

Oxfordshire County Council

Smokefree School Gates: 2022 toolkit for Oxfordshire's schools



#SmokefreeOxon

About this toolkit

This toolkit is intended to set out why smokefree school gates are important and support schools across Oxfordshire in implementing smokefree school gates.

The toolkit outlines the background to the initiative, the current legislation on smoking, evidence on tobacco use in Oxfordshire and why smokefree school gates are important to improve the wellbeing of future generations and our communities. It goes on to suggest steps in implementing and communicating a smokefree school gates initiative. The appendices contain resources you may wish to use as a template – e.g. a template letter to parents, FAQs and example wording for signage.

Whilst this toolkit has been created with input from schools, we would expect each school to modify any resources as needed, so that they can be tailored to specific contexts and communities.

Acknowledgments

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Our aims

Our aim across Oxfordshire


Oxfordshire is aiming to be smoke free by 2025. This means that we are aiming to reduce smoking levels to below 5% of the local adult population by 2025 and to **inspire the county's first smokefree generation**.

A fundamental part of our [Oxfordshire smoke free strategy](#) is supporting organisations working across the community to promote smokefree environments including homes, cars, play parks and school gates.

Our aim for smokefree school gates

The aim of smokefree school gates, is to work with our schools and local communities to create a smokefree environment around school gates when dropping off or collecting children.

De-normalising smoking for children is a key step towards a smokefree generation - most people start smoking as teenagers. Smokefree environments also protect our young people and residents from tobacco related harm and the harms of second-hand smoking.



Smokefree school gates is about de-normalising smoking for children. It sends a positive message about how we value the health and wellbeing of our pupils, staff and communities.

Background

What are smokefree school gates?

Whilst smoking indoors is not permitted under the 2006 Health Act, smokefree school gates would take things one step further and would:

- **Make school gates and the immediate area around the school a voluntary smokefree zone**
- **send a positive message to our children and communities – that health and wellbeing are a priority**
- **be accompanied with signs that send a positive message around being smokefree**
- **be widely publicised, along with a readily available policy for anyone using the school premises. For example, through newsletters, school websites etc.**

Oxfordshire County Council are supporting schools to introduce smokefree school gates through free provision of training and support for signage for schools – [see below](#).

What is the current law on smoking and how does this apply to smokefree school gates?

Currently smoking is not legally permitted in any indoor public spaces or workplaces. It is also **banned** in vehicles carrying children under the age of 18.

The extra steps taken to make your school gates smokefree would not be regulated by the same legislation. It would be managed through a voluntary code where the whole school community works together to encourage smokers to choose not to smoke in these areas: for example through signage, letters to parents and publicity to wider community.

It is the school that decides upon the extent of the outdoor area covered, the times at which it applies and introduces and monitors the smokefree school gates policy.

Why become a Smokefree School?

Reducing smoking uptake in children and young people

Evidence tells us that children are less likely to start smoking if they do not view the activity as a normal part of everyday life. Making smoking less visible and less socially acceptable helps reduce smoking uptake by young and new smokers.

Home and school environments play an important role in children and young people's behaviour:

- Children and young people who live with parents who smoke are three to four times more likely to become **smokers** themselves than their peers who do not live with smokers: where smoking is more visible and perceived to be socially normal behaviour, there is a higher likelihood to experiment with tobacco.
- Teachers, parents and other adults have an important role in influencing the attitudes and smoking behaviour of children and young people.
- Among adult smokers, about two-thirds report that they took up smoking before the age of 18 and over 80% before the **age of 20**

Improving health and wellbeing in Oxfordshire

Effects of second-hand smoke on children:

Children exposed to second-hand smoke (SHS) are especially vulnerable to its effects, in part due to their developing heart and respiratory systems.

Even **outdoors**, particles emitted from smoking are detectable and can lead to **SHS exposure**, which could have adverse effects on the lungs, heart and increase the severity of asthma attacks in children.

Most people start smoking as teenagers. De-normalising smoking is important:

Despite a decline in smoking rates in recent years, 11.5% of adults in Oxfordshire continues to smoke in 2019/20. However, this figure masks stark inequalities: in some of our neighbourhoods it is less than 5% and in others more than 20%.

