

Health and Safety

The purposes of a specific policy for the Vancouver Island School of Art is to create an awareness of the principle of Safety First, and to ensure as much as possible the safety of the students, the faculty and the staff, while encouraging artistic expression.

General Safety

Each person in the Vancouver Island School of Art is responsible and accountable for his/her own safety awareness and implementation. It is important that each person understand that he/she is also expected to work in a manner that will not cause harm to any other person within the school community.

Art materials can affect the body in various ways. There are three major routes of entry: inhalation, ingestion and skin contact.

1. Inhalation:
The most common ways that foreign substances enter the body are from vapors, fumes, dust gases or mists that can be inhaled into the respiratory system. The substances may damage the nose, mouth, upper respiratory tract, lungs or be absorbed into the bloodstream and travel to other organs in the body.
2. Ingestion:
Substances may be accidentally or willingly ingested through the contamination of food, drinks, cigarettes and hands. These substances may affect the mouth, throat and/or stomach or be absorbed into the bloodstream. It is imperative that eating and/or drinking do not occur in any work area.
3. Skin Contact:
Substances may attack or destroy the natural protective barriers of the skin, damaging the skin itself, and enabling toxic chemicals to enter the bloodstream, where they are carried to various organs of the body.

Site Safety

It is the responsibility of every person in the area to be aware of their surroundings which in turn will create a safe working environment. Particular attention should be paid to the following:

1. Emergency Procedures:
Emergency Procedures are posted in the office and in the virtual classroom. A copy is also in the Office Procedures Handbook in the office. They include contact people, phone numbers and instructions for: fire or smoke, flooding, break-in, theft, vandalism, alarm, electrical, heating, injury, and first aid.
2. Evacuation Plan:
An evacuation plan is posted in the hallway in front of the school's entrance.

3. Telephones:
2 located inside the Office. Emergency contact numbers are posted beside each telephone, at the virtual classroom desk and beside the office door.
4. First Aid Kits:
1 located in the Office and is clearly marked. When supplies in the first aid kit diminish contact the Office Manager, in order that kits may be replenished.
5. Fire Alarm:
1 located in the hallway in front of the school's entrance.
6. Fire Extinguishers:
2 locations: 1 located in school in the kitchenette, 1 located in the hallway in front of the school's entrance.

Hours of Operation

Students are permitted to work during class hours or open studio hours (10:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm Mondays, or during Reading Break).

Site Inspections

Inspection rounds are conducted on both a routine and random basis in order to maintain an awareness of safety and ensure all areas of the space are free of any unsafe conditions.

Project Materials and Substances

Hazardous materials are not permitted for use in the school; this includes the use of any aerosol spray material, resins or solvents other than Odorless Mineral Spirits. For any substance or material that includes a potential risk, the student must consult his/her Instructor and the Director. In all cases the Instructor and the Director will make the final determination.