



## HIV / AIDS POLICY

### VISION OF OUR SCHOOL

We wish to make all learners and the community aware of AIDS and how to prevent it.

### BACKGROUND

HIV is a very small germ or organism called a virus, which infects people. It cannot be seen by the naked eye. HIV is mainly spread through sexual contact, and through contact with infected body fluids. It survives and multiplies in body fluids such as sperm, vaginal fluids, breast milk, and saliva.

HIV attacks the body's natural ability to fight illness called immune system. This is the body's defence against infection. It makes it harder for the body to resist all kind of illness such as flu, diarrhoea, pneumonia, TB and certain cancers.

The constitution guarantees the right to educate, the right not to be unfairly discriminated against, the right to life and bodily integrity, the right to privacy, the right to a safe environment and the right to dignity.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Department of Education's Policy on HIV/AIDS as published in Government Gazette No 20372 dated 10 August 1999. All numbers indicated in brackets refer to the paragraph in the National Policy.

### DEFINITION

- a) Open wounds: This consists of any open sore, break in the skin, graze or open skin lesion.
- b) Bodily fluids: refers to tears, saliva, mucus, urine, vomit, faeces and pus. These fluids must be handled with caution as they may contain HIV infected blood.

### HIV/AIDS TESTING

Testing for HIV/AIDS at school is voluntarily or may only happen based on the government or instruction from the Department of Education.



## **DISCLOSURE**

No learner or educator is compelled to disclose their HIV/AIDS status. Voluntary disclosure to the appropriate authority would be welcomed and an enabling environment must be created in which the confidentiality of such information is ensured and in which unfair discrimination is not tolerated.

## **NON DISCRIMINATION AND EQUALITY**

No learner or educator with HIV/AIDS may be unfairly discriminated against directly or indirectly.

Learners may not be denied admission or continued attendance at school on account of their HIV/AIDS status or perceived status.

Educators must be trained and given support to handle confidentiality where learners disclose their HIV/AIDS condition.

An educator may disclose his/her HIV/AIDS status to the principle.

Unauthorised disclosure of HIV/AIDS related information could give rise to legal liability.

Infection control measures and adaptations must be universally applied and carried out regardless of the known or unknown HIV status of individuals concerned. All persons should be considered as potentially infected and their blood and body fluids treated as such

Learners must be educated about their rights concerning their own bodies, to protect themselves against rape, violence, inappropriate sexual behaviour and contracting HIV

## **ATTENDANCE**

Learners with infectious illness must be kept away from school protect all other members, especially those whose immune system may be impaired by HIV/AIDS.

## **EDUCATION**

Learners must receive age-appropriate education about HIV/AIDS.

This should be integrated in the curriculum. The learner's regular educator (class teacher) should provide education about HIV/AIDS. (Education regarding HIV/AIDS must be integrated in the curriculum and presented by class teacher.) The educators must attend courses to improve their knowledge of, and skills to deal with, HIV/AIDS.



## **SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS**

As HIV is transmitted only through blood, semen, vaginal fluid, and breast milk and not day to day social contact, the prevention of HIV/AIDS transmission is to be promoted by the application of Universal Precautions within the school. These precautions must be applied regardless of the known or unknown HIV status of individuals concerned.

All blood, open wounds (sores, breaks in the skin, grazes, open skin lesions); and bodily fluids which could be contaminated with blood (tears, saliva, mucus, phlegm, urine, vomit, faeces, and pus) should be treated as potentially infectious.

- a) Blood spills should be handled with extreme caution.
- b) Skin exposed to blood should be washed immediately with soap and running water.
- c) All bleeding must be cleaned immediately with running water and antiseptic.
- d) If there is a biting or scratching incident where the skin is broken, the wound should be washed and cleaned under running water, dried, treated with antiseptic and covered with waterproofed dressing.
- e) Blood splashes to the face should be flushed with running water for at least three minutes.
- f) Disposal bags and incinerators must be available to dispose of sanitary wear.

All open wounds must be completely and securely covered with a non-porous or waterproofed dressing or plaster so that there is no risk of exposure to blood.

All persons attending to blood spills and wounds must wear protective latex/rubber gloves.

Bleeding can be managed by compression with material that will absorb blood.

Surfaces contaminated with bodily fluids and blood must be cleaned with running water and bleach (1:10 solution) and paper or disposable cloths. The person doing the cleaning must wear protective gloves.

Blood contaminated material must be sealed in a plastic bag and incinerated/ sent to a appropriate disposal firm. Tissues and toilet paper may be flushed down a toilet.

Instrument contaminated with blood or body fluids must be washed and placed in a strong bleach solution for at least one hour.



**The school will maintain at least 2 first aid kits, which will include the following:**

- a) 2 large and 2 medium pairs of disposable latex gloves.
- b) 2 large and 2 medium pairs household rubber gloves for handling blood-soaked material.
- c) Absorbent material, waterproof plasters, disinfected (hypochlorite), and a protective resuscitation mouth piece.
- d) Protective eye wear, and
- e) Protective face mask to cover nose and mouth.

Each classroom must be a pair of latex or household rubber gloves.

First aid kits and cleaning equipment must always be accessible.

The contents of first aid kits should be checked regularly against a content list.

A fully equipped first aid kit must be available at all school events, outing and tours, and must be kept on vehicles transporting learners.

Learners, educators and other staff must be given appropriate information and training on HIV transmission, the handling and use of first aid kits and the application and importance of universal precautions:

- a) They must be trained to manage their own bleeding and injuries and to assist and protect others.
- b) They must be instructed never to touch blood or open wounds, nor to handle nosebleeds, cuts and scrapes of their own, but to call for help from educators immediately.
- c) They must be taught that all open wounds and grazes must be always covered with waterproof dressing or plaster.

All cleaning staff, learners, educators, and parents must be informed about the universal precautions.

## **PREVENTION OF HIV TRANSMISSION DURING PLAY AND SPORTS**

The risk of HIV transmission during contact play and sport is insignificant, but increases when open wounds are exposed to infected blood. Adequate wound management is therefore essential:

- a) No one may participate in contact play with an uncovered wound.
- b) If bleeding occurs during play, the injured player must be removed immediately and treated as per the universal precaution. The player may resume playing as long as the wound remain covered.
- c) Blood-stained clothes must be changed.
- d) The same precautions must be applied to injured educators, staff members, and spectators.

A fully equipped first aid kit must be available whenever contact play takes place; and Universal precautions must be adhered to in the event of bleeding.



## References

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996

The South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996

Department of Education, National Policy on HIV/AIDS. No 20372 dated 10 Aug 1999.

This policy was adopted by the School Management on

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This policy has been made available to school personnel and is readily accessible to parents and learners on request.

This policy will be reviewed and updated every year.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
School Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Educator Representative

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