Smoking remains England's single greatest cause of preventable illness and avoidable death - it kills more people each year than obesity, alcohol, drug misuse, traffic accidents and HIV combined. It is also the cause of many preventable illnesses such as cancer, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, strokes and cardiovascular disease. Recently, the Chief Medical Officer, **Professor Chris Whitty, pointed out that more people were likely to have died of smoking in 2020 and 2021 than of COVID-19.**

In Oxfordshire alone, around 1698 deaths each year are due to smoking, and smoking accounts for over 3700 hospital admissions **each year.**

Each year across Oxfordshire, **the cost to society of smoking amounts to around £193 million. These costs are accrued across loss of productivity, healthcare, social costs and fire costs.**

Support from our local communities for smoke-free school gates

Becoming smokefree is an initiative which has the support of our communities:

- The recent Smokefree Oxfordshire survey asked 300 smokers within some of the most deprived wards in Oxfordshire in November 2021 and May 2022. 91% of respondents were supportive of voluntary initiatives to make school gates smoke free
- Of all the options of voluntary initiatives, making school gates smokefree had the joint-highest levels of support

Across Oxfordshire, around 886 children start smoking each year

In a recent survey of 300 people who smoke in Oxfordshire, 91% supported initiatives to make school gates smokefree

It's good for the environment too!

Locally

Almost all cigarette butts contain a filter made of fibres of cellulose acetate – a form of plastic.

- Cigarette butts are not fully bio-degradable and can take up to twelve years to break down.
- In Oxfordshire, [Action on Smoking and Health \(ASH\)](#) estimates that smoking generates 32 tonnes of waste a year, of which 13 tonnes a year is discarded as street litter.

Globally

Growing tobacco crops can cause irreparable damage through deforestation, water consumption and the use of pesticides:

- This deforestation is devastating for local wildlife and ecosystems, but also contributes to climate change, soil erosion, reduced soil fertility and disrupted water cycles.
- It also damages the communities that depend on this crop, threatening sustainable development as it takes up valuable land for arable crops for local communities.

The curriculum

The [Schools inspection handbook](#) states schools should “recognise online and offline risks” and “develop pupils’ understanding of how to keep physical healthy”. Work on smokefree school gates, could be linked to the PHSE curriculum.

E-cigarettes and vaping

E-cigarettes have become the most popular aid used by people trying to stop smoking and that switching completely from smoking to vaping is likely to have substantial health benefits. However, the minimum age for purchase of nicotine inhaling products, which includes e-cigarettes, is 18 years and for children and young people, e-cigarettes are not recommended.

For this reason, we advise that your smokefree school gates policy also prohibits e-cigarette use.

We also recognise that staff, parents and carers may be using e-cigarettes to quit smoking; therefore, any communication messages need to be sensitive to this and avoid alienating those who are trying to quit smoking tobacco.

For example, if looking to include messaging around vaping on any smoke free signage, you could consider something similar to that used on Oxfordshire County Council signs which reads “Please be aware when using a vape, some people may not like the vapour produced. Please find a suitable alternative area outside the smokefree area”

The Association of Directors of Public Health have produced a detailed position statement on use of e-cigarettes [here](#) and ASH have produced guidance on including vaping in school policies [here](#).

What support is available to us to make our schools smokefree?

Courses

As part of becoming a smokefree school, Oxfordshire County Council are offering free places for staff on [Very Brief Advice \(VBA\) training](#).

This training is a one-hour course for anyone who may come into contact with people who are smoking. Nearly 60% of smokers are thinking about quitting at some point, and the VBA training aims to:

- Increase confidence in having conversations about smoking without getting into conflict
- Learn about the importance of talking about smoking
- Give the best advice about quitting, without needing to be an expert

Whilst no-one has to approach people who are smoking in the newly designated smokefree areas, these courses will highlight how to have positive conversations with individuals on the topic of smoking.

We recognise that there are many demands on staff time and it might not be possible to have widespread staff attendance on these courses. You might consider nominating one or two “smokefree champions”, similar to how schools nominate wellbeing champions who can attend.

