

Smoking & Vaping Guidance - Education

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This guidance sets out the Education Directorate approach and commitment to providing a healthy and safe learning and working environment for Children, Young People and school staff, contributing to vaping and tobacco product free generations.
- 1.2 Following this guidance will ensure a consistency of approach across the Directorate.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This guidance uses the World Health Organisation Tobacco Free Schools Framework. According to the report, tobacco claims over 8 million lives annually; a staggering 1.3 million of these deaths are non-smokers succumbing to illnesses attributed to second-hand smoke, and 51,000 of these victims are children.
- 2.2 The main concern of tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke in youth is the harmful effects of nicotine on adolescent brain development. In addition, children are more vulnerable to different forms of marketing and peer pressure and are easily influenced by their role models. This combination emphasises the need for more effective and comprehensive measures to prevent children and young people from starting tobacco and nicotine use.
- 2.3 As children spend one third of their waking hours at school, it is imperative to offer them clean air and to protect their environment from the misleading and manipulative tactics of the tobacco industry.
- 2.4 This guidance, and associated actions, are in line with the Raising Scotland's Tobacco Free Generation target, as well as recent national measures to further protect children and young people from the unknown risks associated with the unlicensed use of vapes. According to the Scottish Government's Tobacco and Vaping Framework: Roadmap to 2034, over 8,000 lives are cut short in Scotland every year from diseases caused by smoking.
- 2.5 The recent Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children 2022 (HBSC) (Scotland) study reports that 3% of 11-year-olds, 10% of 13-year-olds and 25% of 15-year-olds said they had used an e-cigarette in the past 30 days. The report also found that there have been increases in current e-cigarette use since 2018 for 13-year-old girls (2 to 13%) and larger increases for 15-year-olds (girls 6% to 30% and boys 8% to 20%).
- 2.6 Fife's recent Health and Wellbeing Survey for young people, carried out in 2023, indicates that 79.9% of pupils in S2 reported that they had never vaped.

75.1% of pupils in S4 reported that they use e-cigarettes less than once a month or have never used them.

3 AIM

3.1 Education staff are dedicated to creating a vape and smoke free school environment and aim to:

- protect the health and wellbeing of our Children, Young People and staff by banning the use vape and tobacco products during facility operating hours.
- encourage tobacco and nicotine vapour product users to stop use and offer appropriate support.
- de-normalise vaping and tobacco use, thereby contributing to raising vaping and tobacco product free generations.

4 DEFINITIONS

4.1 Tobacco products: this guidance refers to tobacco products, including those that are traditionally smoked, snuffed and ingested, as well as other oral forms of tobacco.

4.2 Nicotine Vaping Products (NVPs) or e-cigarettes: Battery-operated devices that people use to inhale an aerosol or liquid, which typically contains nicotine (though not always), flavourings, and other chemicals. While these devices might be a useful quitting aid for people who smoke, Public Health Scotland advises that NVPs and e-cigarettes are not suitable products for children or non-smokers.

5 SCOPE

5.1 **This guidance applies to the following people:**

Everyone present on school premises: pupils, school staff, parents while visiting and all other visitors, regardless of the purpose of their visit and at all times.

5.2 **The following areas are covered by this guidance**

5.2.1 The smoking and vaping school guidance applies to all Education facilities, properties and vehicles, regardless of location.

5.2.2 Tobacco and vape use is prohibited in any indoor areas, including, but not limited to, offices, classrooms, meeting rooms, service rooms, bathrooms, hallways, staircases and sports and leisure venues. The use of vaping and tobacco products is banned in all outdoor school facilities, including, but not limited to playgrounds, paths, fields, parking areas and sports and leisure areas.

- 5.2.3 The guidance also applies during school events, school trips and off-campus activities where pupils are under the care and supervision of school staff.

6 IMPLEMENTING THE GUIDANCE

6.1 Raising awareness of the guidance

Education establishments will raise awareness of the smoking and vaping policy with staff, pupils, parents and carers, partner organisations, contractors and members of the public, using a range of methods. To ensure the whole school community is aware of the guidance and our ambition to protect against harms caused by tobacco and vaping products, we will undertake the following actions:

- utilise the school social media accounts
- ensure the guidance is available on the school website
- make all contractors, hirers and visitors of the school building aware of the policy
- display smoke/vape-free school signage in prominent areas of the school, including the car park and all entrances, toilets and other communal areas.
- provide the guidance to all staff
- ensure that staff and pupil induction processes include information about the guidance and approaches
- staff induction will include full briefing of the smoking and vaping guidance

6.2 Tobacco and Vaping education

- 6.2.1 Schools will use Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes for planning learning in this area of the curriculum. Fife's Progression Pathways/ PSE inputs can support this work and have been updated with latest information and resources to support teaching about vaping. As always, learner voice will shape the learning to ensure it is appropriate for the context of the school.

