



# LORETO SCHOOL QUEENSWOOD

## POLICY ON AIDS

### PREAMBLE

The Loreto school community is a multi-faith community composed of the pupils, parents and staff both teaching and non-teaching, the management and all related families. This community is morally and practically obliged to meet the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS (Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

In our response we endeavour to emulate the example of Christ to respect and protect the human rights and dignity of all. We endeavour to take all practical steps to make our school and community a place of safety for all, and we commit ourselves to raising the awareness in ourselves and our children to be better able to meet the challenges ahead.

### PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

1. We cannot, and should not, insist upon compulsory disclosure of a learner's, teacher's or other employee's HIV/AIDS status.

Voluntary disclosure of a learner's or employee's status to the Principal should be welcomed and an enabling environment will be cultivated in which the confidentiality of such information is ensured and in which unfair discrimination is not tolerated.

2. No pupil will be denied admission to or continued attendance at our school on account of her/ his HIV/AIDS status or perceived status.
3. No employee may be dismissed, or otherwise discriminated against, on account of his/her HIV/AIDS status or perceived status.

"... as Christians interacting with one another in society we are challenged both to address problems around us and to respond to people suffering the consequences of the ills of society." Sr Alison Munro O.P. A Christian response to Aids Infection control measures and adaptations will be universally applied and carried out regardless of the known or unknown HIV status of individuals concerned. (See page 4)

### A SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Although there are no known cases of the transmission of HIV in schools, learners with HIV/AIDS will increasingly form part of the school population, because of the increase in infection rates. Loreto School therefore needs to have a planned strategy in place to cope with what could become an epidemic. HIV cannot be transmitted through day to day social contact. The virus is only transmitted through blood, semen, vaginal and cervical fluids and breast milk. Recipients of infected blood transfusions, primarily hemophiliacs, may also be present in schools.

Current scientific evidence suggests that the risk of HIV transmission during normal school activities is insignificant. There is no risk of transmission from saliva, sweat, tears, urine, respiratory droplets, handshaking, swimming pool water, communal bath water, toilets, food or drinking water, provided universal precautions are adhered to.

People with AIDS within the school community should be allowed to live as full a life as possible. The risk of transmission can be effectively eliminated by following standard infection control procedures or universal precautions and good hygiene practices under all circumstances. In the educational setting this means that all blood, open wounds, breaks in the skin, grazes and infected

skin lesions, as well as all body fluids, should be handled in a prescribed manner by a member of staff.

Members of the school community with infectious diseases or illnesses such as measles, German measles, chicken pox, whooping cough and mumps should be kept away from school to protect all other members of the school, especially those whose immune systems may be impaired by AIDS.

### EDUCATION AND RAISING AWARENESS

The purpose of education about HIV/AIDS is to prevent the spread of the infection, to allay excessive fears of the epidemic, to reduce the stigma attached to it and to instill nondiscriminatory attitudes towards persons with HIV/AIDS. Education should ensure that our children acquire age- and context- appropriate knowledge and skills in order that they may adopt and maintain behaviour that will protect them from HIV infection. This should include education about their rights concerning their own bodies, and how to protect themselves against rape, violence, inappropriate sexual behaviour and contraction of HIV, at home as well as at school.

Life skills and HIV/AIDS education should not be limited to life skills and Religious Education lessons but should be integrated in the whole curriculum.

Parents and guardians will be informed about all life- skills and HIV/AIDS education offered at the school as well as the values to be imparted. They will be invited to participate in parental guidance sessions and made aware of their primary role as sexuality educators and imparters of values at home.

Life skills and other HIV/AIDS awareness training will be provided for all teachers and other staff members.

### THE CURRICULUM WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. Providing information on AIDS and developing the life skills necessary for the prevention of transmission.
2. Inculcating from an early age onwards basic first-aid principles, including how to deal with bleeding with the necessary safety precautions.
3. Emphasising the role of drugs, sexual abuse and violence, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in the transmission of HIV, and empowering learners to deal with these situations.
4. Encouraging learners to make use of health care, counselling and support services offered by community service organizations.
5. Teaching children and others how to behave towards persons with HIV/AIDS, raising awareness on prejudice and stereotypes around AIDS.
6. Cultivating an enabling environment and a culture of non-discrimination towards persons with HIV/AIDS.
7. Providing information on an age appropriate level concerning prevention and avoidance measures, including abstinence from sexual intercourse and immorality, faithfulness to one's partner, the avoidance of contact with blood, and the application of universal precautions.
8. Such information and education should be given in an accurate and scientific manner, and in language and terms that are understandable.