Support with signage

Oxfordshire County Council will be providing support to cover costs for schools with the production of signage. This signage could be co-created with schools and ideally with pupil input (e.g. as part of a competition with pupils to design)

An example of smokefree signage is given in Appendix 5.

If you would like to have a discussion about Smokefree School Gates with Oxfordshire County Council, please email smokefreeoxon@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Additional guidance and resources

In addition to the support from Oxfordshire County Council, there are many other resources and sources of information available for schools to use.

These can be found in Appendix 6.

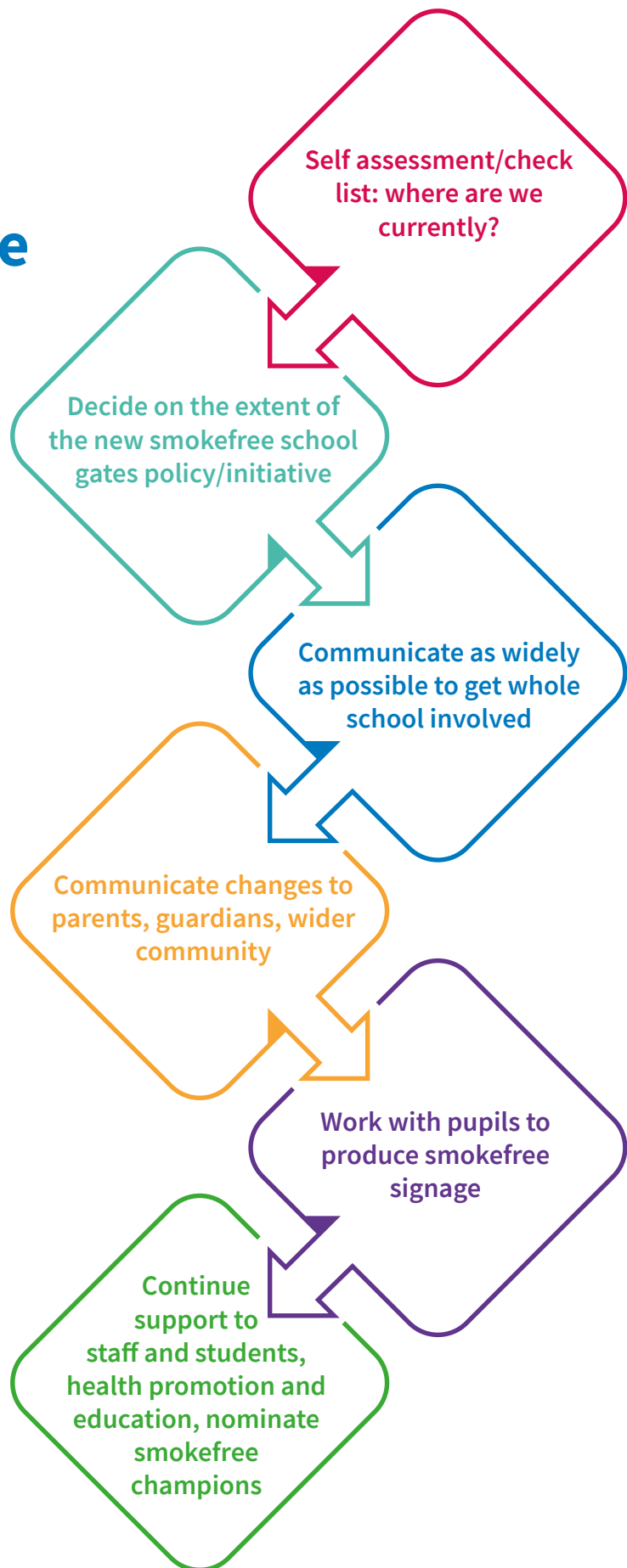
Have smokefree school gates been introduced in other places?

Yes, there are examples of smokefree school gates programmes – for example in [Rotherham](#), many parts of [Wales](#), [Derbyshire](#) and [Tameside](#) (click on links for more information).



We've decided we want our school gates to be smokefree – where do we start?

