Anti-Smoking and Vaping Policy

**Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy**

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| **Approved by:** | Linda Guest |  |
| **Last reviewed on:** | 1st September 2024 | |
| **Next review due by:** | September 2026 | |

**Purpose**

Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy is committed to promoting the health of our students and to educate them about healthy lifestyle choices.

Smoking by students and staff places the smoker’s health at risk together with those in their proximity who are passive smokers.

This policy was developed in a response to concerns that many young people either vape and/or smoke. Although our students are not permitted to smoke or vape during school time we are aware that some may do so in their own time.

We worked with the students to make them aware of the risks to their health. As part of this work, students helped us to devise the first version of this policy on 18th May 2023.

**Definition**

For the purposes of this policy, Smoking is taken to include all use of legal tobacco products, herbal substitutes, and vaping.

**Objectives**

The purpose of this policy is to:

* eliminate all forms of smoking by students as part of ensuring that the school complies with its responsibility to create and maintain a safe emotional and physical environment for students;
* demonstrate the school’s commitment to promoting the health of students and staff;
* protect non-smokers from the adverse health effects of environmental tobacco smoke in the workplace;
* ensure that those who wish to stop smoking receive advice and support;
* inform students of the law relating to smoking and vaping;
* ensure that all students understand the effects and potential dangers of smoking and vaping;
* communicate to parents the school's stance on smoking and vaping.

**Policy Statement**

Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy prohibits vaping and smoking by students whilst under the care of the school and while they are travelling to or from school or are on school activities away from school. This is for the following reasons:

* It has been illegal to smoke in a public place, including schools, since 1st July 2007.
* Students’ health is endangered since smoking is the single most preventable cause of premature death and ill health in our society. Passive smoking – breathing other people’s tobacco smoke – is also potentially fatal. It has been shown to cause lung cancer, as well as many other illnesses, in non-smokers.
* Without a strong stance on this issue, students who are not smokers might be discouraged from using school facilities because of the activities of smokers.
* Smoking is a Health and Safety issue for all who work at and visit the school.
* Everyone has the right to breathe clean air.
* When students are seen openly smoking at or near school or while on their way to or from school, the school’s reputation is placed at risk.
* Staff are not permitted to smoke within the school building or in the presence of students at any time. The prohibition of smoking will apply during related school activities undertaken outside school premises, e.g. educational visits.
* Visitors are not permitted to smoke on the school premises and will be asked to leave the school site if they attempt to do so.
* Students need to receive consistent messages and require non-smoking role models within the school.

**Support, Counselling and Disciplinary Procedures**

Whenever a member of staff suspects that a student has been smoking, a number of procedures will be put into place. If a pupil is suspected of smoking or vaping of the suspected student’s name should be reported to the Headteacher/Proprietor.

There will be a letter or phone call to parents/carers following smoking offences will notify them of the availability of the support and counselling in the local area. The laws governing the buying of cigarettes, smoking and vaping in the UK may also be reinforced.

Students will be given every assistance to help them stop smoking, however electronic cigarettes (vapes), together with liquid nicotine and similar appliances, are not allowed by the school and will be treated in the same way as normal cigarettes or tobacco.

School sanctions for smoking are to be found in the Behaviour Policy. If staff are found smoking in the school building or in the presence of students, they will be dealt with in line with the staff disciplinary policy.

**Sanctions**

Sanctions for smoking and vaping will be issued in line with the school behaviour policy. The general guidelines will be followed.

Pupils who are found vaping and smoking in school will be offered an intervention alongside any relevant sanction as indicated by the school behaviour policy. This reflects the school’s view that smoking is extremely dangerous and puts the lives of students and staff at risk. It is also a serious breach of our behaviour policy.

**Reporting Concerns**

Historically, we have had reason to believe that local businesses have been selling smoking and vaping related products to our students illegally.

We will take a zero-tolerance approach to this sort of behaviour. If we believe that our pupils have been provided with such products illegally, we will report this to trading standards or the police as relevant.

**Related issues**

* Students found associated with smokers/vapers (i.e., caught in the presence of them when the activity is taking place) are likely to incur similar sanctions to those caught for the first time which will include a letter or phone call home to parents/carers.
* All students found in possession of cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, tobacco, liquid nicotine, snuff, lighters, lighter fuel etc. will have the smoking materials confiscated. If such items are discovered and confiscated, parents will be informed. The school has discretion about what it does with any confiscated items – in most circumstances parents will be invited to collect the item or the school will dispose of it.
* In cases where students have returned from overseas/abroad and are found in possession of large quantities of cigarettes/tobacco that has been brought into the UK and exceeds that allowed by law, the school may inform HM Customs and Excise.
* If a student is caught supplying cigarettes/tobacco to other this could result in them being suspended or permanently excluded.

Students may contact ***‘Quitline’***, the free national telephone helpline for smokers – 0800 00 22 00.

Students may also contact various websites for information and help:

<https://makesmokinghistory.co.uk/how-to-quit>

<https://www.talktofrank.com/drug/vapes#the-risks>

<https://ash.org.uk>

**Communication**

* A copy of this policy will be placed on the school website.
* Staff will be made aware of expectations as part of the induction process.
* Members of Staff will inform school visitors of the policy where relevant. As a School:
* We will use any opportunity to educate and discuss aspects of smoking and vaping, to use clear direct and honest messages, to use assertiveness techniques etc. via the PSHE programme and Citizenship curriculum.
* The PSHE programme emphasises the importance of educating students to make healthy, informed choices.
* We will encourage students are to think carefully about their attitudes and aspirations, and to explore ways of making decisions and of developing strategies for resisting ‘peer pressure’.
* The PSHE programme extends across the age groups and across the curriculum.
* We will deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints relating to smoking.
* We will continue to have a firm but fair discipline structure. The rules are clearly set out in the Staff Handbook and Behaviour Policy.
* Where appropriate we will use outside specialist agencies to make presentations to students about smoking.
* We will encourage those in our schools to be good role models at all times.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

* The policy is a living document; it will be evaluated, refined and updated on a regular basis.
* The school will keep records of smoking offences.
* Resource materials will continue to be updated and made available to both staff and students.
* This Policy has been devised in consultation with students. Students will be involved in any significant updates.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Headteacher/Proprietor any significant updates will be shared with the Management Committee.