



The Apple International Community School

Drug, Alcohol and Vape Policy **2026-2027**

POLICY INFORMATION

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1 Policy statement

The Apple International Community School (AICS) is a drug-free, alcohol-free, smoke-free and vape-free educational environment. The school protects children from substance-related harm through prevention, early identification, proportionate intervention, safeguarding, medical support and lawful reporting. Student welfare and immediate safety take priority in every response.

This policy does not treat a disclosure of use, dependency, coercion or exploitation as merely a disciplinary matter. Such information may indicate a child-protection, health or mental-health need and must be assessed under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

2 Purpose

- prevent the possession, use, supply, sale, sharing or promotion of prohibited substances and related devices;
- provide age-appropriate education about health, legal and social risks;
- set a clear, safe and consistent response to concerns and incidents;
- identify safeguarding, exploitation, dependency and wellbeing needs early;
- define lawful, respectful searching, seizure, recording and reporting arrangements; and
- support reintegration and reduce recurrence while maintaining a safe school community.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all students, staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors and service providers on school premises, school transport, educational visits, sports fixtures, residential activities and any event organised by or representing AICS. It also applies to relevant off-site or online conduct where there is a clear connection to school safety, student welfare or the reputation and orderly operation of the school.

4 Definitions

Term	Meaning for this policy
Alcohol	Any beverage or product containing alcohol, including products carried in another container or mixed with another drink.
Controlled or illegal substance	A narcotic drug, psychotropic substance or other substance whose possession, use or supply is prohibited or controlled under UAE law, including any substance represented as such.
Tobacco or nicotine product	Cigarettes, cigars, shisha or waterpipe products, smokeless tobacco, nicotine pouches and any other tobacco or nicotine-containing product, whether combustible or not.
Vape or electronic smoking device	An e-cigarette, disposable or refillable vape, heated-tobacco device, cartridge, pod, liquid or component, whether or not it contains nicotine.
Medication misuse	Possessing, sharing, supplying or using prescription or non-prescription medicine other than as authorised and directed.
Other harmful substance	Solvents, aerosols, inhalants, volatile substances, synthetic products or household/industrial chemicals used or intended for intoxicating or harmful effect.
Paraphernalia	Equipment or material associated with consumption, preparation, concealment or supply, including empty pods, grinders, rolling papers or improvised devices.
Under the influence	Observed impairment or presentation suggesting recent substance use. Staff do not diagnose intoxication; medical assessment is obtained where needed.

5 Legal and regulatory framework

This policy must be read and applied in accordance with the current versions of:

- Federal Decree-Law No. 30 of 2021 on Combating Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, as amended, and its implementing decisions;

- Federal Law No. 15 of 2009 on Combating Tobacco, as amended, and Cabinet Resolution No. 24 of 2013 concerning its Executive Regulations, including controls relating to electronic and similar smoking devices and protection of persons under 18;
- Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on Child Rights (Wadeema's Law), as amended, and its Executive Regulations;
- the UAE National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions and applicable mandatory reporting requirements;
- Federal Decree-Law No. 45 of 2021 on the Protection of Personal Data;
- applicable UAE and Dubai alcohol-control, public-health, medicines and criminal laws; and
- current KHDA and Ministry of Education requirements for safeguarding, student conduct, inclusion, wellbeing, suspension and exclusion in Dubai private schools.

If law or regulator direction changes, the legal requirement prevails and this policy will be updated at the earliest review.

6 Guiding principles

Principle	Required approach
Safety first	Call for medical help promptly; do not delay urgent care to question a student or determine discipline.
Best interests and safeguarding	Assess possible abuse, exploitation, trafficking, coercion, self-harm, dependency and unmet health needs.
No stigma	Use factual, respectful language. Do not shame, label or publicly identify a student.
Proportionate response	Consider age, development, intent, risk, frequency, impact, evidence and any special educational need or disability.
Need-to-know confidentiality	Share information only with those who need it to protect the child, comply with law or manage the incident.
No promise of secrecy	Staff explain that safety concerns must be shared with the Designated Child Protection Lead (DCPL).

7 Prevention and education

Substance education is preventive, factual, culturally appropriate, trauma-aware and matched to students' age and development. It is taught through PSHE/Life Skills, science, wellbeing, digital citizenship, assemblies and approved specialist inputs.

