

Smokefree School Gates Executive Summary

Our aim across Oxfordshire

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

A fundamental part of [Oxfordshire's Smokefree Strategy](#) is supporting organisations working across the community to promote smokefree environments.



Aim for smokefree school gates

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

De-normalising smoking for children is a key step towards a smokefree generation as 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.



What are smokefree school gates?

Smokefree school gates would:

- Make school gates and the immediate area around the school a voluntary smokefree zone

This in turn:

- sends a positive message to our children and communities that health and wellbeing are a priority
- could be accompanied with signs that send a positive message around being smokefree
- should be widely publicised, along with a readily available policy for anyone using the school premises. For example, through newsletters, school websites etc.

Why become a smokefree school?

- It will de-normalise smoking and therefore reduce smoking uptake in children and young people
- To improve both air quality and health and wellbeing in Oxfordshire by reducing the effects of second-hand smoke on children
- It's good for the environment. It is estimated that 32 tonnes of waste a year are due to cigarette butts in Oxfordshire
- There is support from our local communities for smokefree school gates. 91% of 300 smokers surveyed agreed with the smokefree school gates initiative.



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

TRAINING

- Oxfordshire County Council are offering free places for staff on a 1-hour online training in Very Brief Advice (VBA) which 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

SIGNAGE

- Oxfordshire County Council can provide financial support to government-funded schools for the costs of producing signage.
- This signage could be co-created with schools and ideally with pupil input
- Additional guidance and resources (e.g., checklist, FAQs, example letters to parents/guardians, example smokefree school policy) can be found in our toolkit.

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

A checklist has been created for schools to use to assess what actions a school needs to complete to become smokefree, this is available in our toolkit.

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

Launching policies and communications

• Process

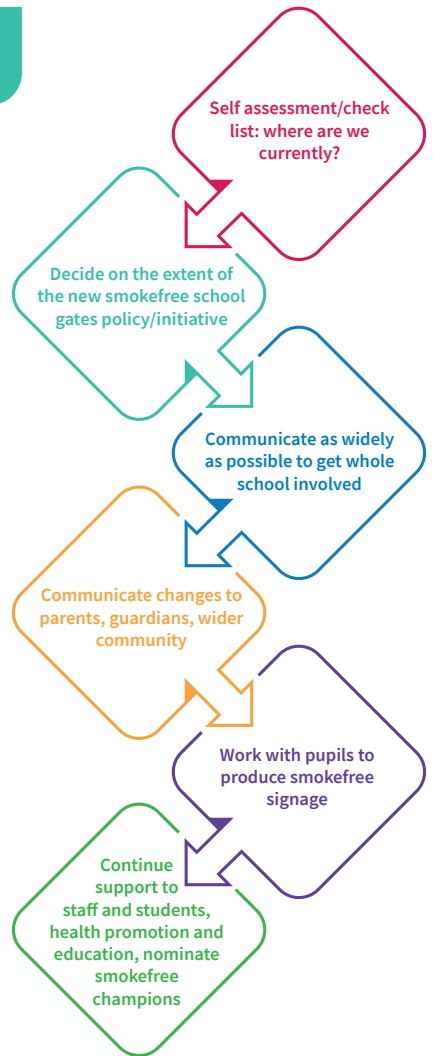
- You could consider a formal launch event for your Smokefree school to raise awareness and set a date for implementation.
- This might involve pupils in producing smokefree signage. The cost of signage production will be covered by Oxfordshire County Council.

• Timing

- You could link the launch to national/international events to build momentum and support
 - National No Smoking Day – 10th March*
 - World No Tobacco Day – 31st May*
 - Stoptober in October*
 - New Year's resolutions in January*

• Wider Communications

- Communicating the policy widely and making sure everyone knows where to find the information about smokefree school gates is essential
- It can go on:
 - The school website
 - Social media
 - A letter should be sent to parents/guardians to raise awareness and ask for their support in upholding the policy.
 - An example letter can be found in our toolkit
 - You could 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.



Toolkit

If you'd like more detailed information, please check out our toolkit at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/smokefreeoxon
Or email us at smokefreeoxon@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Thank you to Wood Farm Primary School for allowing us to include their smokefree signage as examples in this Smokefree School Gates summary.

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



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