



SB/JC

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Dear Parents and Carers

We have recently been made aware about an increase in the number of incidents in our local community where children and young people are being exposed to potentially harmful substances through the use of electronic cigarettes and/or vapes. This mirrors the national trend over the last couple of years. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the issue, provide you with access to helpful resources if you feel that your child is involved in this kind of behaviour, as well as to alert you to the potential consequences should your child/children be found to be in possession or use of electronic cigarettes/vapes on the College premises.

Vaping is the act of inhaling a vapour produced by an electronic vaporiser (vape) or e-cigarette. The vapour can contain nicotine and other substances which, as I am sure you will appreciate, is very concerning. We take this issue very seriously due to the negative health effects vaping can have on children. We often find that parents are frequently not aware of the risks around vaping, they do not recognise the signs, or the devices themselves. You may be familiar with vapes that emit a plume of smoke, this is not the case with many devices on the market now.

The vapour can contain nicotine and other substances which is concerning. 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. The flavours are designed to be appealing to children and the marketing often supports this.

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 College equipment, as a consequence they can be easily mistaken or missed (see below)



Like cigarettes, it is a criminal offence to sell an age-restricted product to someone who is underage. However, we are aware that there are many shops that turn a blind eye to the sale of such devices to children. Where we become aware of premises selling vaping devices to children, we will report this to Trading Standards. Devices can be purchased online or bought from older siblings, friends, or unfortunately even parents. Vaping and e-cigarettes come under the same law as smoking. This law says that **it's illegal to sell any tobacco products to someone under 18**. It's also illegal for someone else to buy them for you if you are under 18.

The Surgeon General reports that nicotine is addictive and can harm brain development, which continues until about age 25. We know that using nicotine may make it harder for College related tasks such as learning and concentration. Students may not be aware of the harmful effects of vaping. We have added the dangers of vaping into our PSHE curriculum but naturally, we will also continue our work in College 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 the College 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 Positive Behaviour Policy, which has also been shared and explained to students, anyone who is found to be in the possession of paraphernalia linked to smoking or vaping will have the said items confiscated and will be placed in isolation. Incidents of students smoking/vaping on site or in College uniform will be addressed with a more severe sanction.

I hope that you welcome this letter in the spirit with which it is intended and that you share and understand our concerns about this potential harmful issue. We always aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to help support our students in making positive decisions for themselves and their future. We encourage you to have a conversation with your child/children about this topic. Should you have any further concerns, please do contact your child's relevant Head of House or Tutor who will be more than willing and able to provide you with additional support and guidance.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Mrs S Bennett  
Headteacher

Link to government information.

[https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html)