

# MAKING YOUR SCHOOL GATES SMOKEFREE



Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) Wales Cymru is a registered charity (1120834)

 @ashwalescymru #SMOKEFREEWALES

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action on smoking and health

# About

## ASH Wales

We are the leading organisation working for a smokefree Wales through tobacco control. We raise awareness of the health, social and economic effects of smoking by delivering projects and campaigning with communities, young people and partners across Wales.

In 2013, we launched a campaign for smokefree playgrounds, influencing all 22 councils in Wales to introduce a blanket voluntary smoking bans in areas where children play. We're currently working alongside communities and local authorities to develop smokefree beaches and universities.

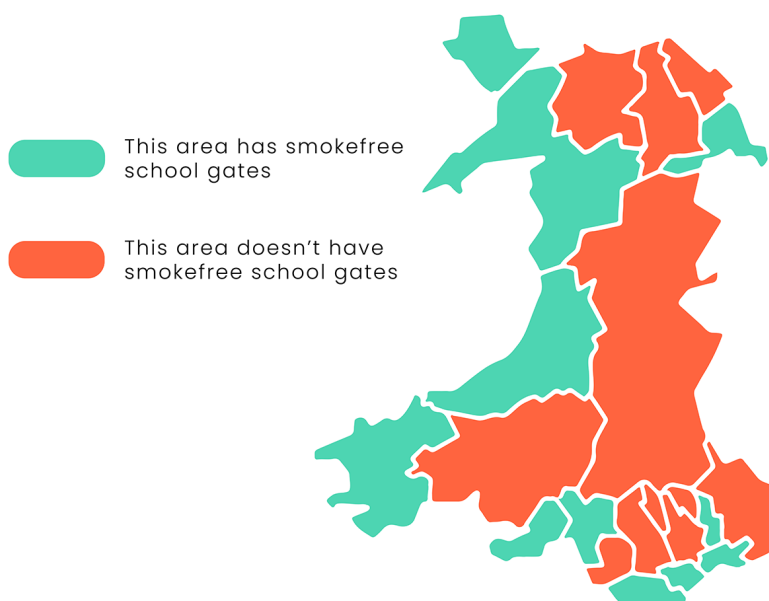
## Smokefree School Gates

Since launching the smokefree school gates campaign ASH Wales has worked with local authorities and healthy schools officers throughout Wales. We provide a step by step toolkit and signage to support schools with the policy.

Local authorities that have implemented the smokefree school gates policy so far are: **Cardiff, Gwynedd, Anglesey, Wrexham, Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion, Newport, Bridgend, Swansea, Vale of Glamorgan and Neath Port Talbot.**



### Smokefree Schoolgates in Wales



# Why Smokefree School Gates?

School gates are a part of the school which are usually overlooked within the school's smoking policy.

Many children walk in and out of school through clouds of second-hand smoke created by adults and other school children. This policy should be in place to protect people from second-hand smoke.

## Children exposed to smoking are significantly more likely to start smoking themselves

Children exposed to smoking from family, friends or teachers are much more likely to start smoking themselves. Children with parents who smoke are 70% more likely to start smoking.



## Smoking is a habit of childhood

Two thirds of smokers start before the age of 18. People who start smoking earlier are often the heaviest smokers later in life.

## Set an example for healthy living

What the school defines as important to the well-being of staff and pupils, helps shape the community and the family home. Your school plays a vital role in preparing young people for adult life.



Cigarette butts are the most littered item in the world, found on 80% of Wales' streets

How many can you find outside your school? Empower your pupils to take environmental action through the Keep Wales Tidy Eco-Schools programme: [keepwalestidy.org/eco-schools](http://keepwalestidy.org/eco-schools)

# Updating or creating your smokefree school policy

## Current legislation

Smoking has been banned in all indoor public places and in cars that carry children under 18. In addition to this, measures such as the significant reduction in tobacco advertising, regular price increases and raising the age of sale for tobacco products to 18, have changed the perception that tobacco use is an acceptable or a normal thing for young people to do.

Currently, smoking policies relating to school gates, are decided and governed by schools themselves. Smoking on school grounds is to become illegal in 2020, however this will not cover school gates.

## Where do we start?

Get the whole school involved! It's important to ensure that pupils, teachers, support staff, parents /guardians and community partners have the opportunity to contribute to the new or updated smoking policy. Decide together what should go into the policy, communication and signage. Raise it at the next PTA or hold a separate focus group involving a selection of pupils.

