

Author	Senior Deputy Head
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Approving Body	ELT
Regulatory References	Health Act 2006
	Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016
	DfE Guidance: Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2022)
	Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – DfE statutory guidance 2025
Stowe policy to read in conjunction	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
	Behaviour Policy
	Health & Safety Policy
	PSHE / RSHE (Relationships, Sex & Health Education) Policy
Next Review	April 2027

Document distribution:

Stowe website, Parent Portal, School policy (StoweNet)
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Smoking, Nicotine Pouches / Patches and Vaping Policy

Introduction and Purpose

Stowe School recognises that smoking, vaping, and the use of nicotine products present serious health risks and can have long-term consequences for physical and mental wellbeing. This policy is designed to protect Stoics from these risks, to prevent the development of nicotine dependency among our community, and to foster a culture of healthy, informed decision-making. The school is committed to maintaining a safe, smoke-free and nicotine-free environment, ensuring compliance with UK law and public health guidance (including NHS and UKHSA guidance), while providing appropriate pastoral and medical support for any Stoics who may be struggling with nicotine use. The policy applies to all tobacco and nicotine-related products, including cigarettes, cigars, rolling tobacco, vapes, heated tobacco products, nicotine pouches, and any nicotine-containing device or substance.

Stowe School operates in accordance with UK law and statutory guidance, including the Health Act 2006, the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016, and DfE guidance on behaviour, safeguarding, and searching Stoics (Searching, Screening and Confiscation, 2022). It is illegal to sell tobacco or nicotine products to anyone under 18. The school has a duty to take reasonable steps to prevent possession, use, or supply of nicotine products among Stoics and to safeguard their wellbeing in accordance with child protection law.

Who the Policy Applies To

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including Stoics, staff, parents, visitors, contractors, and volunteers. It applies across all school premises and grounds, during school events, trips, fixtures, expeditions, and residential visits, and whenever individuals are representing the school, including travel to and from school.

Stoics are expected to always comply with the policy, including when wearing school uniform or otherwise identifiable as members of Stowe School. Staff, parents, visitors, and contractors are also required to refrain from smoking, vaping, or using any nicotine-containing products anywhere on school premises, apart from a designated smoking area located near the swimming pool, which is provided for their use. Even in this area, individuals are expected to act responsibly and ensure they do not cause nuisance or risk to the school community.

Scope of Prohibited Products

The policy applies to all nicotine and tobacco-containing products. This includes cigarettes, cigars, rolling tobacco, vapes, e-cigarettes, heated tobacco products, nicotine pouches, nicotine patches or gum (unless medically prescribed and approved by the school), and any device, cartridge, liquid, or substance containing nicotine. Emerging nicotine delivery devices or substances are also covered, regardless of brand or marketing claims.

School Expectations and Standards

Stowe School is a smoke-free and nicotine-free environment. Smoking, vaping, or the use of nicotine products is not permitted by any individual on school premises. Stoics must not possess, use, or supply tobacco or nicotine products at any time while under school authority, including during term time, school trips, expeditions, fixtures, and travel to and from school when representing the school. Staff, parents, and visitors are expected to comply fully with this policy, refraining from smoking or vaping on school premises or in view of Stoics (with the exception of the designated smoking area located near the swimming pool for staff, parents, and visitors).

Stoics Conduct and Prohibited Behaviour

Stoics must not smoke, vape, or use nicotine products under any circumstances connected to school life. Possession of nicotine or tobacco products, including vaping devices or related paraphernalia, is prohibited, whether or not they have been used. Stoics must not supply, sell, or facilitate access while under school authority. Stoics found in the presence of smoking or vaping where they are actively participating, facilitating, or otherwise under school authority, will be treated as in breach of school rules. Attempts to conceal nicotine products, tamper with detection

measures, or evade staff supervision may be considered aggravating factors when determining the school's response.

Searches, Confiscation, and Disposal Procedures

Any Stoics found in possession of, using, or supplying nicotine or tobacco products will face disciplinary action. The overarching aim of the school's response is to protect health, prevent addiction, and promote positive, informed choices.

