



SMOKING AND VAPING POLICY

Rationale

- Our school recognises the health risks caused by smoking, passive smoking, vaping, and passive vaping. We also recognise the need for schools to be positive educational environments for students around harm minimisation and making healthy choices.
- The Department of Education and Training (DET) has a comprehensive smoking policy. As a government school, Maffra Secondary College must adhere to this policy, which states:
 - 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.
 - Smoking and vaping are also not permitted during school events and excursions held off 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 (vapes) and applies whether or not the e-cigarette contains nicotine.
 - 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.

Aims:

By implementing this policy, we hope to achieve the following aims:

- To provide effective education for students (and our wider school community) around the health risks of smoking and vaping
- To ensure that a fair and reasonable process for responding to incidents of smoking and vaping is understood by the school community, and consistently followed
- To prevent and manage smoking and vaping as part of a whole-school approach to health and wellbeing

Implementation

Prevention

The health risks associated with smoking and vaping will form part of the Health and Physical Education curriculum for all students. Parents / guardians will be provided with information via the newsletter, Compass feed, email and parent information evenings regarding the following:

- Health risks associated with smoking and vaping
- Strategies to help prevent their children taking up smoking or vaping
- Advice on how to talk openly to their child about smoking or vaping

- Strategies to help their child quit if they have shown signs of smoking or vaping, or have addiction issues
- Wellbeing staff available to support their child and how to contact them

Students will be actively engaged to participate in health promotion activities to ensure that student voice about smoking / vaping is heard and acted upon. Staff will continue to receive professional development to ensure they are equipped to intervene and manage young people who choose to smoke or vape at school.

Management

For students found smoking or vaping either at school or on school sponsored activities a series of interventions will apply – see below. All interventions are based on the belief that smoking and vaping are primarily health issues, and recognizes the rapid dependent nature of nicotine. The college aims to support young people to remain smoke-and vape-free through the school day or on school sponsored activities.

Levels of Intervention:

First episode of smoking or vaping on school premises or on school activities:

1. Student is signed up for a lunchtime education session with the school nurse via COMPASS (chronicle entry – smoking / vaping education session). As part of this chronicle entry, COMPASS sends home an email to parents which has some information regarding the health risks (see next page).
 - a. If student does not attend, the school nurse will place them on a 30 minute year level detention, and also place them on another lunchtime education session with nurse.
2. Year Level Coordinator contacts parents / guardians and informs them of what has happened and that there are educational resources being put in place. YLC discusses what happens if a second episode of smoking or vaping occurs.
3. Staff member confiscates student's vaping device or cigarettes.

Second episode of smoking or vaping on school premises or on school activities:

1. Student is externally suspended for one day. Learning tasks are made available via Compass.
2. Return to school meeting is arranged with parent before student returns to normal classes.
3. Behaviour contract is developed and discussed at parent meeting, ensuring that all involved understand the expectations and laws that are in place around smoking and vaping in schools
4. Further education with nurse is arranged as necessary (depending on level of understanding demonstrated).

Communication sent home to parents via COMPASS:

Dear <parent name>

<student name> has been smoking/vaping at school or on a school sponsored activity.

It is part of our procedure to contact parents/guardians. Maffra Secondary College is a Smoke and Vape-Free school. This means

- Schools are smoke-and vape-free environments.
- All school activities are smoke and vape-free.
- Students, staff and parents must refrain from smoking in school premises, on the school grounds, or at school functions and activities.

Parents, carers, schools, and community all play an important role in protecting children and young people from, and educating them about, the harmful effects smoking and vaping.

Research from the Royal Children's Hospital shows many parents and carers are not aware of the harmful effects or how their views about smoking and vaping can impact the likelihood of a young person taking up smoking or vaping.

The Department of Education and Training has developed resources to help you learn more about the health risks of smoking and vaping, and some suggestions about how to talk to children and young people about vaping, and where to get support. To access the resources, go to <https://www.vic.gov.au/smoking-and-vaping-advice-parents>

As your child was caught smoking or vaping on school premises we are writing to notify you of the current school policy. Your child will be required to attend a lunchtime educational session facilitated by our College nurse/ health educator. The session will include discussions on the consequences of smoking and vaping (health, legal and financial).

Subsequent episodes of smoking will lead to suspension from school, as we are required to ensure a safe environment for all students and staff at school. Education around healthy choices and the health risks of vaping will continue to be provided, along with any wellbeing support that may be needed.

If you would like further information, or wish to discuss any issues, please feel free to contact the school.

Kind regards,

Maffra Secondary College

Policy effective 3rd March 2023