Having staff and pupils play a significant role in shaping a smokefree school policy means it is far more likely they will fully understand what is expected of them and help to monitor the new policy.

## What do we put in the policy?

Clearly state which areas are smokefree on the school premises. It's up to you on how far past the school gates you wish to take it. Some have gone as far as the first school road crossing patrol area. If you have extra spaces like playing fields, put these into consideration too.

Include what times the policy is to be adhered to, such as after school or half term events, activities or meetings held by the teachers and when the children have been taken off site on school trips. Include sign posting for quit smoking support for teachers, staff, parents, visitors and pupils - a template policy can be found on page 6.

Irrespective of specific content or actions, it is important to frame your smokefree school gates policy in upbeat terms and emphasise the positive outcomes that the policy aims to deliver.

## What about e-cigarettes?

This is a tricky one as there are so many views to put into consideration. ASH England have put together a check list on whether or not you should consider including e-cigarettes into your policy. This document can be found here: [bit.ly/2cGwzQM](https://bit.ly/2cGwzQM)

# Communication

## okay, we've got our policy, what next?

Make sure everyone knows where to find your policy: put it on your school website, social media channels, notice boards or in the school newsletter if you have one. Hand a policy out to each member of staff and send a letter out to every parent. Involve any school clubs, the school council, mentors or sports teams to actively assist in communicating the policy.

Send a letter to parents/guardians that:

- 1) explains the smokefree school policy change;
- 2) provides the health, academic and social reasons for the change;
- 3) asks for support in enforcement

See our template letter on page 13.

## Signage and branding?

For those looking for a quick fix, we offer a design service. Many schools across Wales have used our signage. It is adjustable to your needs and available at your request. For more info please contact [communications@ashwales.org.uk](mailto:communications@ashwales.org.uk) or call 029 2048 0621.

Some schools across Wales have had their signs created by school children, which is cost effective and generates better buy-in from the local community, parents, staff and other school children. Why not create a competition?



# HOW should we launch the policy?

An excellent way of raising awareness of a new smokefree school policy is to organise a formal launch event. Organising an event helps to set a clear date for the implementation of the policy and provides an opportunity to involve and inform key community partners, pupils, parents and staff

A launch event could include:

- Speeches from staff, pupils or partners highlighting the reasons why your school has developed a smokefree school policy
- Showcasing tobacco prevention and awareness raising activities and projects that pupils have been involved with. Previous launch events have seen pupils creating songs, poems, raps and art.
- Unveiling the signage!
- Coverage from local newspapers and radio stations in order to raise further awareness of your smokefree school policy. We can assist you with this, just contact [communications@ashwales.org.uk](mailto:communications@ashwales.org.uk) or call 029 2048 0621.



# Template smokefree school policy

## Smokefree School Gates Policy

[School Name Here] is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment. We recognise that pupils, staff and visitors have the right to breathe smokefree air in and around the school. We acknowledge that exposure to second-hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. We know that smoking is a habit of childhood and that is why we are committed to creating a smokefree environment by committing to smokefree schoolgates.

## Aims

- Protect the right of pupils, staff, parents and visitors to not be exposed to second-hand smoke
- Improve the health of pupils, teachers and support staff
- Educate young people and parents on the dangers of smoking and smoking around children.
- Provide encouragement, support and signposting to smokers who wish to give up smoking
- Reduce litter around the school gates
- Be a healthy role model within the local community
- Contribute towards denormalisation of smoking amongst children and young people

## Objectives

- We will promote a smokefree environment at the school gates
- We will implement smokefree signage at our school gates
- We will ensure that tobacco education is part of the school's curriculum of PSHE
- We will adopt and support interventions to prevent the uptake of smoking amongst pupils, staff, parents/guardians and members of the wider school community
- We will involve all staff, governors, pupils, parents/carers the community and other outside agencies as appropriate, in the development of policy and practice in relation to tobacco.

## Rationale

All members of the school community have the right to work and learn in a smokefree environment.

- Exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses.
- A classroom full of children – 30 young people – take up smoking every day in Wales.
- Children with a parent who smokes are also 70% more likely to start smoking.
- 40% start smoking regularly before the age of 16.
- 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, they are more likely to be heavier smokers.
- The earlier children become regular smokers, the greater their risk of developing life-threatening conditions, such as lung cancer or heart disease if they continue smoking into adulthood.

