



POLICY (Number: Fiv)

HIV AND AIDS POLICY

This policy forms part of the school's approach to dealing with HIV/AIDS and is drawn from the ISASA guidelines and the National Policy on HIV and AIDS for Learners and Educators in Public Schools and Students and Educators in Further Education and Training Institutions (10 August 1999, Volume 410, Number 20372).

HIV and AIDS is one of major challenges facing all South Africans. It was estimated that almost 25% of the general population would be HIV positive by the year 2010. HIV is spread mainly through sexual contact, breast feeding and mother to child transmission. In keeping with International standards and in accordance with education law and the constitutional guarantees of the right to a basic education, right not to be unfairly discriminated against, the right to life and bodily integrity, right to privacy, the right to safe environment and the best interests of the child,

The purpose of this policy is to:

- To prevent the spread of HIV infection.
- To demystify HIV & AIDS
- Allay fears
- Reduce stigma
- Instil non-discriminatory attitudes, develop knowledge, skills, values and attitudes in order that they may adopt and maintain behaviour that will protect them from HIV infection and to support infected and affected people.

1. Definitions

- 1.2. "SH" means Somerset House;
- 1.3. "HIV" means the human immune deficiency virus;
- 1.4. "AIDS" means the acquired immune deficiency syndrome, which is the final phase of HIV infection
- 1.5. "Universal precautions" refers to the concept used worldwide in the context of HIV/AIDS to indicate the standard infection control procedures of precautionary measures aimed at the prevention of HIV transmission from one person to another and includes instructions concerning basic hygiene and wearing of protective clothing such as rubber gloves.

2. Non-discrimination and equality regarding pupils and staff members with HIV/AIDS

- 2.1. No pupil or staff member with or perceived to have HIV/AIDS may be unfairly discriminated against.
- 2.2. Pupils and staff members with HIV/AIDS should be treated in a just, humane and life-affirming way, considering the fears, objections and the rights of all parties affected – a fair and balanced stance is necessary in the interest of the entire school community.
- 2.3. Any special measures required in respect of a student or staff member with HIV should be fair and justifiable in the light of medical facts or school conditions, and must be financially feasible, considering a balancing of interests of the pupil and staff member with HIV/AIDS and those of other pupils or staff members, and their parents.

3. HIV/AIDS testing: the admission of students to SH and the appointment of staff members

- 3.1. No pupil may be denied entrance to or continued attendance at the school on account of his or her HIV/AIDS status or perceived HIV/AIDS status. However, that pupil may be expected to pay an additional fee, as determined by the Board of Governors, from time to time, to meet the added burden on the school to accommodate an HIV/AIDS pupil.
- 3.2. No staff member may be denied the right to teach or to be promoted because his or her HIV/AIDS status or perceived HIV/AIDS status. HIV/AIDS status may not be the reason for dismissal of a staff member.
- 3.3. Pupils are expected to attend classes in accordance with school requirements for as long as they can function effectively and pose no medically significant risk to others at the school.
- 3.4. If, and when pupils with HIV/AIDS become incapacitated through illness, or poses a risk to others at the school, the school will make academic work available to them for study at home and parents should, where practically possible, be allowed to educate their children at home, at the request of parents. All such arrangements are to be made by the parent in conjunction with the Management Team.



4. Disclosure of HIV/AIDS-related information and confidentiality

- 4.1. No pupil (or parent on behalf of a pupil) or staff member, may be compelled to disclose his or her HIV/AIDS status to the school.
- 4.2. Genuine voluntary disclosure of HIV/AIDS is however welcomed and encouraged. In the event of voluntary disclosure, it may be in the best interests of a pupil with HIV/AIDS if a member of the Management Team of the school is informed of his or her HIV/AIDS status, either by the pupil or by the pupil's parent(s).
- 4.3. Any person to whom any information about the medical condition of a pupil or staff member with HIV/AIDS has been divulged is expected to keep this information **confidential**.
- 4.4. Disclosures to third parties may nevertheless be authorized with the informed consent of the pupil (if the pupil is above the age of 14 years), or his/her parent, or by the written consent of the staff member, or as is justified by statutory or legal authorization, or necessity, as would be in the case of an emergency.

5. Safe SH environment

- 5.1. SH will implement universal precautions to effectively eliminate the risk of transmission of all blood-borne pathogens, including HIV, in the school environment, as far as is practical.