To succeed, smoke free schools need the support of staff, governors parents, guardians, pupils and wider communities. Involving these people from the start, will improve relevance to your school.



Self-assessment

A checklist for self-assessment and actions needed to become a smokefree school are available in Appendix 1.

Deciding on how to implement your smokefree school gates

Deciding on how to implement your smokefree school gates, how far the smokefree zone will extend for and whether this is part of a broader smokefree approach is up to each school. Regardless of the specifics of the smokefree school gate policy/initiative, the messaging should be positive: it not about “getting smokers to quit”. It is about making our environments – where we live, work and play – a healthy environment for all generations.

In terms of detail, most policies would include:

- A clear indication of the designated outside smokefree areas: you can decide how much of the area around the school gates this will include for your school.
- Oxfordshire already has a commitment to [smokefree sidelines](#), and you may wish to include sports pitches and playing fields or areas belonging to your school in your guidance
- The times at which the policy applies – e.g. at drop off and pick up times or throughout the school day
- For those wanting to quit, information that signpost to support
- An understanding that the policy/initiative relating to outside areas is a voluntary code rather than legislation.

You can refer to an example policy created by Wood Farm Primary School in Appendix 4 or OCC's Smokefree policy in Appendix 7.

Taking smokefree school gates one step further: a whole-school approach

Becoming a smokefree school also gives you the opportunity to take a whole-school approach to becoming Smokefree.

For example, you might also consider:

- Setting out a school-wide smokefree policy document that is widely available
- Linking being smokefree to wider aspects of wellbeing and work to promote healthy behaviours. You may already have a programme around this, which includes education on smoking and social relationships, or possibly the wider effects of tobacco use and sustainability.
- Broadening the area to which the policy/initiative applies to include not just school gates, but also any adjacent land – e.g. car parks, playgrounds, school road crossing patrol areas
- Building on Oxfordshire's commitment to [smokefree sidelines](#), may wish to include sports pitches and playing fields or areas belonging to your school in your guidance

Involving Pupils Throughout

You probably have a number of ideas of how to get pupils involved. Some ideas include:

- If you have a school council, taking the smokefree school gates initiative to them and discussing how they would design signs, involving them in writing articles for the school newsletter etc.
- Getting pupils involved in the design of signage – for example, running a drawing competition for the picture on banners or signs
- Getting older pupils to write a piece for the school newsletter on why smokefree school gates are important to them
- School projects that follow the lifecycle of a cigarette and related litter

Support for people who want to quit

Nearly 60% of smokers are thinking about quitting at some point.

Across Oxfordshire, there is help available to give up smoking. These services are free, and more information can be found at [Oxfordshire County Councils smokefree page](#), and [Stop For Life Oxon](#).

Very Brief Advice training available to staff can increase confidence in having positive conversations with people who choose to smoke.

Launching policies and communications

Process

You could consider a formal launch event for your Smoke free school to raise awareness and set a date for implementation.

Part of this might involve pupils in producing smokefree signage (e.g. competitions within years to design elements of signage). In 2022, there is support from OCC within pilot areas to cover the cost of signage production.

Timing

You could link the launch to national or international events, to build on momentum and support. E.g.

- **National No Smoking Day on 10th March**
- **World No Tobacco Day on 31st May**
- **Stoptober in October**
- **New Year's resolutions in January**

Wider Communications

Regardless of whether you choose a specific launch day, communicating the policy widely and making sure everyone knows where to find the information about smokefree school gates is essential.

For example, it can go on:

- The school website
 - Parents and carers of new pupils should also be made aware that the school is smokefree when enrolling
- Social media
- A letter should be sent to parents and guardians to raise awareness and ask for their support in upholding the policy.
 - An example letter to parents is included in Appendix 3
 - You could also consider asking older pupils to write an article for the school newsletter

You could consider a press release or coverage from local media, in conjunction with Oxfordshire County Council

FAQs

A list of potential FAQs has been included in Appendix 2.

Evaluating your smokefree school gates

Understanding the impact of smokefree gates and how the changes have been received amongst parents and carers, staff and pupils is important.

