

# MAKING YOUR SCHOOL GATES SMOKEFREE



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

# ABOUT

## ASH Wales

We are the leading organisation working for a smokefree Wales through tobacco control. Campaigns we have worked on across Wales, such as smokefree playgrounds, smokefree sports, and smokefree hospital grounds, are now national policy and we work alongside **Healthy Schools Wales** to increase the number of smokefree spaces for Wales' children.



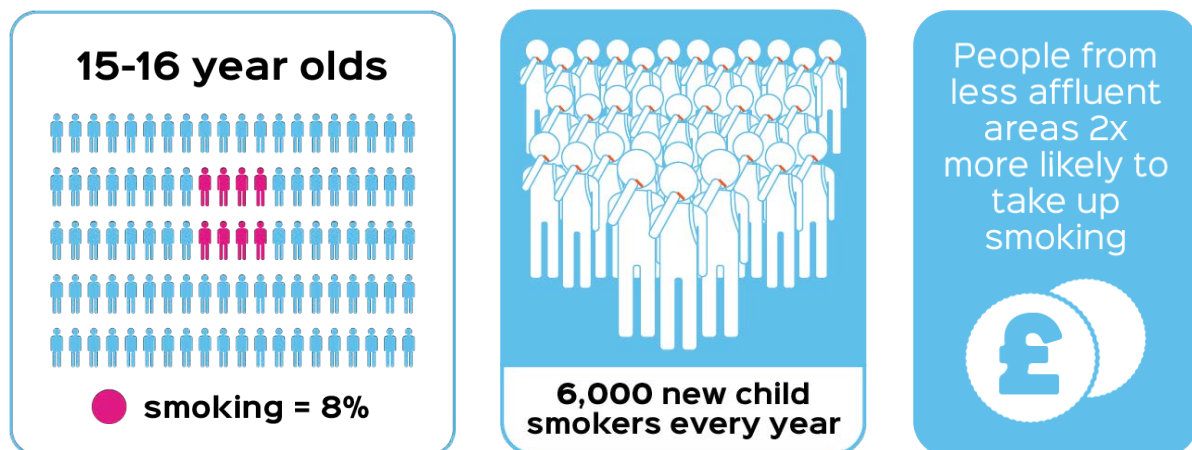
## Smoking and Young People

76% of current smokers tried their first cigarette before the age of 18.

Long term decline in youth smoking has stalled. The [2019/20 Student Health and Wellbeing in Wales Report](#) from SHRN shows us that 8% of 15- to 16-year-olds in Wales are smokers. This figure has not fallen since 2013, with an additional 6,000 children in Wales taking up smoking every year.

Deprived areas in Wales also see twice as many children taking up smoking than in more affluent areas.

In addition, many young people begin smoking through cannabis use, with research showing that cannabis use is on the rise among young people in Wales.



**Urgent action is needed to reduce children's exposure to smoking.**

# SMOKEFREE SCHOOL GATES

Banning smoking at the school gates helps de-normalise smoking in the eyes of children – which will make them far less likely to take up the habit.

Supporting Welsh Government's actions to reduce smoking amongst children, smoking bans also send a message to the wider community that smoking around children is not acceptable.

By making your school gates smokefree, you will be joining hundreds of schools across Wales who have successfully introduced this policy, taking that extra step to protect children from exposure to smoking.



Your school will also be meeting criteria for the [WNHSS National Quality Award](#), and further aligning your school with Welsh Government's Curriculum for Wales Guidance on [The Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience](#). This curriculum guidance recognises that children are highly influenced by what they see in the world around them. Social influences such as rules, social norms, attitudes, and values shape children and affect their health and well-being.



Rhwydwaith Cynlluniau Ysgolion Iach Cymru



Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes

# 3 SIMPLE STEPS

Making your school gates a smokefree space can be done in three simple steps:

## STEP ONE – POLICY

The Smokefree School Gates Policy can be added to your pre-existing Smokefree School Grounds Policy, with information on where the boundaries are for the smokefree school gates, identifying how far past the school gates you wish to take it.

We have included an [example policy](#) in this document for guidance, if needed.