Phase	Learning emphasis
FS-Year 2	Safe and unsafe substances; medicines are given only by trusted adults; how to seek help.
Years 3-6	Risks of smoking, vaping, alcohol, medicines, energy products and household substances; peer pressure; refusal and help-seeking skills.
Years 7-13	Physical and mental-health effects; nicotine dependency; UAE law; counterfeit or mixed substances; exploitation and supply; emergency response; decision-making and routes to confidential support.

- External speakers and resources must be approved by senior leadership and the DCPL, be age-appropriate and avoid sensational or instructional content.
- The school offers parent awareness sessions and communicates emerging risks without identifying individual students.
- Staff receive induction and annual refresher training on signs, disclosures, emergency action, safeguarding referral and evidence safety.

8 Prohibited conduct

No person covered by this policy may:

- possess, consume, use, be under the influence of, supply, sell, share, exchange or attempt to obtain alcohol, tobacco/nicotine products, vapes, controlled substances, unauthorised medicines, harmful substances or paraphernalia;
- encourage, pressure, recruit, facilitate or exploit another person in relation to a substance;
- bring substance-related promotional material, display or distribute advertising, or use school systems to arrange purchase or supply;
- misuse prescription or non-prescription medication, or share medication with another person; or

- tamper with smoke/vape detectors or conceal, dispose of or destroy relevant evidence.

A student who reports an emergency, seeks help for themselves or another person, or makes a safeguarding disclosure will be supported. Help-seeking does not remove the need to assess the incident, but it will be considered when deciding a proportionate school response.

9 Authorised medication

- Medication must be supplied to the school clinic in original packaging with the required prescription/instructions and parent consent.
- Medication is administered or supervised only in accordance with the school's Medication and First Aid procedures and documented individual healthcare plan.
- Emergency medication may be self-carried only where this is clinically necessary, formally authorised and recorded by the clinic.
- Possession of properly authorised medication is not a breach. Any concern about misuse or sharing is managed under this policy and the safeguarding procedure.

10 Reporting a concern or disclosure

Any staff member who sees, suspects, receives or is told about a substance-related concern must:

1. secure immediate safety and obtain medical help where required;
2. listen calmly, avoid leading questions and do not promise confidentiality;
3. report immediately to the Principal and DCPL (or the Deputy DCPL if the DCPL is unavailable);
4. make a factual, timed and signed safeguarding/incident record before the end of the working day; and
5. preserve relevant evidence and follow the direction of the Principal/DCPL and competent authorities.

Students may report to any trusted member of staff, the counsellor, clinic, Principal, DCPL/Deputy DCPL or through the school's designated reporting route. Parents should contact the Principal or DCPL promptly. Anonymous information is assessed, but the school may be limited in the action it can take without verifiable detail.

11 Immediate response protocol

Step	Required action
1. Medical safety	For collapse, breathing difficulty, seizure, severe agitation, chest pain, loss of consciousness, suspected poisoning/overdose or other urgent symptoms: call 999, alert the school clinic, follow first-aid instructions and do not leave the student alone.
2. Reduce risk	Move other students away, keep the student under appropriate supervision and remove ignition, sharps or other immediate hazards only if safe.
3. Safeguarding alert	Notify the Principal and DCPL immediately. Consider exploitation, coercion, trafficking, self-harm, abuse, neglect and risk to siblings or peers.
4. Parent contact	The Principal/DCPL decides when and how parents are informed. Contact is normally prompt, unless doing so may increase risk, compromise a statutory enquiry or conflict with competent-authority direction.
5. Competent authorities	The Principal/DCPL makes or coordinates reports to Dubai Police, Child Protection or health authorities when required by law, safeguarding procedures, risk or official direction.
6. Record and plan	Complete the incident and safeguarding records; determine interim safety measures, support, discipline, reintegration and follow-up.

Staff must not taste, smell closely, test, analyse, consume, flush, destroy or independently transport a suspected substance. Staff must not conduct a criminal investigation or question students beyond what is necessary to establish immediate safety.

12 Searches and screening

AICS does not conduct indiscriminate or routine random searches for deterrence. A search is undertaken only where it is lawful, necessary and proportionate to a specific safety concern or reasonable grounds, and is authorised by the Principal or delegated senior leader.

- Seek the student's cooperation and explain the reason and process in

age-appropriate language.