OCC are happy to work with schools implementing smokefree gates to evaluate the impact.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Smokefree school checklist

The following checklist outlines minimum actions that should be in place/have taken place to ensure your school is smokefree.

ACTION	TAKEN PLACE?
The following checklist outlines minimum actions that should be in place/have taken place to ensure your school is smokefree.	Y/N If no – please refer to main toolkit
The smokefree policy is clearly documented and states, as a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The outside areas which are now designated as smokefree The times of day at which the policy applies Information that sign-posts to support for quitting smoking, for those who want to quit Reminder that all of school buildings indoors are smokefree 	Y/N
The new policy has been communicated to all staff and school governors	Y/N
The new policy has been communicated to all parents, carers, guardians	Y/N If no, please see appendix XX for example letter to parents
The new policy has been made easily accessible to all in the school community: e.g. on website	Y/N
There is positively framed signage that denotes the smokefree school gates area	Y/N If no, please contact OCC for support with signage and see appendix XX for examples of positive wording

In addition to the minimum checklist, there are additional steps you might consider:

ACTION	TAKEN PLACE?
Has a launch for the new policy taken place?	Y/N If no, consider a policy launch and whether this can be linked to national events (see ppXX)
Has there been a press release or work with the local media to promote the new policy?	Y/N If no, consider a press release or working with local media and OCC to publicise your smokefree school
Has the free Very Brief Advice (VBA) training available through OCC been taken up by staff? You might consider nominating one or two “smokefree champions” to embed the new changes and who can attend the VBA training.	Y/N If no, see ppXX for more details about the VBA training. This is free for school staff members
Has this opportunity been used to promote schools-wide approach to being smokefree? E.g. integration with education and health promotion	Y/N If no, please see appendix XX for example letter to parents
Evaluating adherence to and success of the policy Are people aware of the policy? Is it adhered to? Have we considered how we could evaluate the policy further with OCC?	Y/N

Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions

Internal FAQs for staff members of the school

What does smokefree school gates School mean?

It means that smoking is not allowed in view of children in the outside areas of and directly surrounding your school. Specifically this includes:

- Outside the school gates (at collection and drop off times, if you have decided the policy will have timings attached).
- Anywhere inside (as per smokefree regulations)
- Anywhere on the playing fields, including the sidelines of the pitches

And may also include:

- Near exits, entrances, windows or doorways of any buildings
- In cars parked on site (where children are inside)

Is this legally binding?

No. Smoke free school gates is a voluntary code, intended to send a positive message to our children and wider communities.

Legally, however smoking has been banned inside buildings since 2007, and is also banned in vehicles carrying children (include links)

Are there any other legal issues?

If the pavement directly outside your school gates is public land, then littering (including cigarette butts) is not permitted. Authorised officers can issue a fixed penalty charge for a litter offence.

Are you expecting us to go up and challenge a smoker who is smoking?

No. Staff members are not expected to confront people who choose to smoke. We are asking you to publicise the expectation that smoking at school gates is not acceptable. You can chose to do this by notifying parents of the new expectation through newsletters, letters, social media, use of the publicity materials or any other mediums you and your club considers appropriate. If there are people who do feel comfortable approaching someone they can politely remind people of your policy.

What should we do if people refuse to stop smoking outside our gates?

Consider whether you have explored all the options for promoting the policy and explaining the rationale behind it. Ask other schools what they found worked well. You are not expected to personally challenge people who keep smoking outside the gates.

Internal FAQs for staff members of the school

Is vaping permitted?

Vaping is 95% less harmful than smoking and does help people quit smoking – we know that e-cigarettes have become the most popular aid used by people trying to stop smoking. However, given the minimum age for purchase of nicotine inhaling products, which includes e-cigarettes is 18 years, we recommend that vaping also is not permitted outside school gates.

That said, staff, parents and carers may be using e-cigarettes to quit smoking: therefore, any messages need to be sensitive to this and avoid alienating those trying to quit smoking tobacco.

See [ASH's guidance for more details'](#)

How can we get our pupils involved?

