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Smoking/Vaping Policy

**Help for non-English speakers**

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Emerald Secondary College on (03) 5968 5388 or email [emerald.sc@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:emerald.sc@education.vic.gov.au)

**Purpose**

Emerald Secondary College recognises the danger of smoking and passive smoking causes to one’s health, as well as the need for the school and its staff to provide positive role models to students. Government legislation stipulated that from the 13th April 2015 –‘smoking is banned within four metres of an entrance to all primary and secondary schools in Victoria, and within the school grounds, under an amendment to the Tobacco Act 1987.’

Vaping – the act of smoking e-cigarettes or ‘vapes’ – also poses significant danger to one’s health. The use vapes is considered as smoking. In Victoria, it is illegal to sell to or buy these for any person aged under 18 years whether or not the e-cigarettes contain nicotine. It is unlawful to use them on school premises or close to a school entrance*.* Students found in possession or use of these items will be considered to have breached this policy.

Therefore in line with mandated Government legislation, Emerald Secondary College is a smoke-free and vape-free environment, and students, staff and visitors are not permitted to smoke, or possess smoking/vaping paraphernalia, within any area of the College property, nor at any school related activity or function by students, staff and visitors.

This policy recognises that smoking and passive smoking, which also includes students in the company of smokers and vapers, is dangerous to the health of employees and students. Students, staff and visitors who smoke are infringing the rights of others to a smoke-free workplace.

**Note:** Students identified smoking in school uniform out of school/out of bell time hours may be treated in the same manner as smoking/being in the company of smokers as if they were on school grounds.

**SMOKING MATERIALS**

Students who bring smoking material (Vapes, E-cigarettes, cigarettes, and other tobacco related material such as papers, lighters etc.) to school will have this material confiscated and not returned. This also includes the college not returning any confiscated items to the students or Parent/Guardian. Students should also be aware that a possible investigation into how students came to be in possession of this material may also occur.

It is worth noting that the primary objective of this policy is to ensure the health and wellbeing of our students and the health risks that are associated with smoking. Education around this aspect of health and wellbeing does form specific parts of the College curriculum for all students. Informed choices about the risks of smoking and other associated drugs/alcohol that are prevalent in any community also forms part of our College wide Health and Wellbeing program which is undertaken through both our BEST Program as well as being supported by specific targeted programs.

Further support material for schools is available at:

<https://lungfoundation.com.au/lung-health/protecting-your-lungs/e-cigarettes-and-vaping/>

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/smoking-vaping-ban/policy>

**WHERE THE BAN APPLIES**

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 outside school hours care, cultural, sporting or recreational activities and school fetes
* all camp and excursion activities that take place as part of a school based program including outside normal school hours

Smoking and vaping are also banned within four metres of any part of a pedestrian access point (entrance) to the premises.

**WHEN THE BAN APPLIES**

The smoking and vaping ban applies at all times, no matter whether the building or school grounds are being used for education purposes or other purposes. The ban therefore applies when other activities are taking place on the school grounds, such as fetes or sporting events, as well as during school hours.

**WHY THE BAN EXISTS**

**To protect children and young people from the dangers of second-hand smoke and vapour**

This ban ensures that children and young people can enter and leave these areas without being exposed to harmful second-hand smoke and vapour. Their health is particularly at risk because they have smaller airways and less developed immune systems compared to adults.

**To reduce the role modelling of smoking and vaping behaviours around children and young people**

Children and young people are more likely to view smoking and vaping as socially acceptable when they regularly see people doing it.

Banning smoking and vaping in areas used by children and young people will discourage children and young people from using tobacco or e-cigarette products.