Searches for nicotine or tobacco products will be conducted in accordance with DfE statutory guidance (Searching, Screening and Confiscation, 2022) and the school's Behaviour Policy and Searches Policy. Confiscated items will be disposed of by the Head of Security and will follow legal and environmental standards. Staff will act proportionately, respecting Stoics' dignity and privacy. Parents will be informed when prohibited items are found.

Staff are expected to remain alert to smoking, vaping, and nicotine use. Concerns should be reported promptly to Houseparents, pastoral leaders, or safeguarding staff, and records maintained. Consistent enforcement and vigilance are essential to safeguarding and maintaining a healthy environment for all Stoics.

Communication

Parents will be informed of any nicotine-related incidents involving their child. The school will work collaboratively with families to support behaviour change and cessation and can provide advice and resources as needed. The school maintains clear communication of expectations, consequences, and available support.

Disciplinary Measures, Sanctions, and Reintegration

Any Stoic found in possession of, or using, a vaping device, tobacco, nicotine, or related products will receive an automatic suspension. The school takes this matter very seriously, and suspension will be applied regardless of previous offences. While suspension is automatic, each case will be reviewed by The Head and Senior Deputy Head to ensure welfare considerations are addressed and appropriate support is provided.

In addition to suspension, the school may confiscate prohibited items, notify parents, and provide pastoral support to address underlying health or behavioural issues. Supplying tobacco or nicotine products to others is considered a particularly serious offence and may result in further sanctions. Where there is evidence of coercion, exploitation, or organised supply, safeguarding procedures will be initiated.

Upon returning from suspension, Stoics will enter a structured reintegration process. This process includes setting clear personal targets and meeting weekly for four weeks with a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team (ELT) to review progress, provide support, and reinforce expectations. This process explicitly supports behaviour change, addresses health or wellbeing concerns, and promotes accountability while helping the Stoic reintegrate successfully into school life.

Nicotine use is recognised as both a health and wellbeing concern. Stoics found using nicotine products will be offered support through Houseparents, the Medical Centre, therapy, or external health services. Smoking cessation guidance and structured support will be provided where appropriate. Concerns regarding exploitation, coercion, or involvement in supplying products will be escalated through safeguarding channels in accordance with statutory guidance.

While each incident is taken seriously, the school ensures that all actions are consistent, transparent, and in line with statutory guidance, prioritising both accountability and the wellbeing of Stoics.

Education and Preventative Measures

The school emphasises prevention through education and awareness. Stoics receive age-appropriate teaching in PSHE about the risks associated with smoking, vaping, and nicotine addiction. Lessons cover peer pressure, decision-making, marketing tactics, and strategies to resist harmful behaviour. The school reinforces these messages through

assemblies, prefect initiatives, and engagement with parents to ensure consistent communication between home and school.

Staff are expected to act as positive role models and uphold the smoke-free and nicotine-free environment. Staff must not smoke or vape on school premises or in view of Stoics, with the exception of the designated smoking area located near the swimming pool for staff, parents, and visitors. Staff are expected to challenge and report breaches of this policy, and to follow safeguarding procedures when concerns arise. Training is provided to ensure staff are aware of emerging nicotine products, associated health risks, and best practice responses. Senior Leadership Team oversight ensures consistency in enforcement and guidance.

Parents, Visitors, and Contractors

All visitors, contractors, and parents are required to comply with the school's smoke-free and nicotine-free environment, with the exception of the designated smoking area located near the swimming pool. Smoking or vaping is not permitted anywhere else on school grounds or during school events, including fixtures, performances, and open days. Clear signage reinforces this expectation, and individuals who fail to comply may be asked to leave the premises.

Monitoring and Review

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy are monitored through recording and analysis of incidents, safeguarding records, and Stoics wellbeing data. The policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if required, to ensure compliance with legal and public health guidance. Stoics, staff, and parental feedback will inform ongoing development.

Medical and Health Context

Smoking and nicotine use have well-documented adverse health effects, including increased risk of cancer, heart disease, respiratory illness, and addiction. Nicotine is highly addictive and can impact adolescent brain development, concentration, and mental wellbeing. While vaping is sometimes perceived as less harmful than smoking, it carries health risks, including exposure to chemicals and the potential for long-term addiction, according to NHS and UKHSA guidance. Stowe School emphasises that cessation at any stage confers significant health benefits, and support is available for Stoics seeking to stop using nicotine products.