



Reviewed September 2024

ST BERTELINE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

SMOKE AND VAPOUR FREE POLICY

St Bert's is committed to creating a smoke & vapour free environment.

Introduction

National Statutory Guidance

The Health Act 2006 (implemented 1st July 2007) requires all employers to provide smoke free premises, places and vehicles.

Section 2 (2) (e) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on employers to provide a working environment for employees that is:

"so far as is reasonably practical, safe, without risk to health and adequate as regards to facilities and arrangement for welfare at work"

Tobacco Related Harm

Tobacco smoke contains over 4,000 toxic chemicals and at least 60 known Grade A carcinogens. Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death and of health inequalities in our society today; and is responsible for over 80,000 deaths in the UK annually.

Smoking is not only a threat to smokers; passive or second-hand smoking (involuntarily breathing in smoke of others, sometimes called exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke) is established as a cause of serious disease in non-smokers - including cancer, cardiovascular disease and numerous respiratory conditions. Children, pregnant women and those with established disease such as asthma are particularly vulnerable.

Short-term exposure to passive smoking leads to effects ranging from headaches, sore throat, dizziness and nausea, increased cough, wheeze and phlegm production, to irritation of the eyes and the nuisance of foul-smelling clothes and hair.

Smoke-free legislation was introduced in the UK in 2007 and has been highly effective in reducing exposure to passive smoke at work and in public places. There have been substantial health benefits, and in particular a marked reduction in hospital admissions with coronary heart disease. Other health benefits associated

with smoke free legislation include reduced incidence of childhood asthma and an increase in the number of people cutting down or quitting smoking.

Tackling smoking amongst young people is one of the major priorities for Halton Borough Council.

Schools are in an ideal position to influence the health of the community they serve as the school environment has a key role to play in reducing smoking amongst young people, staff and visitors.

What are e-cigarettes?

Electronic cigarettes, also known as electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) are designed to look and feel like cigarettes.

A draft review by the World Health Organisation Tobacco Regulatory Group in 2009 noted that the extent of nicotine uptake and the safety of e-cigarettes have yet to be fully established. While electronic cigarettes may be safer than conventional cigarettes, the long-term effects on health are not known. The drawbacks of e-cigarettes include:

- . Electronic cigarettes are not regulated as medicine and therefore the ingredients and amount of nicotine contained varies and is not reliably listed on the label.
- . They are not proven safe. Some e-cigarettes tested by a local authority trading standards team contained toxic chemicals, including some carcinogenic products.
- . The vapour produced may reduce oxygen levels in body.
- . There is no evidence that e-cigarettes are successful at helping people to stop smoking.

As often quoted advantage of smoke free legislation is that it de-normalises smoking, effectively distancing the behaviour from what is an accepted social norm. The ban on smoking in public places has reinforced in many people's minds that such behaviour has gone from a normal, widely accepted activity to one that is abnormal and unaccepted. There are concerns that e-cigarettes will undermine this process, threatening the now established practice of smoke free public places and public transport. For these reasons restriction on the use of e-cigarettes is included in this policy.

Objectives

The aim of this policy is to:

- . Protect and improve the health of all school staff, pupils, visitors, parents, contractors and agency workers.
- . Protect both smokers and non-smokers from the dangers to their health and exposure to second-hand smoke.
- . Lead by example to young people to demoralise smoking within communities.
- . Reflect a comprehensive approach to tobacco use.

General Policy Statement

Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes (vaping) is prohibited in all areas of school premises including, buildings, grounds, playgrounds and car parks and areas of access and egress. Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes is also prohibited in all vehicles owned or operated by the school including school transport contracted by the school. Smoking is not permitted in private vehicles whilst on school premises.

The sale or promotion of tobacco products or e-cigarettes is not allowed on school premises including, buildings, grounds, playgrounds and car parks and areas of access and egress.

These restrictions apply to all school employees, pupils, parents, agency workers, visitors and contractors.

Employees

Employee Protocol

Smoking breaks are not provided within the terms of the school's policy or conditions of service. Employees who choose to smoke may only do so during unpaid breaks eg lunch breaks and only if staff are off site including playgrounds and car parks.

Employee Visits and Appointments

In the circumstances where staff provide home visits, they should be able to do so in a safe environment. Staff are at risk if the household is a smoking household. The school will take reasonably practical steps to minimise the risks to employees whilst at work. All households will be notified of impending appointments, the requirement to be smoke free 30 minutes prior to the appointment commencing and the requirement not to smoke during the appointment. Staff will have the right to refuse to work in a smoky atmosphere.

Non-compliance with the Policy

Staff/parents who refuse to refrain from smoking on school premises will be in breach of the smoke free policy and initially should be counselled and encouraged to comply with the policy. Further breaches of the policy will become a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures.

Recruitment Procedures

On their appointment, all new staff members will be made aware of this policy. This policy will be reiterated and reinforced during the induction process.

Signage and Vehicles

Statutory signage, posters and the sign in app are utilised and displayed at all entrances and appropriate places throughout the premises so that it can be seen and read by people in the premises and approaching the premises. This also includes displaying signage in enclosed smoke free vehicles.