



HIV & AIDS POLICY



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Policy Statement

Valenture Institute strives to deal with the impact and threat of HIV / AIDS by:

1. Providing full and adequate information about the disease to all students, staff and interested parents.
2. Empowering students through education to prevent the transmission of HIV.
3. Providing reasonable safeguards to prevent exposure to the virus.
4. Making available confidential, voluntary counselling and testing to students and staff for early detection of HIV infection in order that progression to AIDS be prevented by early and appropriate treatment.
5. Ensuring that there is no discrimination against students or staff with HIV/AIDs by providing a policy, based on constitutional rights and guarantees.



Preamble

The Valenture Institute policy on HIV/AIDS is based on the draft National Policy on HIV/AIDS that was published as a General Notice in the Government Gazette dated 11 December 1998.

This policy has been written in keeping with international standards and in accordance with education law and the constitutional guarantees of the right to basic education, the right not to be unfairly discriminated against, the right to life and bodily integrity, the right to privacy, the right to freedom of access to information, the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion, the right to freedom of association, the right to a safe environment, and the best interests of a child.

Valenture Institute has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information in our handbooks. However, we reserve the right at any time, if circumstances dictate, to:

- (i) make alterations or changes to any of the published details of the opportunities on offer or;
- (ii) add to or withdraw any of the opportunities on offer.

Our students are given every assurance that changes to opportunities will only be made under compelling circumstances and students will be fully informed as soon as possible.



1. Definitions

In this policy guideline all terms and expressions used have the meaning that has been assigned to them in the South African Schools Act (No 98 of 1998) and the Employment of Educators Act (No 76 of 1998) or, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following shall have meanings assigned hereunder.

“The School” is taken to mean Valenture Institute.

“HIV” means the Human Immunodeficiency Virus.

“AIDS” means the acquired immune deficiency syndrome, that is the final phase of HIV infection.

“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.

“Staff members” refers to all individuals employed by Valenture Institute and includes educators, administrative staff, support staff and coaches.



2. Introduction

AIDS is a disease caused by infection with HIV. The HIV is spread only when an adequate amount of infected body fluid enters the bloodstream of a non-infected person.

The dominant modes of transmission of the HIV are:

1. unprotected penetrative sexual intercourse where the exchange of bodily fluids takes place;
2. through the accidental or deliberate shared use of HIV-contaminated needles or skin cutting instruments (in and out of health care settings);
3. from infected mothers to unborn infants;
4. through transfusion of infected blood or blood products.

Since the HIV cannot be contracted through the more usual work-place or study contacts, the School views a person infected with HIV as it does any healthy person and it views a person with AIDS as it does a person with any other chronic illness or disability.



3. Non-discrimination and equality

- 3.1. No student or staff member with or perceived to have HIV/AIDS may be unfairly discriminated against.
- 3.2. Students and staff members with HIV/AIDS should be treated in a just, humane and life-affirming way, taking into account the fears, objections and the rights of all parties affected - a fair and balanced stance is necessary in the interest of the school community.
- 3.3. 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, school conditions, and must be financially feasible, considering a balancing of interests of the student or staff member with HIV/AIDS and those of other students or staff members, and their parents.
- 3.4. No student may be denied continued attendance at the school on account of his HIV/AIDS status or perceived HIV/AIDS status.
- 3.5. No staff member may be denied the right to be employed or to be promoted on account of 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.



- 3.6. students with HIV/AIDS are expected to attend classes in accordance with school requirements for as long as they are able to function effectively.
- 3.7. If and when students with HIV/AIDS become incapacitated through illness, or pose a risk to others at the school students should, if possible, continue with their academic work at home.

4. Disclosure and Confidentiality

- 4.1. No student (or parent on behalf of a student), 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 welcomed and encouraged. In the event of voluntary disclosure, it may be in the best interests of a student with HIV/AIDS if a member of the School's Executive Committee is informed of his/her HIV/AIDS status, either by the student or by the student's parent(s).
- 4.3. A person to whom any information about the medical condition of a student or staff member with HIV/AIDS has been divulged is expected to keep this information confidential. Disclosures to third parties may nevertheless be authorized with the informed consent of the student (if



the student is above the age of 14 years), or his/her parents, 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. Safety conditions and precautions

- 5.1. Valenture Institute 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.
- 5.2. The basis for advocating the consistent application for universal precautions lies in the assumption that in situations of potential exposure to HIV, all persons are potentially infected and all blood and body fluids and excretions which could be stained or contaminated with blood (for example tears, saliva, mucus, phlegm, urine, vomit, faeces and pus) are therefore to be treated as potentially infectious.
- 5.3. Blood, especially in large spills (such as from nosebleeds) should be handled with extreme caution.