You probably have a number of ideas of how to get pupils involved. Some ideas include:

- Getting pupils involved in the design of signage – for example, running a drawing competition for the picture on banners or signs
- Getting older pupils to write a piece for the school newsletter on why smokefree school gates are important to them
- School projects that follow the lifecycle of a cigarette and related litter

What support is available to our school to enable this?

OCC are providing financial support for schools towards the cost of signage and are also making VBA training freely available to any interested staff.

What sort of language should we use on our signage?

This campaign is about sending a positive message to our school and local communities. We also know that positive framing is likely to bring about more action. Therefore, keeping the language positive and supportive is important.

E.g. “ Proud to be smokefree” or “Thank you for not smoking outside our school gates”

For examples of signage and language see Appendix 5.

External FAQs for parents, guardians, wider community – e.g. could be circulated with letter to parents and guardians announcing the smokefree school gates initiative

What does Smokefree School Gates School mean?

It means that smoking is not allowed in view of children at the school gates at collection and drop off times. It also includes:

- Anywhere inside (as per smokefree regulations)
- Anywhere on the playing fields, including the sidelines of the pitches
- Near exits, entrances, windows or doorways of any buildings
- In cars parked on site (where children are inside)

Is this a new law?

No. Smoke free school gates is a voluntary code. It sends a positive message to our children and wider communities.

Legally, smoking is not permitted inside buildings since 2007, and is also not permitted in vehicles carrying children.

Why can't I smoke outside the school gates when I come to collect my kids?

Children copy what adults do. Children whose parents smoke are three times more likely to smoke and 7 out of every 10 smokers started before they were 18 years old. Each year across Oxfordshire, around 886 children start smoking. We're asking all adults to give every child in Oxfordshire an equal opportunity of not smoking by de-normalising smoking in places where they work and play

Do people really support making school gates smokefree?

Yes – according to a local survey 91% (just over 9 in 10) people who currently smoke in Oxfordshire, support making school gates smokefree.

Do people who smoke really support making school gates smokefree?

Yes – the local survey that found 9 out of 10 people supported making school gates smokefree was carried out only amongst people who currently smoke

I am vaping to help me quit, can I do this outside the school gates?

We know how helpful vaping is to help quit smoking and also that replacing smoking with vaping has many health benefits. However, as some children may find it hard to tell the difference between vaping and smoking, we ask that we also keep the area around the school gates smokefree.

If I wanted help to quit smoking, is this available to me?

Yes and it's free. For more information visit [Stop Smoking In Oxfordshire, Quit Smoking Today - Stop For Life Oxon](#)

Appendix 3: Example letter to parents for adaptation by Schools

[School Logo]

PROUD TO BE SMOKEFREE/ TAG LINE

Dear Parent or Guardian,

[Insert name of School] are adopting a new [or updated] smokefree school policy. This new policy is part of our commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of all our students, staff and wider communities.

The new policy is active in school hours and during drop off and pick up. It is a voluntary code and means that that staff, visitors, parents and guardians can no longer smoke throughout our school grounds including:

- outside the school gates
- on our sports fields
- [insert any additional areas that apply to your School]

Here are some of the reasons why [Insert name of School] has chosen to become a Smokefree school:

- Teachers, parents, guardians and other adults have an important role in influencing the attitudes and smoking behaviour of children and young people.
- Three out of four children are aware of cigarettes before they reach the age of five. Evidence tells us that children are less likely to start smoking if they do not see it.
- Two thirds of smokers (two out of every three smokers) say they began smoking before the age of 18. Those who start smoking before the age of 16 are twice as likely to continue to smoke compared to those who begin later in life, and they are more likely to become heavier smokers.
- Becoming smoke free protects children from the harms linked to smoking:
 - Across Oxfordshire 886 children take up smoking a year. This increases their chances of many preventable illnesses such as cancer, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, strokes and cardiovascular disease
- In a recent Oxfordshire survey of 150 people who are currently smokers, 89 % of respondents supported making school gates smoke free.

Across Oxfordshire, there is help available to give up smoking. These services are free, and more information can be found at Stop Smoking In Oxfordshire, Quit Smoking Today - Stop For Life Oxon

We would like your support in making [Insert name of School] a Smokefree school and community.