6. Prevention of HIV transmission during play and sport

Considering:

- 6.1. The risk of HIV transmission because of contact play and contact sport is generally insignificant.
- 6.2. The risk increases where open wounds, sores, breaks in the skin, grazes, open skin lesions or mucous membranes of pupils, and staff members without HIV are exposed to infected blood.
- 6.3. Certain contact sports (such as rugby and boxing) may represent an increased risk of HIV transmission.
- 6.4. Adequate wound management, in the form of the application of universal precautions is essential to contain the risk of HIV transmission during contact play and contact sport.

Therefore:

- 6.5. If bleeding occurs during contact play or contact sport, the injured player should be taken off the playground or sports field immediately and appropriately treated. Only then may the player resume playing and only for as long as any open wound, sore, break in the skin, graze or open skin lesion remains securely covered.
- 6.7. Soiled clothes must be changed.
- 6.8. The same precaution should be applied to injured staff members or staff members and injured spectators.
- 6.9. Sports participants, including coaches, with HIV/AIDS should preferably seek medical counselling before participation in sport, in order to assess risks to their own health as well as the risk of HIV transmission to other participants.
- 6.10. Staff members acting as sports administrators, team managers and coaches should ensure the availability of first-aid kits and the adherence to universal precautions in the event of bleeding during sports participation.

7. Education on HIV/AIDS at SH

- 7.1. A continuing HIV/AIDS education programme is in place at SH. It is aimed at pupils and staff members (both academic and support).
- 7.2. Age-appropriate education on HIV/AIDS forms part of the curriculum for all pupils and is integrated in the life-skills education programme for pre-primary and primary school pupils. This is not limited to, but includes the following:
 - Providing information on HIV/AIDS in South Africa and developing the life skills necessary for the prevention of these infections;
 - Inculcating, from an early age onwards, basic first-aid principles, including how to deal with bleeding;
 - Emphasizing the role of drugs, sexual abuse and violence in the transmission of HIV;
 - Encouraging pupils to make use of health care, counselling and support service (including services related to reproductive health care and the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases) offered by community service organisations and other disciplines;
 - Teaching pupils how to behave towards persons with HIV/AIDS;
 - Cultivating an enabling environment and a culture of non-discrimination towards persons with HIV/AIDS; *and*
 - Providing information on appropriate prevention and avoidance measures including abstinence from sexual intercourse, the use of condoms and the application of universal precautions.
- 7.3. Education and information regarding HIV/AIDS is given in an accurate and scientific manner and in language and terms that are understandable.



- 7.4 Staff members (academic and support) are provided with relevant HIV/AIDS education through workshops and the provision of relevant educational material on a continuing basis.
- 7.4. Parents of pupils are kept abreast of all HIV/AIDS education offered at the school and institution, the learning content and methodology to be used as well as values that will be imparted. They should be invited to participate in parental guidance sessions and should be made aware of their role as sexuality teachers and imparters of values at home.

8. Duties and responsibilities of students, staff members and parents

- 8.1. All pupils and staff members should respect the rights of other pupils and staff members.
- 8.2. It should be emphasized that the ultimate responsibility for a pupil's behaviour rests with his or her parents. Parents of all pupils:
 - Are expected to require pupils to observe all rules aimed at preventing behaviour which may create the risk of HIV transmission;
 - Are encouraged to take an active interest in acquiring any information or knowledge on HIV/AIDS supplied by the school and to attend meetings convened for them by the Management Team or Board of Governors.
- 8.3. It is recommended that a pupil or staff member with HIV/AIDS and his or her parent, in the case of pupils, should obtain a medical opinion to assess whether the pupil or staff member, owing to his or her condition or conduct, poses a medically recognized significant health risk to others. If such a risk is established, the Head of the school and the Chairman of the Board of Governors must be informed. The Head of the school, after consulting with the Chairman of the Board of Governors, must take the necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of all the other pupils and staff members.
- 8.4. Staff members have a duty to ensure that the rights and dignity of all pupils and staff members are protected and promoted.

9. Refusal to study with or teach a pupil with HIV/AIDS or to work with a staff member with HIV/AIDS

- 9.1. Refusal to study with a pupil or to work with a staff member with or perceived to have HIV/AIDS should be pre-empted by providing accurate and understandable information on HIV/AIDS to all staff members, as well as to pupils, and their parents.
- 9.2. Nevertheless, pupils who refuse to study with a fellow pupil or staff members who refuse to work with a fellow staff member or to teach a pupil with or perceived to have HIV/AIDS, will be counselled.
- 9.3. The situation will be resolved by the Head and staff members and, if necessary, with the assistance of the Board of Governors in accordance with the principles contained in this policy.