## STEP TWO – COMMUNICATION

Your new Smokefree School Gates policy can be communicated on your website, social media channels, notice boards and in the school newsletter if you have one.

In communications to parents, you could also provide guidance on where to find quit smoking support, while explaining the health, academic and social reasons for the change.

We have included information on [quit smoking support](#) available to your pupils, their parents, and your staff, in this document, as well as a [template message to parents](#).



## STEP THREE – SIGNAGE

Hundreds of schools across Wales have used our signage. It's a great way of showing everyone your school's stance on smoking around children and its proactive approach to protecting and improving children's health.

Our banners are adjustable to your needs and available at your request. We have included [examples of the banners](#) used for this campaign in this document.



# TEMPLATE SMOKEFREE SCHOOL POLICY

## Smokefree School 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 that, for many, begins at childhood and that is why we are committed to creating a smokefree environment and developing pupil's knowledge, attitudes, and skills in positive decision making around smoking.

### 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 on the dangers of smoking



Provide encouragement and support to smokers who wish to give up smoking



Reduce smoking litter around the school



Be a healthy role model within the local community

### Actions

- Provide a smokefree school environment
- Ensure that tobacco education is part of the school's curriculum
- Ensure that all staff promote healthy lifestyles with a positive attitude
- 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
- Ensure that this policy is applied when children / young people are off site

# TEMPLATE MESSAGE TO PARENTS

**Dear parent / guardian,**

On [date] our school will be adopting a new Smokefree School Gates policy.

This policy prohibits smoking outside and around the school gates and is in addition to our policy prohibiting smoking on our school grounds and on our sports fields [list other areas if relevant].

Please find attached a copy of our new policy, which can also be found on our website [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 second-hand smoke increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. Exposure to role models who smoke also normalises smoking behaviour, which can have a significant negative impact on the smokefree message.

Three quarters of smokers start before the age of 18, and almost 40% start smoking regularly before the age of 16. 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.

A smokefree school provides positive health promotion, 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 also recognise the important role that teachers, parents and other adults have in influencing the attitudes and smoking behaviour of children and young people.

We seek 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, who offer a free and effective service in Wales. For more information visit [helpmequit.wales](http://helpmequit.wales) or phone 0800 085 2219.

Yours sincerely,  
[name of sender/school]

# EXAMPLE BANNERS

Small = 1m x 1.5m



Medium = 1m x 2m



Large = 1m x 3m



To order banners for your school, email us at [communications@ashwales.org.uk](mailto:communications@ashwales.org.uk)





# QUIT SMOKING SUPPORT

## Help Me Quit

For anyone looking for quit smoking support, the NHS provide a free quit smoking service called Help Me Quit.

Help Me Quit can provide free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) to those who have decided to stop smoking.



### Contact Help Me Quit

Tel: 0800 085 2219  
Email: [helpmequit@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:helpmequit@wales.nhs.uk)  
Text: HMQ to 80818

Website: [helpmequit.wales](http://helpmequit.wales)



Scan for Help Me Quit website

## Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

NRT is a range of medication that helps reduce unpleasant withdrawal effects, like bad moods and cravings, by providing the body with nicotine, without the tar, carbon monoxide, and other poisonous chemicals present in tobacco, making it far safer than smoking. Children as young as 12-years-old can access NRT.

**You are 3x more likely to quit if you combine NRT with professional support.**

For more information on the different types of NRT that are available, visit our website for our online NRT Guide: [https://ash.wales/nrt\\_guide/](https://ash.wales/nrt_guide/)

Scan to reach our online NRT Guide



**WHAT IS NRT?**  
The main reason that people smoke is because they are addicted to nicotine. Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) is a range of medication that helps reduce unpleasant withdrawal effects, like bad moods and cravings, by providing you with nicotine, without the tar, carbon monoxide, and other poisonous chemicals present in tobacco, making it far safer than smoking.

**WHAT ARE NICOTINE PATCHES?**  
They look and are placed on the skin like plasters. They provide a steady supply of nicotine into your body through the skin, to replace some of the nicotine you would get from a cigarette.

**NICOTINE PATCHES**

**WHAT IS NRT?**

**WHAT ARE NICOTINE PATCHES?**