

To Parents/Carers of Years 7 to 12

Our Ref: 87280138

23 June 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Re: Vaping

As part of our ongoing safeguarding work, I am writing to raise awareness of the health dangers associated with vapes and vaping and to share with you our stance on this should any student be found in possession of, or using such items on the school premises.

As you may be aware, vaping is the act of inhaling a vapour produced by an electronic vaporizer or e-cigarette. Whilst the vapour may be based on a liquid concentrate, it can contain nicotine, as well as being used to inhale other synthetic substances, which is clearly of significant concern. There have also been reports locally of children and young people experimenting with THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) vaping. THC is the psychoactive compound in cannabis and is illegal in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, there have been reports of young people becoming unwell and needing medical attention after using vapes. The liquids that are vaporized come in many different flavours and might even smell fruity. For example, many of the flavours of these liquid concentrates, or 'vape juices', are sweet and even have names such as, cinnamon roll, marshmallow, grape, strawberry, bubble gum, lemonade and cookies.

Vapes can come in a variety of different forms, shapes and sizes. Some common styles of vapes include ones which look like a thick pen or highlighter pen. These devices are usually very small and can be concealed on a person or blend in with normal school equipment, as a consequence they can be easily mistaken or missed. Like cigarettes, shops and other retailers cannot sell vaping items to people under the age of 18. This includes the sale of vaping equipment, including liquids and devices. It is, therefore, clear that young people under the age of 18 should not be purchasing or be in possession of alternative nicotine products such as vapes. Whilst the sale of items as detailed above is illegal, students have reported to us that they are able to acquire devices online or from older siblings, friends and unfortunately in some instances even parents and carers.

When students vape, it can be due to an addiction to nicotine they have developed, a peer pressure issue, or they are simply curious and want to try it out. If this is the case, we would like to guide you to the following websites which provide helpful information to support you as parents and carers in raising this important issue with your child(ren):

- ASH (Action on Smoking and Health): <https://ash.org.uk/fact-sheets/>
- Know the Risks: <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/>
- Kids Health: <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/e-cigarettes.html>

Naturally, we will also continue our work in school to educate students regarding the dangers of vaping and the legality surrounding this. I am sure that you will agree that the possession and use of vapes on school premises is something that we simply cannot tolerate, consequently, we will view this in the same way as incidents of smoking or possession of smoking paraphernalia. As detailed in our Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy, anyone who is found to be in possession of cigarettes, vapes or associated paraphernalia, will have such items confiscated and will be placed in isolation. Students suspected of vaping will also be searched, with suspicious behaviour in toilets likely to be sanctioned. Any incident of students smoking/vaping will be addressed with a more severe sanctions in line with our Behaviour Policy.

### **Your support**

There are ways you can help protect your children. These include:

- Talking to your child about why smoking/vaping are harmful for them. It is never too late to have the conversation
- Learning about the different types of e-cigarettes available and the risks associated with using these products. We recommend our parents and carers have a look at images of vapes online to familiarise what they can look like
- Setting a good example by being tobacco free
- Knowing what **your child** is bringing to school and taking out with them when in the community. Regularly checking bags, blazers, coats and bedrooms to ensure things are not being hidden or concealed
- Reporting those who are selling cigarettes and e-cigarettes to minors. You can do this by completing the online Whisper button [SWGfL Whisper - Report](#)

I hope you share and understand our concerns about this potential harmful issue. We always aim to work in partnership with parents and carers to help support our students in making positive decisions for themselves and their future. Should you have any further concerns, please do contact the relevant House Team at the school who will be more than willing and able to provide you with additional support and guidance.

Yours faithfully



Mitch Trainor  
**Deputy Headteacher**