[Signature]

Head Teacher

[Insert name of School]

Appendix 4: Smokefree School Policy Example

Your School Name

SmokeFree Gate Policy

What:

Oxfordshire is aiming to be smoke free by 2025, this means aiming to reduce smoking levels to below 5% of the local adult population. We are working with Oxfordshire County Council to support this. The aim of this initiative is to inspire the county's first smoke-free generation. The County will work with our school to create a smokefree and vape-free environment around the school gates when dropping off or collecting children.

Why:

Whilst we know that smoking indoors in public places is not permitted under the 2006 Health Act, smoke-free school gates would take things one step further and would make the school gates and the immediate area around the school a voluntary smokefree zone. It also sends a positive message to our children and communities – that health and wellbeing are a priority.

Evidence tells us that children are less likely to start smoking if they do not view the activity as a normal part of everyday life. Making smoking less visible and less socially acceptable helps reduce smoking uptake by young and new smokers. Home and school environments play an important role in children and young people's behaviour:

- Children and young people who live with parents who smoke are three to four times more likely to become smokers themselves than their peers who do not live with smokers: where smoking is more visible and perceived to be socially normal behaviour, there is a higher likelihood to experiment with tobacco.
- Teachers, parents and other adults have an important role in influencing the attitudes and smoking behaviour of children and young people.
- Among adult smokers, about two-thirds report that they took up smoking before the age of 18 and over 80% before the age of 20

From September 2020 all Primary age children are taught Relationships and Health education. These subjects are designed to equip children with knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships as well as preparing them for a successful adult life.

By the end of primary school pupils should know

- The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including **smoking**, alcohol and drug – taking.

How:

Your School Name will work with Oxfordshire County Council to create smokefree and vape-free school gates. The school will communicate all proposals with wider stakeholders including parents and carers, pupils, governors and staff. **Include how you would like the smokefree signage to be produced and where it will be placed e.g., children will design a logo to help promote the smokefree initiative and this will be produced onto some signage which will be placed at the gates of the school.** The lead person at school will attend the County's Very Brief Advice Training in how to signpost people who smoke to the Local Stop Smoking Service. The school will use the successes in other counties as well as the success of the smokefree sidelines initiative to support their campaign. At all times the messaging will be positive: it is not about "getting smokers to quit". It is about making our environments – where we live, work and play – a healthy environment for all generations.

The smokefree zone will include **the area you would like to be smokefree at your school.** The initiative will be in place from **the timing that works for your school e.g., 8am – 6pm from Monday – Friday.** **Include an image from Google Maps with the area you would like to be smokefree highlighted.**

Appendix 5: Smokefree Signage – Example messages and Designs

It's important to keep the messaging on any signage positive and ideally, signs would be co-designed with your pupils.

Some examples of messages for signs include:

“ Proud to be smokefree”

“ Help us keep this outside space/these school gates useable for all”

“ Thank you for keeping our school gates smokefree”

You may wish to have some extra lines – e.g.

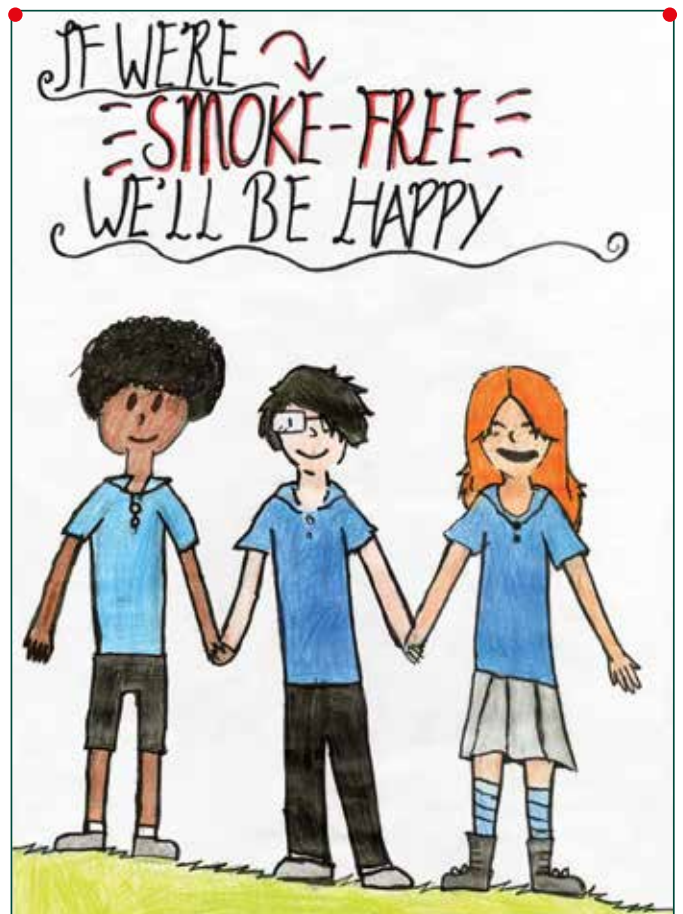
“There is no safe level of second-hand smoke. If you smoke tobacco, please find a suitable alternative space away from the school gates”



