relevant remind staff that a person must not smoke in a motor vehicle if a person under 18 years is also present in the motor vehicle
- encourage Department employees who require support complying with the ban to either:
 - call the Quitline on 13 7848. Quitline is a friendly, confidential telephone service. A Quitline counsellor is trained to listen carefully and provide practical advice tailored for each person.
 - use the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or contact LifeWorks (1300 361 008)
- if necessary, arrange training with Quit Victoria on how to support staff and young people to quit
- make tobacco education information available. Education resources are available in the Resources tab.

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), commonly known as 'vaping'

In Victoria, it is illegal for any person aged 18 or over to obtain, possess or use nicotine e-cigarettes, or e-cigarette cartridges containing nicotine, or nicotine liquids for use in a vaporiser, without a prescription. It is illegal to sell e-cigarettes to, or buy e-cigarettes for, any person aged under 18 years, whether or not the e-cigarettes contain nicotine. Whilst it is not unlawful for a person to possess or use e-cigarettes that do not contain nicotine, it is unlawful to use them on school premises or within 4 metres of a school entrance.

Definitions

Electronic cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) are electronic devices which heat and vaporise liquids that may or may not contain nicotine or flavouring agents. The vapour is inhaled, simulating the act of smoking. Use of e-cigarettes is commonly referred to as 'vaping'.

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School response to incidents of smoking or vaping

The following toilets have been fitted with Vape sensors:

- Main boys' toilet (left and right)
- Main girls' toilet (left and right)
- Gender neutral toilet
- Sports centre boys' toilet/changing room
- Sports centre girls' toilet/changing room

When vapour is detected in the toilets or a staff member observes a student vaping in an external area, members of the school's leadership team will be alerted. Cameras will be used to identify any students in the close vicinity, entering or exiting the toilet area at the time of the sensor being set off.

If a student can be identified as the perpetrator *beyond reasonable doubt* (ie. they are in possession of an e-cigarette or are the only student identified in the area where the vape sensor was set off), in the first instance the school's response will be:

- The identified student will be required to attend a smoking and e-cigarette awareness workshop with the School Nurse (run weekly).
- The identified student will be offered an appointment with the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, to access further support from external services if required.
- Parent/carer phone call to inform the family of the incident, with the incident/phone call recorded on Compass Chronicle.
- The school's smoking/e-cigarette policy will be emailed to the student and the parents/carers.

In the second or further instances of students found to be vaping or in possession of a vape, the school's response will be:

- The identified student will be offered an appointment with the Student Wellbeing Coordinator/School Nurse.
- The student may be referred to an external organisation such as:
 - **Quitline** provide advice and confidential counselling, including for children from 8 am to 8 pm Monday to Friday – phone 13 78 48
 - **DirectLine** is a state-wide alcohol and other drugs advice service offering confidential counselling and referral 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – phone 1800 888 236
 - **Youth, Drugs and Alcohol Advice** provide a youth-specific advice service from 9 am to 8 pm Monday to Friday – phone 1800 458 685
 - **Alcohol and Drug Foundation** advice line – phone 1300 85 85 84
 - **Headspace** offer mental health support online, by phone and in person through headspace centres.
- Parent/carer phone call to inform them of the incident, with the incident/phone call recorded on Compass Chronicle.
- The school's smoking/e-cigarette policy will be re-emailed to the student and the parents/carers.
- The identified student will receive a **one-day external suspension**, in line with DET's suspension guidelines.
- The student and a parent/career will be required to attend a return to school meeting before the student can return to classes post-suspension.

Review cycle and evaluation

Policy last reviewed	23/10/2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	23/10/2027