- Use two authorised adults; where reasonably practicable, one should be the same sex as the student. Protect dignity, privacy, cultural sensitivity and any disability-related needs.
- Record the grounds, authorization, persons present, scope, result and any item secured.
- Limit a school search to belongings, lockers or outer clothing as permitted by applicable law, regulator requirements, the parent-school contract and school rules.
- School staff must never conduct a strip search or intimate search. Where such powers may be required, preserve safety and contact Dubai Police.
- Refusal is referred to the Principal/DCPL for risk assessment and parent/competent-authority direction; staff must not use force except lawful action immediately necessary to protect a person from serious harm.

13 Securing suspected items and evidence

- Do not handle an unknown powder, liquid, sharp or leaking item unless necessary to prevent immediate harm. Isolate the area and seek emergency/police advice.
- If an item can be secured safely, two adults should witness the action. Place it in suitable separate packaging without opening or testing it; record date, time, place, description and each transfer of custody.
- Store temporarily in the school's designated secure location with access restricted to the Principal/DCPL or authorised nominee.
- Do not place suspected controlled substances in ordinary lost property, a desk, personal vehicle or general waste.
- Transfer or disposal is only in accordance with Dubai Police or other competent-authority instructions. The incident form records the transfer; it must not offer a staff choice to 'keep/destroy' the item.

14 Assessment and decision-making

The Principal and DCPL coordinate a documented assessment before final school action, unless an urgent interim safety measure is required. The assessment considers:

- the student's age, development, understanding and vulnerability;
- the substance/device, quantity, apparent intent and level of risk;

- use, possession, attempted purchase, supply, coercion or exploitation;
- the reliability of evidence and the student's account;
- prior concerns and whether there is an escalating pattern;
- special educational needs, disability, medical or mental-health factors and reasonable adjustments;
- risk to other students, staff and the wider community; and
- advice or instructions from the clinic, Child Protection, Dubai Police, KHDA or other competent authority.

15 School responses and consequences

School consequences are applied under the Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy and current KHDA/MoE requirements. They do not replace mandatory safeguarding or competent-authority reporting.

Indicative concern	Safeguarding and school response
Possession or use of a tobacco/nicotine product or vape	Secure safety and item; notify Principal/DCPL and parents; assess dependency, peer influence and supply; apply proportionate behaviour response; provide cessation/wellbeing education and monitor.
Alcohol possession, use or suspected impairment	Obtain medical assessment where indicated; secure item; notify Principal/DCPL and parents when safe; consider authority reporting; assess safeguarding and apply proportionate consequence/support.
Unauthorised medication or harmful-substance misuse	Seek clinical advice; assess access, intent, self-harm and risk to others; notify Principal/DCPL; contact parents when safe; refer externally where required.
Suspected controlled substance	Prioritise medical safety; isolate/secure only if safe; notify Principal/DCPL; contact Dubai Police/Child Protection as required; do not test or conduct a criminal investigation.
Supply, sale, coercion, exploitation or repeated serious conduct	Immediate safeguarding and risk plan; competent-authority referral as required; interim safety measures; formal disciplinary process and documented reintegration/placement planning.

Suspension or exclusion is not automatic. Any such decision must be evidence-based, proportionate, procedurally fair and compliant with the current KHDA/MoE authorisation, notification, documentation and appeal requirements. The school will not require a Student of Determination to withdraw because of behaviour without documented reasonable adjustments, inclusion review and required regulator involvement.

16 Support, referral and reintegration

- A named adult coordinates the student's return and reviews safety, attendance, learning and peer risks.
- Support may include counselling, clinic review, an individual safety/wellbeing plan, mentoring, family meetings and referral to appropriately licensed external services.
- The school does not diagnose dependency or provide specialist treatment. Referral decisions are made with qualified health/safeguarding professionals and competent authorities.
- Students affected by another person's substance use are also offered support.
- Information about support is not withheld as punishment.

17 Students of Determination and equality

Prevention teaching, reporting routes and support will be accessible to all students. AICS will make reasonable adjustments to communication, supervision, investigation meetings and reintegration. Disability or additional need does not remove the obligation to maintain safety, but it must inform the assessment and response. No student will be discriminated against because of nationality, gender, religion, disability, health condition or family circumstance.