## Providing Smokefree School Gates

This policy applies to students, staff, parents/carers, members of the public, contractors or others working / using the school premises or vehicles and all vehicles used to transport students.

As of Summer 2019, smoking is not permitted by law in any part of the school's premises and grounds in Wales. Our policy extends this to the entrance area to the school (the school gates), on land adjacent to the school building (e.g. car parks, garden areas, walkways, playgrounds, playing fields etc.) or on the school road crossing patrol areas. Suitable posters, displays and signage will be displayed near the gates

Staff and visitors who smoke will need to do so outside of the school premises and clear of the school gates. The policy applies to all events / activities held in the school including before and after school sessions, any meetings organised which are attended by school employees as part of their work and/or visitors to such meetings/events.

### **Smoking prevention activities**

Tobacco education is part of the school's progressive entitlement curriculum of drug education / PSHE (including the health effects, legal, economic and social aspects of tobacco use) which may be delivered across the curriculum.

### **Responding to smoking related incidents**

The following procedures will apply when there is non-compliance with the smokefree school gates policy:

#### **Staff**

The Schools Disciplinary Procedure will be followed for members of staff who do not comply with the school's smokefree policy. The staff member will be offered support to help them quit smoking.

#### **Non-staff members/school visitors**

Staff are authorised to ask non-employees who breach the policy to adhere to the policy.

#### **Assistance for those who smoke**

Help Me Quit can help staff, parents/guardians and any other adults who would like to quit smoking. Free group and one-to-one support may be available for staff and parents/carers through HelpMeQuit

Please note: this service should not be seen as a disciplinary action. Stop Smoking Wales can be contacted via 0808 2502157 or visit [www.helpmequit@wales](http://www.helpmequit@wales)

### **Other Related Policies /Guidance**

Within the school this policy is linked to/consistent with:

- Drug Education Policy
- PSHE Policy /Healthy and Wellbeing Strategy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Equality /Diversity Policy
- Staff Continuing Professional Development Policy
- Disciplinary Policy



# Example signage

THANKS FOR KEEPING OUR SCHOOL GATES SMOKEFREE



DIOLCH AM GADW EIN GATIAU YSGOL YN DDI-FWG

THANKS FOR KEEPING OUR SCHOOL GATES **SMOKEFREE**  
DIOLCH AM GADW EIN GATIAU YSGOL YN **DDI-FWG**



THANKS FOR KEEPING OUR SCHOOL GATES SMOKEFREE  
 DIOLCH AM GADW EIN GATIAU YSGOL YN DDI-FWG



Smoke Free Play Area  
 Ardal Chwarae Di-fwg



Ysgyfaint Ifanc yn Chwarae  
 Young Lungs at Play



Designed by Jessica Assie Lewis: Aged 10 years

# Template letter to send home

## Dear parent/guardian

Dear parent/guardian

On [date] our school will be adopting a new [or updated] smokefree school policy.

As of 2020 Wales is set to become the first country in the UK to extend its smoking ban to outdoor areas, which will include school grounds. Our updated school policy will now extend this further to include the school gates. This policy will apply during school hours and during activities before and after school.

Please find attached a copy of our new policy. This policy can also be found on our website.

The policy will provide a strong message to students, parents and staff that is consistent with our education programmes and with the fact that smoking remains the largest preventable cause of death and illness in Wales. Exposure to role models who smoke normalises smoking behaviour, which can have a significant negative impact on children who copy behaviour, for example a child with a parent who smokes is 70% more likely to start smoking.

A classroom full of children – 30 young people – take up smoking every day in Wales. Those who start smoking before the age of 16 are also twice as likely to continue to smoke compared to those who begin later in life, and they are more likely to become heavier smokers.

We are proud to be a smokefree school which promotes smokefree schoolgates and provides positive health messages, contributing to the development of children and young people for life after school. We are committed to improving the health of all our staff and students, as well as that of other members of our community.

We recognise the important role that teachers, parents and other adults have in influencing the attitudes and smoking behaviour of children and young people. We look forward to receiving your support in maintaining [name of school] as a smokefree community.

If you or another family member would like support to stop smoking, please contact Help Me Quit, the national stop smoking service in Wales, who offer a free and confidential advice and support for smokers. For more information please visit [helpmequit.wales](http://helpmequit.wales) or phone 0808 252 8179

Yours sincerely,