



RC/JAE

9 February 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Schools in the Portchester and Fareham area have seen a recent spike in incidents involving children vaping; this mirrors a national trend. Several parents have already approached schools asking for help for their children. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the issue, give you resources if you feel your child is involved in this kind of behaviour, as well as alert you to possible repercussions if your child engages in vaping on the school site.

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 that their child is vaping and have a limited understanding 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. Vaping is the act of inhaling a vapour produced by an electronic vaporiser or e-cigarette. The vapour can contain nicotine and other substances which is concerning. The flavours are designed to be appealing to children and the marketing often supports this. Vaporisers or e-cigarettes come in all different shapes. Some common styles we see look like a thick pen, a stylus for an iPad, or a small flask with a round chimney coming off the top. Some are disposable whilst others require a refill. The devices are very small and can easily be hidden on a person or blend in with normal backpack or pencil case items.

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. Nicotine within some of these products is addictive and can harm brain development, which continues until about age 25. We know that using nicotine may make it harder for school related tasks such as learning and concentration. Students may not be aware of the harmful effects of vaping.

Vaping is prohibited in our School Behaviour Policy. [Government guidance](#) allows authorised school staff to search pupils, even without their consent, where they have 'reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item'. This includes any item banned under school rules.

After this half term break, we will be introducing more regular searches of students suspected of carrying or using vapes on the school grounds. This will result in confiscation and disposal of the prohibited item. Increased sanctions, such as 'internal exclusion' and 'suspensions', may be used for persistent offenders.


We hope you find this letter informative and understand our concerns about this potentially harmful issue that is growing amongst young people. We encourage you to have a conversation with your child about this topic.

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As we learn more, we will certainly share that information. We would advise you to search your child's belongings if you become suspicious.

I have also included this link if you wish to know more.

[Quick Facts on the Risks of E-cigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults | CDC](#)

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

R Carlyle

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