



2nd February 2023

Dear Parent/Carers

I am writing to share our recent concerns regarding students using electronic cigarettes (vaping) whilst on the school site. Students have been observed vaping in and around school grounds, in particular gathering in groups in toilets.

As many of you may be aware from recent media coverage, there has been a significant increase in children reported as smoking e-cigarettes (vaping) in the UK. It is currently reported that 7.0% of 11-17 year olds are current users, compared to 3.3% in 2021 and that 10.4% of 11-15 year olds have tried vaping.

E-cigarettes (vapes) can contain high levels of nicotine. Adolescence is a critical period for brain development and exposure to nicotine can have long-term health consequences, impacting memory, attention and learning.

E-cigarettes (Vapes) are often available in different flavours which can be appealing to young people and may expose them to chemicals and toxins such as formaldehyde, heavy metals, particulate matter and flavouring chemicals, at levels that have the potential to cause adverse health effects.

We recognise the difficulty parents/carers are facing with this issue and how vapes are designed to be appealing for younger age groups, with a range of flavours and availability.

With these increasing numbers across the UK and growing concerns of vaping, including the use of vapes at THS we have attached below a link to a guide for parents/carers on e-cigarettes (vaping) to increase and support parental knowledge on this topic and to enable conversations with your children.

https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/SGR_ECig_ParentTipSheet_508.pdf

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

- Talking to your child about why vaping is 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.
- Reporting those who are selling e-cigarettes (vapes) to minors

I would also like to clarify that e-cigarettes (vapes) are illegal to purchase and smoke under the age of 18. To this end we will address all concerns with students and parents/carers if a child is reported to have a vape on them or is caught vaping in school. Please note smoking, which now includes the use of electronic cigarettes (vaping) is prohibited on the school premises.

Please contact your child's Head of Year if you have any particular concerns about your child vaping and help will be made available as soon as possible.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Crellen
Deputy Head Teacher

