



7th March 2024

Dear Parents / Carers

In January we wrote to you to explain our concerns about vaping and our stance on the use of these devices. As we all know, adolescence is a time of exploration and curiosity. It's during these years that our children are exposed to various influences, both positive and negative.

Today, we are writing to address a concerning trend that has been observed throughout all school communities: vaping and curiosity around vaping among students. Every school in the country is facing challenges on this matter and we continue to have concerns about the use of these devices by young people in our school and the local community. More recently we are aware of young people experiencing adverse reactions to the use of vapes in the community and on the school site. Whilst in some cases these responses may be as a result of trying a nicotine product for the first time, we are also aware of national reports of vapes being imported from other countries that contain very high levels of nicotine or other substances including THC and spice.

Vaping, the act of inhaling and exhaling aerosol produced by an electronic cigarette or similar device, has gained popularity in recent years, especially among young people. While it's true that vaping is often marketed as a safer alternative to traditional smoking, it's essential to recognise that it still poses significant health risks, particularly for developing adolescents.

As parents, it's natural to be worried about our children's well-being, especially when it comes to their health and safety. Therefore, I believe it's crucial for us to have an open and honest conversation about vaping and its potential consequences.

First and foremost, it's essential to understand why young people may be drawn to vaping. Peer pressure, curiosity, stress and the misconception that vaping is harmless are just a few factors that might influence their decisions. By acknowledging these influences, we can better address them and provide our children with accurate information and support.

We ask for your support to take an active role in educating your child / children about the dangers of vaping. Please have conversations with them about the risks associated with vaping, how they may react to the substances used within the vape (Do they really know what substances are in the vape?), addiction, lung damage, and the unknown long-term effects of inhaling e-cigarette aerosol. Vapes can contain other substances than nicotine and it is important that children understand the potential risks of using vapes that could contain drugs such as cannabis or spice.

By creating a supportive environment at home and by continuing our education in school about the dangers of vaping through our **LIFE** curriculum including one-to-one safeguarding conversations, we can empower children to make informed decisions and resist peer pressure.

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Additionally, we urge you to familiarise yourselves with the signs of vaping and nicotine addiction, such as increased irritability, coughing, and changes in behaviour or academic performance. If you suspect that your child may be vaping, don't hesitate to contact school or healthcare professionals for guidance and support.

Unfortunately we are aware that some parents and carers condone their child's vaping. If you know that your child is vaping we implore you to have a discussion about the source of these products and that you find ways to help them cease the use of these products.

***We also must remind you that vaping or bringing these products onto site will incur a fixed term suspension. Repeat incidents will lead to an escalation of sanctions and may lead to permanent exclusion. Anyone found to bring an illegal drug onto site is likely to be permanently excluded from the school.***

***We will also work in close coordination with the police to deal with any incidents that would endanger any member of our school community and we will continue to perform search and confiscation procedures where we believe or suspect a child may be in possession of any banned substances.***

This is a national picture: schools across the country are experiencing issues related to vaping and we continue to find ways to monitor, support and educate our young people to reduce the risks to their health, for example next Wednesday is National No smoking Day and assemblies will be carried out to all year groups explaining and reminding our students of the dangers of smoking and vaping.

We feel that honest, open dialogue is important and so we will continue to highlight our concerns to you around important topics throughout the year, particularly those that cause concern on a local and national scale. Together, we can work towards creating a community where our children feel safe, informed, supported, and empowered to make healthy choices.

In the letter to parents / carers in January we shared some useful information and resources. We have added these again below.

- This [factsheet](#) from the National College is useful for you to understand more about vapes and vaping
- [Talk To Frank](#) is useful, factual and informative and is a good place to signpost your teenager if they're looking for more information for themselves
- The [NHS page for drug addiction](#) is a good starting point if you're looking for services to support your teenager
- [This website](#) helps teens to come up with a plan to quit vaping, including some apps that you can get to track your progress
- Apps like [KWIT](#) help people to track their progress when trying to quit smoking or vaping
- [A Parent's Guide to Vaping](#) - a guide designed to support parents in helping them to understand what vaping is and why young people do it
- [I'm worried about my child vaping](#) - a website which offers guidance on how to open a dialogue with your child about vaping

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- [What's In Your Vape](#) - a website which explains the increasingly harmful substances found in vapes
- [Healthier Together Middlesbrough](#) - a local support service which will provide a good starting point for seeking support
- [Growing Healthy North Yorkshire](#) - an additional local support service which signposts other local services, depending on your home postcode
- [People's Information Network Redcar & Cleveland](#) - support within Redcar and Cleveland area to help start you to get some support

Yours faithfully

Mr M Fenwick  
Headteacher

& Mrs J M Myers  
Designated Safeguarding Lead