- 6.2.2 School staff will have opportunities to engage with relevant training, access to resources and other CPD opportunities to ensure they are equipped to deliver tobacco and vaping awareness education. Free training is available via NHS Fife Health Promotion's Prevention and early Intervention training programme which can be accessed here: <http://hptraining.fife.scot.nhs.uk>

6.3 Support people to stop smoking & vaping

- 6.3.1 To reduce the harm caused by smoking and vaping, staff, pupils and

visitors will be signposted to support to stop smoking & vaping as appropriate. The Education Directorate will signpost to relevant information for those who wish to stop smoking or vaping.

- 6.3.2 Pupils identified as smoking or vaping will be signposted to relevant support and parents will be notified.

6.4 Reducing supply of tobacco & vaping products to young people

- 6.4.1 The Education Directorate will work closely with local businesses and trading standards services to reduce young people's access to tobacco & vaping products. Where the school has information on young people being supplied with tobacco or NVPs this information will be passed to trading standards officers.
- 6.4.2 Young people are often able to access cigarettes and vapes by buying them or being given them by other people. The sharing or selling of cigarettes and NVPs between peers is a clear breach of this guidance. Pupils should not bring any tobacco products to school with them.

6.5 Dealing with incidents of smoking or vaping in the school grounds

- 6.5.1 It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that the Education establishment remains smoke and vape-free. All members of staff are strongly encouraged to recognise their role-modelling influence, not to smoke, vape or knowingly permit smoking & vaping within the school grounds and to advise those seen smoking or vaping that it is not permitted, draw attention to the smoking and vaping guidance and report incidents to the Senior Leadership team.
- 6.5.2 In the case of pupils smoking or vaping within the school grounds, they will be asked to stop and reminded of the smoking and vaping guidance in the first instance. All incidents of pupils smoking or vaping will be reported to the Senior Leadership team for follow-up.
- 6.5.3 Pupils identified as smoking or vaping will:
- have cigarettes/vaping devices confiscated
 - have a conversation about their smoking or vaping with a member of the Senior Management Team
 - receive a phone call home
 - receive a supported referral to stop-smoking or vaping services (if willing)
 - Have a pastoral note completed to record the incident and any follow up.

- 6.5.4 The Education Directorate is committed to supporting all tobacco and vape users who want to stop and will take supportive action to ensure this is the case. Persistent and wilful breaches of the guidance may result in the matter being dealt with through school disciplinary procedures.

7 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 7.1 Education establishments will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this guidance through:
- monitoring smoking and vaping hotspots across the school on a regular basis
 - addressing all reported incidents of smoking or vaping in the school grounds
 - engaging with the Fife Health and Wellbeing Survey every 3 years

EFFECTIVE DATE

March 2025

REVIEW DATE

July 2026

APPENDIX 1

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

- NHS Fife Tobacco prevention and protection - [Tobacco prevention and protection | NHS Fife](#)
- NHS Fife Stop Smoking Service - [Stop Smoking Service | NHS Fife](#)
- Vaping Fact Sheet (NHS Inform) Vaping addiction soon takes hold | [NHS inform](#)

Vapes are not for children or non-smokers. In Scotland, it is illegal to sell vapes or e-cigarettes to anyone under 18, or to buy them for someone who is under 18.

Research on smoking has shown that nicotine is highly addictive. Someone who uses vapes may become addicted to nicotine and find it difficult to stop using it. The nicotine contained in many vapes is highly addictive. It can stop young people from concentrating on the activities they enjoy.

Effects of nicotine

Most of what is known about the effects of nicotine comes from research into smoking.

Nicotine addiction

Research on smoking has shown that nicotine addiction can affect mental health. It can make users tired, stressed and anxious. It can also affect concentration and impact ability to learn and study.

Nicotine addiction can lead to long-lasting changes in cognition (thinking), attention and memory. It can also lead to mood disorders like depression and anxiety.

While the long term health effects are still being researched, organisations like [Cancer Research UK](#), the [British Heart Foundation](#), the [Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health](#) and the [Royal College of Physicians](#) all believe it is unsafe for children and young people to vape. Vapes are not for children.

Nicotine pouches (sometimes incorrectly being referred to as “snus”) are also not suitable for young people under 18. They are discrete and can be used without detection. There is a high potential for nicotine dependence if used regularly, as well as longer term risks being unknown. See this factsheet for more details: https://www.dsmfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/20250121-TUE346-A-quick-guide-to-tobacco-and-nicotine-pouches_DSM-Version.pdf

Nicotine withdrawal

When a person is dependent on (or addicted to) nicotine and stops using it, their body and brain must get used to not having nicotine. This can result in temporary symptoms of nicotine withdrawal.

Nicotine withdrawal symptoms include:

- Irritability
- restlessness
- feeling [anxious](#) or [depressed](#)
- [trouble sleeping](#)
- problems concentrating
- craving nicotine
- headaches

Please remember pupils can always speak to a supportive adult at home, in the community or in school, for example a teacher, guidance teacher or school nurse.