**EMERALD SECONDARY COLLEGE APPROACH**

Students engage in a range of educational opportunities around the health risks and responses to smoking and vaping, including:

* Curriculum delivered in PE/Health classes 7-10 and embedded within units of VCE Health
* BEST pastoral care lessons
* Wellbeing Incursions
* Assembly presentations
* Parent/carer forums as part of the Student Support Services ‘parent/carer engagement program’
* Articles in the newsletter
* Resources available of Compass News Feed for students and parent/carers
* Engagement with the Youth Police Liaison Officer, YSAS and other external agencies
* Clubs and Committees committed to positive health/wellbeing (i.e. SRC, Student Parliament, PE/Sport, and;
* Ongoing professional learning for staff and families

**CONSEQUENCES AT EMERALD SECONDARY COLLEGE**

There are a range of consequences for students who engage with smoking/vaping including:

Engagement in a Behaviour Intervention Meeting (parent/carers, students, student management team); Consequences as directed by School Principal and Department of Education Training, which may include: confiscation of device/material, reflection exercises, withdrawal of privileges, detention, suspension, further education, school counselling and/or other appropriate outcomes as determined by the Principal.

Students found in possession of cigarettes, vaping systems or associated paraphernalia or using vapes or smoking will face consequences (outlined above) and escalated consequences will occur if subsequent offending takes place. Students in the company of others in possession or using will also face similar consequences.

Consequences will be coupled with a planned wellbeing and health response and support. Procedures for students who breach any aspect of the above whilst at school or during any school related activity or function are:

1. Parents/Guardian will be contacted and the student will be issued with a consequence from the College. The student and parent/carer will be provided with a fact sheet about the associated dangers and health risks of vaping and/or smoking.
2. During the period of consequence the student will be required to undertake some educational related tasks related to the health impacts of smoking/passive smoking. The website below provides links/activities to such material.

Cigarette Smoking: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/documents/school/teachers/health/sfscurriculum.pdf>

Vaping:

[https://lungfoundation.com.au/resources/vaping-and-young-people-youth-age-12-17/](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flungfoundation.com.au%2Fresources%2Fvaping-and-young-people-youth-age-12-17%2F&data=05%7C01%7CTanja.Korsten%40education.vic.gov.au%7Cffdf3f88cedb4a08790608da41cd876c%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637894648253765266%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=xALQwZUpSB3hX7Pn8iDRErRxgkhKKIt2EzZErzzkdVU%3D&reserved=0)

*(Associated Student Reflective Task available)*

Students will also be supported by the College Wellbeing Team.

3. Consistent breaches of this policy may result in police involvement. The penalty for breaking school smoking and vaping ban laws is a court fine of a maximum of five penalty units ($924.60 as of 1 July 2022) or an infringement fine of one penalty unit ($184.92 as of 1 July 2022).

The value of a penalty unit is set annually by the Department of Treasury and Finance and is updated on 1 July each year. These rates are specified in [Gazette Number G16 dated 21 April 2022](http://www.gazette.vic.gov.au/gazette/Gazettes2022/GG2022G016.pdf).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information:

* visit the tobacco reforms website call the Tobacco Information Line on 1300 136 775 Better
* Health Channel — contains information on the health effects of smoking, strategies for quitting, statistics and Victoria’s laws on smoking.
* health.vic — a Victorian State Government website where schools can download documents and signage to display on school grounds.
* Quit Victoria — offers resources, information and support for people to quit smoking and vaping.
* Better Health Channel: e-cigarettes — contains information on the dangers of e-cigarettes. Better
* Health Channel: e-liquids — contains information the liquid used in e-cigarettes and the dangers of nicotine poisoning.
* The Royal Children’s Hospital: e-cigarettes and teens — contains information on how to talk to teens about the health risks of using e-cigarettes.
* The Royal Children’s Hospital — contains a video suitable for school staff and parents/carers on health risks of using e-cigarettes.

To view the legislation visit the Victorian Government’s legislation website and search Tobacco Act 1987.

**POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

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| Policy last reviewed | 19/04/23 |
| Approved by | School Council |
| Next scheduled review date | 19/04/25 |