

National Administration Guidelines



National Administration Guideline (NAG) 5 is about the pastoral care of children and students and focuses on educational health and safety.

NAG 5 says that each board of trustees is required to:

- a. provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students
- b. promote healthy food and nutrition for all students; and
- c. comply in full with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of students and employees.

NAG 5 (c) reinforces the fact that a board is required to be compliant with Health and Safety legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

All schools have to have a Health and Safety policy. By law, under the Smokefree Environments Act 1990, early childhood education services and schools must be smokefree, therefore they do not strictly have to have a separate smokefree policy. But they do need to set out how they will make sure they have procedural documents regarding smoking, their expectations, and guidelines about they will respond to situations. These supporting documents (procedures) might include details like:

- The school's stance on hiring staff that smoke
- What the rules are around when and where staff can smoke outside of the school grounds.
- What the guidelines are around staff, parents, whānau caregivers, etc smoking at activities while away from the school, such as when on excursions, camps or education outside the classroom activities?
- How the school deals with breaches to these rules.
- What the school's stance is around the use of e-cigarettes, herbal cigarettes and shisha?
- How the school communicates their smokefree kaupapa to new staff, students, whānau visitors and users of the school buildings and grounds.
- How the school will support staff and students, and their whānau to quit smoking.

The procedures should take a whole school approach. This means that all the school's context supports its smokefree aim.

For further information click [here](#).

Smokefree Schools Policy

Our smokefree policy allows us to comply with smokefree legislation, and promote a smokefree lifestyle to all members of the school community.

The legislation

The Smoke-free Environments Act 1990 (and its amendment in 2003) directs that all buildings and grounds are smokefree, 24 hours a day, seven days a week (with no exemptions). The education provisions in the Act aim to:

- prevent the exposure of children and young people to second-hand smoke
- prevent children and young people being influenced by seeing others smoke
- send a positive message about a smokefree lifestyle as the norm.

The Act applies to anyone on the school grounds, including students, staff, visiting parents, contractors, and people hiring or using the school facilities outside school hours.

To comply with the legislation, schools must ensure that everyone coming on to the school site is aware that the entire grounds are smokefree at all times. This means:

- displaying smokefree signs at every entrance to the school grounds and the outer entrance of every building
- advising contractors and other people working at school of our smokefree policy
- communicating the policy to parents through the newsletter and other means
- ensuring that people hiring or using the school facilities are aware of the policy and accept that there are no exemptions and that it applies 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- having a procedure for breaches of the policy.

Failure to take these steps may result in the management of the school being fined up to \$4,000 for non-compliance. It isn't smoking that is the breach – it's failure to take the steps above.

Promoting a smokefree lifestyle

Smoking is the single most preventable cause of premature death and ill-health in New Zealand, and most people who take up smoking do so by the age of 18. According to the Ministry of Health's 2012/13 Tobacco Use survey, the average age of smoking initiation in New Zealand is 14.8 years old.

Exposure to second-hand smoke (passive smoking) affects the health of non-smokers, especially babies and children. Recent studies have shown that, in addition to causing health problems for children, exposure to second-hand smoking affects a child's behaviour and ability to learn.

Children who receive consistent messages (see role models below) and grow up in a smokefree environment are less likely to smoke. Our school aims to reduce smoking uptake among students and work towards a smokefree society through:

Consistent messages

- We display smokefree signs and ask anyone smoking on school property to stop.
- We do not provide ashtrays or smoking areas.
- We educate students through the curriculum about the harmful effects of smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke.
- Where possible, we provide staff with smokefree-related professional development.
- We communicate our smokefree policy to the school community via the newsletter and other means, and promote Quit Smoking programmes as appropriate.
- We inform parents of new entrants, and prospective employees, of our school's smokefree policy.

Role models

- Young people are more likely to start smoking if they see adults smoking.
- We promote all school activities outside of our school's premises as smokefree, e.g. EOTC activities and sporting events, and remind parent helpers that they must not smoke while looking after students.
- We include the school road crossing (and rostered adults) in our smokefree zone.
- We regularly remind current employees of the policy and ask them to ensure they cannot be seen smoking by students even when they are off the school grounds.

Smokefree environment

- There is no smoking anywhere at school at any time.
- Parents are encouraged to embrace a smokefree lifestyle.

Breaches of the smokefree policy

Students found smoking in or around school are offered appropriate counselling and education. Parents are contacted and encouraged to deal with the smoking as a health issue rather than a discipline issue.

Adults smoking in or around school environment will be reminded that the school is smokefree by law and asked to stop smoking or leave the premises.

Complaints

All complaints involving smoking are referred to the principal, who may pass these to the board of trustees for investigation. Investigations take place within 20 working days of the complaint or incident and follow the procedures laid down in the Smoke-free Environments Act 1990.

Briefly, these are:

- Any complaint about smoking in the workplace should be made to the principal (who may refer it to the board) or to a [Smoke-free Enforcement Officer](#). Complaints made to an Enforcement Officer are referred back to the board in the first instance.
- The principal/board has 20 working days to investigate whether there has been a breach of the Act, and to try to resolve the complaint. This involves being assured by the person in possible breach of the Act that there will be no further cause for such a complaint.
- Employees are entitled to have a workplace representative present at any meeting called by the employer to resolve the complaint.
- If the principal/board is unable to resolve the complaint within 40 working days of receiving it, they must refer it in writing to the Smoke-free Enforcement Officer for their area.

Employment relationship issues arising from smoking in the workplace are dealt with in terms of the Employment Relations Act.

References

- Smokefree Schools / Ngā Kura Auahi Kore
- Ministry of Health: Tobacco Control
- HealthEd NZ: Information and support resources
- The Public Health Service at your local District Health Board

For more information and support:

smokefree.org.nz

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