

St Benedict's Catholic College



Non-smoking and vaping policy

Date reviewed	March 2026
Date of next review	March 2029

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Introduction

This policy reflects the actions necessary to protect the health and wellbeing of all members of the St Benedict's Catholic College community. It is informed by the Government's White Paper *Choosing Health*, the Health Act 2006, the Tobacco and Vapes Bill (2024–2025), and current Department for Education guidance.

The objective of this policy is to create a **smoke-free and vape-free environment** for all who work in, learn in, or visit the college.

Smoking, the use of e-cigarettes, and vaping devices is **not permitted anywhere on college buildings, grounds, or vehicles**, including entrances, car parks, sports fields, and any area supervised by the college.

Principles

St Benedict's Catholic College is committed to:

- Providing a healthy, clean and safe environment that prioritises the emotional and physical wellbeing of students and staff.
- Educating students, staff, parents, contractors and visitors about the health risks of smoking and vaping, including the impact of nicotine on adolescent brain development.
- Complying with all relevant legislation, including the Health Act 2006, Smoke-Free Premises Regulations, and the Tobacco and Vapes Bill.
- Following the WHO Tobacco-Free Schools Framework to ensure a consistent, whole-school approach.
- Reducing exposure to second-hand smoke and vape aerosols.
- Ensuring that all forms of tobacco and vape promotion, advertising, or display are prohibited on site.
- Supporting students who wish to stop smoking or vaping through accessible, evidence-based interventions.

Legislation and Definitions

The Health Act 2006

The Act prohibits smoking in all enclosed workplaces and public spaces. "Smoking" includes being in possession of lit tobacco or any lit substance that can be smoked.

Tobacco and Vapes Bill (2024–2025)

The Bill introduces:

- Stronger restrictions on vape packaging, flavours, and marketing.
- Powers to restrict disposable vapes.
- Enforcement measures to prevent under-18 access.
- Potential extension of smoke-free zones in outdoor areas where children are present.

The college will update procedures as new measures come into force.

College Premises

The policy applies to:

- All buildings, grounds, sports fields, and car parks
- All school-owned or hired vehicles
- Off-site activities including trips, work experience, placements, and events where students are under college supervision

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Aims

- To enable students to make healthy, informed choices about smoking and vaping.
- To provide accurate information about the health risks associated with nicotine, tobacco, and vape use.
- To minimise risks and legal consequences for students using prohibited items.
- To ensure students know how to access appropriate support to stop smoking or vaping.
- To monitor student involvement in smoking or vaping to inform prevention and intervention strategies.
- To ensure PSHE and curriculum content includes up-to-date education on smoking, vaping, and addiction.
- To ensure all members of the community understand the college's expectations and procedures.

Practice

St Benedict's Catholic College aims to create conditions in which students take responsibility for their own health and behaviour. Staff, students, and parents work to an agreed set of standards that clearly outline expectations and consequences.

The college will:

- Communicate with parents when students do not comply with this policy.
- Promote non-smoking and non-vaping through curriculum content, assemblies, displays, and pastoral support.
- Challenge behaviours that undermine the college's smoke-free and vape-free environment.
- Apply sanctions that are **proportionate, educational, and consistent**, in line with DfE guidance.
- Avoid using exclusion solely for vaping unless accompanied by serious or repeated behavioural concerns.
- Address environmental concerns associated with vaping, including waste from disposable vapes.

Support for Students

St Benedict's Catholic College takes its responsibility for student wellbeing seriously and provides the following support:

- Access to the School Nurse for confidential advice.
- Referral to local NHS Stop Smoking Services.
- Information on NHS digital tools and apps to support quitting.
- Staff trained in smoking and vaping cessation methods.
- Peer mentoring for students who would benefit from youth-led support.
- Awareness sessions on the risks of smoking and vaping.
- Signposting to local pharmacies offering free cessation support for under-16s.
- Safeguarding support where nicotine addiction or peer pressure is affecting wellbeing.

Students are made aware that specialist support, combined with nicotine-replacement therapy or medical advice, can significantly increase success rates.

Staff Development

The college ensures that staff are confident and well-informed about smoking, vaping, and drug education. Staff will have access to:

- In-house training
- Up-to-date information on cessation support
- Guidance on responding to vaping incidents proportionately
- Additional training where relevant to their role

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Parents and Carers

The college values strong partnerships with parents and carers. Parents are encouraged to contact the college if they have concerns about their child's smoking or vaping.

Where specialist support is needed, the college will signpost families to appropriate agencies.

Environmental Responsibility

The college recognises the environmental harm caused by cigarette waste and disposable vapes. We will:

- Educate students about environmental impacts
- Work to reduce vape-related waste
- Support national efforts to restrict disposable vapes

Review and Monitoring

The Governing Body will review this policy in accordance with the policy schedule. The college will monitor implementation and update procedures in line with new legislation, DfE guidance, and public health advice.