



Smoke-Free Policy

Reviewed – September 2025

1 Introduction

Woodlawn School and NTC are committed to providing a smoke free environment to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees and pupils to minimise the risks associated with passive smoking.

The purpose is to enforce a **total ban** whilst simultaneously offering support and assistance to employees experiencing difficulty in complying or who express a wish to stop smoking.

2 Legal and strategic drivers to enforce the policy

- Health and Safety Law (1974) Woodlawn School became smoke free (all premises, inside and out) in July 2007.

3 Objectives

Woodlawn School's role in smoking cessation is to offer support to employees.

Key objectives include:

- Attempting to minimise the number of people starting to smoke
- The protection of non-smokers from tobacco smoke
- Supporting people who wish to stop smoking
- Eliminating any unequal treatment between smokers and non-smokers
- Enhancing corporate image

4 What this means in practice?

There is a complete ban on smoking in all workplaces within the school including

- car park
- areas at the front, rear and sides of school
- school vehicles

This ban includes the use of E-Cigarettes. There are no designated smoking areas. Smokers will only be able to smoke in their own time and away from the workplace and vehicles. In addition the use of electrical chargers for E-cigarettes in Woodlawn School is strictly forbidden.

5 Scope

5.1 Who does the policy apply to?

This Policy applies to:

- All employees, visitors, work placements, voluntary workers, agency workers, contractors and sub-contractors while carrying out work on behalf of Woodlawn School, or while on Woodlawn School site.
- Taxi drivers and escorts who drop off/collect pupils.
- Employees working in public areas (e.g. on educational visits) and within school vehicles (e.g. mini-bus)
- Employees accompanying children in any capacity, or while representing the school in a formal or social setting.
- Any place where an employee of the school is conducting work on behalf of the school and this includes the homes of pupils/prospective pupils.

- Woodlawn School also feels very strongly about the bad impression created by employees smoking next to the entrances of the site and requires its employees not to engage in this practice, in addition Woodlawn School reminds employees to dispose of cigarette butts and other litter in appropriate ashtrays, litter bins.

6 Roles & Responsibilities

6.1 SLT responsibilities

SLT members have a responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the policy within their teams. This includes ensuring that all employees have access to the policy and that new employees are made aware of the policy.

SLT also have responsibility to ensure that the policy is made clear to all job applicants and that it is emphasised during induction. The policy will be referred to in any contracts or statements of particulars.

- The Council's Health and Safety Team is responsible for the provision of advice and guidance to employees wishing to quit smoking.

6.2 Employees Responsibility

- All employees of Woodlawn School have a responsibility to adhere to this policy.
- All employees have a duty to inform contractors, subcontractors, work placements, agency workers, voluntary workers, taxi drivers/escorts and visitors to school about these guidelines.

7 Enforcement

It is a disciplinary offence to smoke in the workplace and the following procedure will be followed:

- Where an employee is in breach of the policy they will be informally spoken to in the first instance with help and support offered. This will be confirmed in writing.
- If an employee continues to breach the policy then the appropriate action will be taken under the school's disciplinary procedure. The level of sanction will depend on the nature and seriousness of the breach. This sanction is likely to include a referral for support to manage nicotine dependence whilst at work.

Employees who work more than six hours per day have a statutory right to a rest break of at least 20 minutes away from their work station under the Working Time Regulations 1998 and most rest breaks are taken in the form of a lunch break. Hence employees may use these breaks to smoke away from the workplace without leaving any cigarette ends.

Frequently asked questions about smoking in the workplace

Q1: Why is smoking not allowed when working for Woodlawn School/NTC?

A: We actively promote good health and wellbeing of their employees and pupils. In addition the harmful effects of second hand smoking are well known. Second hand smoke exposure can lead to:

- Heart disease
- Lung cancer and asthma
- Stinging eyes
- Clothes smelling of cigarette smoke

The right of non-smokers to work in clean air prevails over the smokers' right to smoke.

Q2. Is there a law against smoking in the workplace?

A:

- All enclosed workplaces had to be smoke free by July 2007, following as a result of the Government Health Act 2006. Employees are already legally protected from second hand smoke in rest rooms. Pregnant women are also protected under different clauses of the European Health and Safety regulations.
- Health and Safety law states that where reasonably practicable employers must ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees and protect them against known risks.

Q3: When did No Smoking in the Workplace come into effect at North Tyneside Council?

A: 1st Sep 2006.

Q4: What is second hand smoke?

A: Second hand smoke is a mixture of the smoke given off by the burning end of a cigarette, pipe or cigar and the smoke exhaled from the lungs of smokers. Second hand smoke contains more than 250 chemicals known to be toxic or cancer causing. Second hand smoke is also called environmental tobacco smoke (ETS); exposure to second hand smoke is called involuntary smoking, or passive smoking.

Q5: What do I do if I see someone smoking on school owned property?

A: We expect that by far the majority of smokers will cooperate with the guidelines and the non-smokers will continue to treat them with respect. If you encounter someone smoking on/near school property and you feel comfortable approaching him or her, we suggest that you politely bring to their attention that smoking is prohibited. In the unlikely event that the smoker responds in a fashion that you feel is inappropriate, you might wish to report the matter to the Headteacher.

Q6: What is meant by complete ban?

A: Complete ban includes workplace car park areas and areas at the front, rear, sides and inside the school building. It also includes school owned vehicles.

Q7: Why are Electronic Cigarettes included in the ban?

A: We do not allow the use of E-cigarettes as they do not support our aim to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Q8: Will there be any smoking breaks during the working day?

A: There will not be any smoking breaks during the working day. However smokers can use their lunchtime for smoking away from school premises.

Q9: What is the council doing about littering? Won't people throw cigarette ends on the PAVEMENTS, creating a mess?

A: It is expected that smokers will not create litter with their cigarette ends. In North Tyneside a cigarette end constitutes littering and attracts a fine.

Q10: What if some of my employees object to the enforcement of these guidelines?

A: All employees must comply with the school's policies, procedures and guidelines.

Q11: Why don't we have smoking areas for employees?

A: Providing a place to smoke does not support our goal to create a healthier environment. We are working to eliminate the triggers – like smoking areas – that make smoking cessation difficult.

Q12: Where can I get advice and support to quit smoking?

A: Advice and support are available from North Tyneside NHS Stop Smoking Service on 0345 2000101.

Support and advice can also be sought from your G.P.

Q13: Is smoking allowed in school vehicles when no other person is in that vehicle?

A: No.