

Stowe acknowledges that smoking and breathing other people's tobacco smoke is a health hazard and therefore smoking is banned to protect both students and staff from the harmful effects of smoke. This policy also includes all tobacco/nicotine based products such as e-cigarettes, flavoured tobacco, nicotine pouches etc.

This policy aims to:

- provide an environment where good health is promoted for all
- highlight to all at Stowe that it is a 'smoke free' environment
- to ensure that all pupils understand the effects and potential dangers of smoking
- comply with the smoke free legislation under the Health Act 2006 and inform pupils of the law with regard to smoking
- take account of the needs of those who are addicted to smoking and to offer an avenue of support for those who wish to stop
- to communicate to parents the School's stance on smoking

The Policy

1. This policy applies to all students.
2. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the grounds or buildings at any time at School or elsewhere during term time or when travelling to and from School.
3. The possession of smoking materials of any kind (including e-cigarettes) is forbidden, as is their use at School or elsewhere during term time or when travelling to and from School. (This includes students under School supervision away from Stowe including all School expeditions, camps and trips.)
4. Being in the presence of smokers or in known smoking areas is treated as a punishable offence (association)
5. The School recognises a duty of care to those students who smoke and is committed to help them to break the habit.
6. Help will be made available to those students who want advice on how to stop smoking by visiting the Medical Centre.
7. If a student is found breaking the smoking rules, disciplinary action will be taken.

Legal Restrictions

It is illegal to sell tobacco to anyone under the age of 18 in England and Wales. The minimum age for consumption in public is 16, however there is no age limit for consumption in private. Possession is not an offence, providing they are not being consumed underage. Although consumption laws are not strictly enforced due to the high amount of teenage smokers.

Smoking – Basic Facts

About 100,000 people in the UK die each year due to smoking. Smoking-related deaths are mainly due to cancers, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and heart disease.

About half of all smokers die from smoking-related diseases. If you are a long-term smoker, on average, your life expectancy is about 10 years less than a non-smoker. Put another way, in the UK about 8 in 10 non-smokers live past the age of 70, but only about half of long-term smokers live past 70. The younger you are when you start smoking, the more likely you are to smoke for longer and to die early from smoking.

Many smoking-related deaths are not quick deaths. For example, if you develop COPD you can expect several years of illness and distressing symptoms before you die.

Smoking increases the risk of developing a number of other diseases. Many of these may not be fatal, but they can cause years of unpleasant symptoms.

The good news is:

- ***Stopping smoking can make a big difference to your health. It is never too late to stop smoking to greatly benefit your health. For example, if you stop smoking in middle age, before having cancer or some other serious disease, you avoid most of the increased risk of death due to smoking.***

Nicotine

Nicotine is a drug that stimulates the brain. If you are a regular smoker, when the blood level of nicotine falls, you usually develop withdrawal symptoms, such as craving, anxiety, restlessness, headaches, irritability, hunger, difficulty with concentration, or just feeling awful. These symptoms are relieved by the next cigarette. So, most smokers need to smoke regularly to feel normal, and to prevent nicotine withdrawal symptoms.

E-cigarettes

E-cigarettes generate toxic chemicals similar to those found in tobacco and may harm the lungs and immune system. E-cigarette vapour contained free radical toxins similar to those found in cigarette smoke and air pollution. Free radicals are highly-reactive molecules that can damage DNA and cell membranes. The nicotine inside the cartridges is addictive. When you stop using it, you can get withdrawal symptoms including feeling irritable, depressed, restless and anxious. It can be dangerous for people with heart problems. It may also harm your arteries over time.

Tar which contains many chemicals

These deposit in the lungs and can get into the blood vessels and be carried to other parts of the body. Cigarette smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, including over 50 known carcinogens (causes of cancer) and other poisons.

Carbon monoxide

This chemical affects the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood.

Vigilance

Members of staff are expected to be vigilant at all times to prevent pupils from smoking. Any evidence of smoking and or other related activities must be reported to the Houseparents as soon as possible.

Action Following Smoking / Nicotine Breach

In addition to the normal punishment for serious offences, smokers will be routinely urine tested and be asked to visit the Medical Centre to discuss the issues surrounding smoking / nicotine and would be offered a cessation course if they ask. Houseparents must contact parents if pupils are found with cigarettes.