



HIV AIDS POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

St Benedict's acknowledges the seriousness of the HIV and AIDS pandemic and understands that its social, economic, health and development impact should be managed. The school is committed to creating and maintaining a safe school environment for all pupils and staff, and undertakes to deal with an HIV and AIDS infected person in the same manner as it would with a person suffering from any other form of life-threatening disease.

PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure fairness, consistency and compliance with applicable legislation by providing guidelines for dealing with HIV and AIDS in the workplace
- Create a supportive working environment where pupils and staff who are HIV+ can get assistance and feel free to disclose their status should they wish to do so without fear of discrimination or victimisation
- Ensure equal treatment of all HIV+ persons
- Respect confidentiality and treat pupils and staff who contract HIV and AIDS in a humane, life-affirming manner
- Ensure that the school minimises the possible transmission of the virus

OBJECTIVES OF POLICY

The objectives of this policy is to ensure that:

- The rights of all pupils and staff are respected
- The confidentiality of the individual is protected
- Pupils and staff with HIV are managed in an appropriate way
- Further HIV infection is prevented
- A Non-discriminatory and caring learning environment is created
- HIV AIDS education and awareness is incorporated into the Life Skills and Life Orientation programmes of the school

PRINCIPLES

1. The school, its management, staff and pupils have co-responsibility to create a safe learning and working environment.
2. All staff and pupils, including those who are infected with or affected by HIV and/or AIDS will be treated in a humane and life affirming way without any prejudice or stigma.
3. No discrimination against anyone with a positive status will be tolerated.
4. The standard conditions of employment will be applicable to all employees, including employees who are infected with or affected by HIV and AIDS.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- Persons with HIV and AIDS have the right to confidentiality and privacy concerning their health and HIV status
- Where a pupil or staff member contracts HIV, it is advisable but not mandatory for the individual to notify the School of this fact
- An individual is not obliged to disclose his/her HIV and AIDS status to the school or other person
- Where a pupil or staff member discloses that he/she is HIV+, strictest confidentiality shall be observed. No person will be advised of the individual's HIV status without the individual's prior written consent.
- Absolute confidentiality of all records relating to personal health and HIV status of individuals will be maintained
- Any breach of confidentiality will be regarded as a serious offense and treated accordingly

RIGHTS OF PUPILS AND STAFF

The rights of pupils:

- A pupil who is HIV+ will not be denied access to or excluded from the school
- Parents do not have to declare their child's HIV-status
- Pupils who are HIV+ will not be denied the opportunity to reach their full potential. Any special measures taken regarding a pupil should be medically justifiable and taken in consultation with the pupil and his parent
- The School will not test pupils for HIV before they are admitted to the school or while they are at school

The rights of staff:

- While HIV-screening may be provided as part of the school's Wellness Programme, participation will be entirely voluntary.
- Staff will not be tested for HIV without their consent while in the employ of the school
- A staff member will never be forced to disclose their HIV status
- A prospective employee's HIV-status will have no bearing on their possible appointment at the school
- A staff member will not be dismissed, demoted or discriminated against in any way because of their HIV status



FAIR LABOUR PRACTICE

Performance / Incapacity

- HIV+ individuals are generally fit and do not pose a threat to other persons
- The School will provide continued and suitable employment/education to the individuals for as long as they are capable of fulfilling the job/studies
- An individual with HIV and AIDS is expected to meet the same performance requirements that apply to other persons, with "reasonable accommodation" where required
- An individual suffering from full blown AIDS may eventually develop symptoms to the extent that he/she has become incapacitated and is not able to perform as required. Such cases should be dealt with in terms of the Schools Conditions of Service on Incapacity owing to ill health

PROMOTING A SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

- The School is obliged to provide and maintain, as far as reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health of its pupils and staff (Occupational Health and Safety Act)
- The risk of HIV transmission within the workplace or classroom is minimal. However occupational accidents involving body fluids may occur and this should be reported immediately

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND COUNSELLING

- The school accepts that education, training and counselling of individuals is the most effective means of preventing the spread of the HIV and AIDS virus and deal with its effects in the workplace
- The school undertakes to provide counselling and support to the HIV and AIDS positive pupils and staff within the framework of the Employee Wellness Programme

PREVENTION

The universal prevention regulations must be adhered to. A fully-stocked First Aid Kit must be taken on every tour or excursion. This kit must contain:

- Latex and rubber gloves
- Scissors, bandages, water, paper towels, KPR-mouth piece, eye protection (glasses) and a mask
- Disinfectant
- Plastic bag to discard material

St Benedict's will follow the following guidelines to prevent transmission and protect staff and pupils:

- Regard all accidents or incidents as potential infections
- Always use gloves when dealing with body fluids
- Change gloves between treating patients
- Wash hands afterwards even when gloves were used
- Always cover wounds with water resistant plasters
- Wear an apron if blood could spatter
- Exercise utmost caution when using needles.
- Use the correct mouth piece
- Disinfect instruments with JIK



- Discard waste in proper safe bins

No pupils may participate in contact sport if he has an open wound. If a pupil starts bleeding on the sports field, the pupil must immediately be removed of the field or gym and treated.

REVIEW GUIDELINES

These guidelines will be reviewed as the need arises in conjunction with developments in medical and scientific knowledge of the epidemic or any changes in the relevant national legislative requirements.

Policy History

Draft 1: April 2015 - L Nontela, A Oosthuysen

Approved at CAW Meeting 25 May 2015

Reviewed at LEAP Meeting 21 June 2022