# LORETO SCHOOL QUEENSWOOD

## UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

1. The school will implement universal precautions to minimize the risk of transmission of all blood - borne pathogens, including HIV. All blood, open wounds, breaks in the skin, grazes and skin lesions, as well as all body fluids, should be treated as potentially infectious.
2. At this school there will be three full first aid kits available, as well as emergency kits containing everything necessary for handling accidents involving blood. These emergency kits will be carried in school vehicles and kept by sports teachers.
3. First aid kits will contain the following:
  - latex gloves which must be used only once
  - rubber household gloves for handling blood soaked material in specific instances
  - absorbent material
  - waterproof plasters
  - disinfectant
  - scissors
  - cotton wool
  - gauze tape
  - tissues
  - containers for water
  - cardio pulmonary resuscitation mouth piece so that mouth- to-mouth resuscitation can be applied without contact being made with blood or other body fluids.
  - All educators should have a pair of latex gloves renewed from time to time if not used, and a pair of household gloves for cleaning up the spills of any body fluid.
  - Training in First Aid and CPR should be provided for all staff members.
  - The contents of first aid kits will be regularly checked and old or used items replaced.

## MANAGING INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS

1. No one should have direct contact with another person's blood or body fluids
  - Rubber gloves should be worn at all times when dealing with an injury or nosebleed.
  - Anyone cleaning blood should also wear gloves
  - The same precautions apply to other body fluids
  - Learners should be taught not to touch blood or wounds but to ask for help from a member of staff.
2. Stop the bleeding as soon as possible
  - The first action should be to apply pressure directly over the area with a cloth or towel
  - The injured should where possible be helped to do this themselves
  - Someone with a nosebleed should be shown how to apply pressure to the bridge of her nose herself, always with assistance from an adult.
3. Cleaning wounds
  - Help injured people to wash their wounds in clean water with antiseptic if available. If not, use household bleach diluted in water (1 : 9)
  - Wounds must be covered with a waterproof dressing or plaster (unless advised otherwise by a doctor).
  - All wounds, sores, grazes or lesions must be kept covered at all times

4. Managing accidental exposure to another's blood
  - Skin exposed to blood must be cleaned promptly
  - Cleaning must be done under running water, or poured over from a container
  - Clean with antiseptic or diluted bleach (1 : 9)
  - If blood has splashed on the face, (particularly eyes or the mucous membranes of the nose or mouth) these should be flushed with running water for three minutes. An incident report should be written and kept as a record.
5. Cleaning contaminated surfaces and materials
  - Contaminated floor surfaces must be cleaned with bleach
  - Bandages and cloths should be sealed in a plastic bag and incinerated
  - Instruments should be washed, soaked in bleach for an hour and dried
  - Bathrooms should be kept hygienically clean and free from spills
6. Disposing of sanitary towels and tampons
  - Special bins are provided for the specific disposal of these
  - All female staff, parents and pupils should ensure that these bins are used so that no one else has contact with these items.
  - First aid kits should be available during every sports session
  - No one should play a sport with uncovered wounds or flesh injuries
  - If a graze or injury occurs during play, the injured player should be called off the field, given first aid and only allowed back with their injury clean and covered
  - Blood - stained clothes should be changed
  - Educators and learners with HIV are advised first to discuss with a doctor any possible risk to their health and of transmission during the sport. (The aim here is not discrimination but protection of the patient.)

## HIV TRANSMISSION DURING SPORT.

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- No one should play a sport with uncovered wounds or flesh injuries
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- Blood - stained clothes should be changed
- Educators and learners with HIV are advised first to discuss with a doctor any possible risk to their health and of transmission during the sport. (The aim here is not discrimination but protection of the patient.)

## DEALING WITH PREJUDICE

Educators need to be vigilant about the possibility of discrimination at school, take swift action to defuse any situations that occur, and deal effectively with perpetrators. Prejudice thrives on ignorance. The most effective way to reduce such threats is by sharing the information contained in this document with everyone so that they understand the medical facts about HIV and how it is transmitted and know how they can protect themselves.

Educators who are given information concerning another's HIV status, should regard it as strictly confidential. This policy should be renewed from time to time as new scientific information about HIV/AIDS becomes available.