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Thank you to Wood Farm Primary School for allowing us to include their designs.

Appendix 6: Additional Resources and links to websites

Young People & Smoking - Action on Smoking and Health (ash.org.uk)

Better Health Quit Smoking | Campaign Resource Centre (phe.gov.uk)

Health Matters: Stopping smoking - what works? - UK Health Security Agency (blog.gov.uk)

Recommendations on preventing uptake | Tobacco: preventing uptake, promoting quitting and treating dependence | Guidance | NICE

Tobacco and the environment (ash.org.uk)

[ASH resources for local authorities, schools and parents on youth vaping](#)

Appendix 7: Oxfordshire County Council's Smokefree Policy



Smoke Free Policy

Introduction

1. This policy applies to anyone working for Oxfordshire County Council including those working through service contracts, on a casual or temporary basis, consultants and agency workers.
2. Smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other serious illnesses.
3. The aims of this policy are to:
 - promote a healthy work environment and protect the current and future health of employees, customers and visitors.
 - guarantee the right of non-smokers to breathe in air free from tobacco smoke.
 - comply with health & safety and employment law.
 - take account of the needs of those who smoke and to support those who wish to stop.

Restrictions on smoking

4. Smoking is not permitted in work time, including during online video meetings. Line managers may agree breaks as long as working time is made up and breaks do not adversely affect individual or team performance.
5. Smoking is not permitted on Council sites, both internal and external, at any time, or by any person regardless of their status or business with the organisation.
6. Smoking is prohibited in Council vehicles or any vehicle used to carry passengers or clients on council business e.g. taxi.
7. Smoking is prohibited in client homes or where staff are working in the community with the public or service users.
8. Appropriate 'no-smoking' signs will be clearly displayed at entrances to and within the premises and in all County Council vehicles.

Volunteers, Consultants and Visitors

9. All volunteers, consultants, visitors, contractors and deliverers are required to abide by the Smoke Free policy. Staff members are expected to inform volunteers, consultants, customers or visitors of the council's Smoke Free policy. However, they are not expected to enter into any confrontation which may put their personal safety at risk.

Non-compliance

10. Disciplinary action will be taken if an employee does not adhere to this policy. Those who do not comply with the Smokefree law may also be liable to a fixed penalty fine and possible criminal prosecution.

Support to stop smoking

11. Stop for Life Oxon provides free local support which includes up to 12 weeks behaviour support from a trained advisor and free pharmacotherapy such as NRT. Tel: 0800 122 3790 or e-mail: info@stopforlife.co.uk or visit www.stopforlifeoxon.org
12. Contact the [Smokefree National Helpline](#) to speak to a trained adviser on 0300 123 1044
13. Advice is also available from the council's Employee Assistance Programme either [online](#) or phone 0800 111 6387.

Review of policy

We check our policies regularly to make sure they are up to date; the latest version can be accessed from the intranet.

If you have any questions about this policy contact the [HR team](#).

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Related policies

Related policies can be found on the intranet under [Staff > HR Policies](#).

- Use of E-cigarettes (Vaping) in the Workplace policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Driving at Work