- 5.4. Major blood spills on surfaces and floors will be dealt with by the cleaning staff under the supervision of the School's Campus Manager.
- 5.5. All bleeding wounds, sores, breaks in the skin, grazes and open skin lesions should be covered, the flow of blood should be stopped and the patient should receive professional medical attention immediately.
- 5.6. If there is a biting or scratching incident where the skin is broken, the wound should be washed thoroughly with running water and disinfectant.
- 5.7. All open wounds, sores, breaks in the skin, grazes and open skin lesions should be covered securely with a non-porous or waterproof dressing or plaster so that there is no risk of exposure to blood.
- 5.8. Cleansing and washing of wounds should always be done with running water and not in containers of water. Where running tap water is not available containers should be used to pour water over the area to be cleansed.
- 5.9. All persons attending to blood spills, open wounds, sores, breaks in the skin, grazes, open skin lesions, body fluids and excretions should wear protective latex gloves to exclude the risk of HIV transmission effectively. However, emergency treatment should not be delayed because gloves are not available. Bleeding can be managed by compression with material that will absorb the blood, for example a towel. However, people who have skin lesions



- should not attempt to give first aid when no latex gloves are available.
- 5.10. Blood splashes on the face (mucous membranes of eyes, nose or mouth) should be flushed with running water for at least three minutes.
 - 5.11. Skin exposed accidentally to blood should be cleaned promptly with water and disinfectant, in every instance.
 - 5.12. If blood has contaminated a surface, that surface should be cleaned with fresh, clean bleach solution and the person responsible for this should wear latex gloves. Other body fluids and excretions that could be stained or contaminated with blood (for instance tears, saliva, mucus, phlegm, urine, vomit, faeces and pus) should be cleaned up in similar fashion.
 - 5.13. Blood-contaminated materials should be sealed in a plastic bag and incinerated or sent to an appropriate disposal firm. This is the responsibility of the school Sister.
 - 5.14. If instruments (for instance scissors) become contaminated with blood or other body fluids, they should be washed and placed in a strong bleach solution for at least one hour before drying and re-use.
 - 5.15. First-aid kits should be available on the school premises. Details of the content, location and use of these First Aid Kits is included in an addendum to this document.
 - 5.16. First aid kits should be taken on all tours, excursions and outings. It is the responsibility of the staff member



- organising the excursion to ensure that a first aid kit is taken.
- 5.17. Universal precautions are in essence barriers to prevent contact with blood or body fluids. Adequate barriers can also be established by using less sophisticated devices than those described above, such as:
- 5.17.1. Unbroken plastic packets for indoor and outdoor use on hands where latex or rubber gloves are not available, and;
- 5.17.2. Common household bleach for use as disinfectant, diluted one part to nine parts water (1:9 solution) made up as needed.
- 5.18. All students and staff members should be given appropriate information and training on HIV transmission, the application of universal precautions and the importance of adherence thereto.
- 5.19. students should be instructed never to touch the blood, open wounds, sores, breaks in the skin, grazes and open skin lesions of others, nor to handle emergencies such as nosebleeds, cuts and scrapes of friends on their own. They should be taught to call for the assistance of a staff member.



6. Education and Awareness

The primary responsibility for sex education in general and more particularly HIV/AIDS education and prevention measures rests with a student's parents and family and the School could never, nor should it ever, attempt to act as a substitute or assume the responsibility of the parents in that regard. The School's role in sex and HIV/AIDS education is a complementary one only.

- 6.1. A continuing HIV/AIDS education programme must be implemented for all students and staff members. The age-appropriate programme should include the following:
 - 6.1.1. Providing information on HIV/AIDS in South Africa and developing the life skills necessary for the prevention of HIV infection;
 - 6.1.2. Providing information on appropriate prevention and avoidance measures particularly abstinence from sexual intercourse, but also the use of condoms and the application of universal precautions;
 - 6.1.3. Inculcating, from an early age onwards, basic first-aid principles, including how to deal with bleeding;
 - 6.1.4. Emphasizing the role of alcohol, drugs, sexual abuse and violence in the transmission of HIV;



- 6.1.5. Encouraging students 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;
- 6.1.6. Teaching students how to behave towards individuals with HIV/AIDS; and
- 6.1.7. Cultivating an enabling environment and a culture of non- discrimination towards persons with HIV/AIDS.

Education and information regarding HIV/AIDS must be given in an accurate and scientific manner and in language and terms that are understandable.

7. Roles and responsibilities

Students and staff members should respect the rights of other students and staff members. The ultimate responsibility for a student's behaviour rests with his or her parents. Parents of all students:

- Are expected to require students 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.

It is recommended that a student or staff member with HIV/AIDS and their parent, in the case of students, should obtain a medical opinion to assess whether the student or staff member, owing their condition or conduct, poses a medically recognized significant health risk to others. If such a risk is established, the Principal of the school must be informed. The Campus Manager, after consulting with the Principal of the school, must take the necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of all the other students and staff members.

Staff members have a particular duty to ensure that the rights and dignity of all students, and other staff members are respected, protected and promoted.

8. Concerns relating to exposure

Refusal to study with a student or to work with a staff member with or perceived to have HIV/AIDS should be preempted by providing accurate and understandable information on HIV/AIDS to all staff members, as well as to students and their parents.

Nevertheless, students who refuse to study with a fellow student, or staff members who refuse to work with a fellow staff member or to



teach a student with or perceived to have HIV/AIDS, should be counselled.

The situation should be resolved by the Campus Manager or Learning Facilitator and, if necessary, with the assistance of the Principal, in accordance with the principles contained in this policy.