18 Confidentiality, records and data protection

- Records must be factual, dated, timed, signed and stored in the secure safeguarding/incident system, separate from informal notes.
- Access is restricted to authorised personnel on a need-to-know basis. Information is shared with parents and agencies only where lawful, necessary and proportionate.
- Safeguarding and behaviour records are retained and disposed of in

accordance with the school's retention schedule, UAE law and regulator requirements.

- No member of staff or student may photograph, post or circulate an incident or seized item except through an authorised evidential process.

19 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Governing Body	Approve and oversee the policy; assure resources, training, compliance and annual review.
Principal	Overall accountability; authorise searches and interim measures; coordinate regulator/authority engagement and formal discipline.
DCPL / Deputy DCPL	Lead safeguarding assessment, referrals, information-sharing, records, safety planning and multi-agency follow-up.
School Doctor and Nurse	Provide emergency/clinical care within competence; manage authorised medication; record and refer health concerns.
Counsellor / Wellbeing and Inclusion teams	Deliver prevention and tailored support; contribute to risk, reintegration and reasonable-adjustment plans.
All staff	Model compliance; recognise and report concerns; respond calmly; maintain confidentiality; do not investigate or test substances.
Students	Follow the policy; do not carry, use, supply or promote prohibited items; report danger and seek help promptly.
Parents	Support prevention; disclose relevant medical information; collect a child promptly when requested; attend meetings and cooperate with lawful referrals.
Visitors and contractors	Comply with the substance-free campus requirement and report concerns to their AICS contact.

20 Staff, visitors and contractors

Staff, visitors and contractors must not possess, consume, supply or be impaired by alcohol, illegal/controlled substances, tobacco or vaping

products while working, supervising students or on school premises, except lawful possession of authorised medication. Employment, contractor, health and safeguarding procedures apply in addition to this policy. A concern involving an adult must be reported to the Principal; a concern involving the Principal must be reported to the Chair of Governors and handled under the allegations/whistleblowing procedure.

21 Training, monitoring and review

- All staff receive induction and annual refresher training; role-specific training is provided for the Principal, DCPL team, clinic staff and authorised search/evidence personnel.
- The DCPL and senior leadership review anonymised trends, locations, repeat concerns, response times, referrals and student/parent feedback at least termly.
- The Governing Body receives an anonymised annual assurance report. Personal case details are not included unless necessary and lawful.
- This policy is reviewed annually, after a serious incident, or sooner following a change in law, KHDA/MoE direction or identified practice weakness.

22 Related school policies

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy; Anti-Bullying Policy; Inclusion Policy; First Aid and Medication Policy; Health and Safety Policy; Educational Visits Policy; Data Protection and Records Retention Policy; Staff Code of Conduct; Whistleblowing Policy; and Digital Safety/Acceptable Use Policy.

Appendix A Substance-related incident and safeguarding record

Complete promptly. This form supports, but does not replace, the school's secure safeguarding record and emergency/competent-authority reporting.

Student/person concerned	
Year/class	
Date, time and location	
Reporter and witnesses	

Observed facts / exact words used	
Medical presentation and action (including 999/clinic)	
Item/device description; do not identify by testing	
How item was secured; witnesses; storage location	
Chain of custody / transfer to competent authority	
Principal/DCPL notified: date and time	
Parent contact decision and rationale	
Safeguarding risks considered	
Authority advice/referral and reference number	
Interim safety measures	
Support / discipline / reintegration plan	
Completed by / signature / date	
Reviewed by Principal/DCPL / date	

Appendix B Emergency quick reference

If...	Do...	Do not...
A person is unwell or overdose/poisoning is suspected	Call 999; alert clinic; follow first aid; supervise; give accurate information.	Do not induce vomiting, give food/drink unless directed, or delay care to investigate.
An unknown powder, liquid, sharp or leaking item is found	Keep people away; notify Principal/DCPL; seek emergency/police advice.	Do not touch, smell, open, test, move or place in general waste.
A student discloses use, supply, coercion or exploitation	Listen; reassure; record exact words; report immediately to DCPL.	Do not promise secrecy, confront an alleged person, or ask leading/repeated questions.
A vape, tobacco/nicotine or alcohol item is found	Secure if safe with a witness; record; notify Principal/DCPL; follow parent/authority direction.	Do not use, demonstrate, photograph casually, destroy or return it without authorised direction.