

October 2022

Dear Parents

A number of parents recently have asked members of the pastoral team about the health implications of vaping. I thought it might be helpful to share some of the latest research and national guidance on this topic with you in the light of [recent national stories](#).

A recent survey by [NHS Digital](#) has shown that the percentage of school children smoking cigarettes has dropped to an all-time low but there has been a rise in vaping with 9% of 11-15 year olds currently using e-cigarettes. The health evidence on vaping is mixed with the NHS promoting e-cigarettes as a [means of helping people to give up smoking](#) as the absence of tar and other chemicals means that vapes are less damaging than traditional cigarettes. Equally, there is concern about the [health impact of vaping](#) as vapes can contain very high levels of nicotine which is addictive and may harm adolescent brain development. Please note that the link in the previous sentence is to a US government health site as there is little information about this topic available from UK studies.

Vaping in the UK is regulated with the nicotine content of vapes controlled and an age restriction of 18 to use or purchase them. Unfortunately, it is easy to find examples of shops and on-line retailers selling vapes with higher than permissible levels of nicotine to under 18 year olds. Sadly, some vape manufacturers [directly market to children](#) by producing single-use vapes with attractive flavours and which resemble highlighter pens.



Under RVHS rules, vapes are banned items and the school will impose a sanction on pupils who are found to possess or be using a vape. Where the school has reasonable suspicions that a pupil has a vape then we would seek the pupil's consent for a search of their bag or outer clothing and we would hope that all parents would support us with this. (Reasonable suspicion might be an unusual odour or a pupil regularly visiting the toilet during lessons without any suggestion of a medical condition.)

Equally, the research evidence that vaping may be addictive means that the school would approach this primarily as a health issue and seek [to work with parents to support pupils in stopping vaping](#). If you suspect that your child is vaping then please do contact the school as well as talking to them about this. Heads of Year and Senior members of staff give assemblies on this topic and it is also covered as part of the curriculum.

I very much hope that this brief email has given you some insight into vaping. We will try to keep you up to date as research and policy within the UK develops.

Yours sincerely

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RESPECT - ASPIRATION - DETERMINATION - INDEPENDENCE

