

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like to share some preventative information about vaping. We are seeing more frequent incidents involving vaping and are concerned about the potential impact on our students' health.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the issue, as well as alert you to the possible repercussions if your child engages in vaping on the school site or in the local community. We take this issue very seriously due to the negative health effects vaping can have on our students.

To be clear, vaping is the act of inhaling a vapour produced by an electronic vaporiser or e-cigarette. The vapour can contain nicotine and other substances. The liquids that are vaporised 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 marshmallows, bubble gum and lemonade. **The aerosol from e-cigarettes is not harmless.** E-cigarettes contain harmful which are linked to serious illnesses such as lung disease.

Vaporisers/e-cigarettes come in all different shapes and sizes. The devices are very small and can easily be hidden on a person or school bag. Within the attached link at the bottom of this letter, you will find some examples of what these look like. We also know that these devices can be rigged to "vape" or smoke cannabis oils and other substances in an odourless method. The cost is considerably cheaper than cigarettes, which can be bought online and in corner shops. A small number of shop owners in the local area have been illegally selling these vape pens to minors. Please be assured that when this comes to light, the school always informs the police, who will seek to prosecute offenders, which can result in fines. According to the vaping law in the UK, **you must be 18 or over to buy e-cigarettes or e-liquids.** However, they are available online, and students may ask older siblings or friends over 18 to purchase them. As a school, we are educating students through assemblies and PSHE lessons. We also work with our school police officer and outside organisations such as Fusion, who offer mentoring sessions.

Our first and foremost concern is student health and safety. Students using these devices are inhaling nicotine and other harmful chemicals, thinking it is safe. As you know, nicotine is highly addictive, and some of these unregulated products that students purchase at vape shops or online contain higher levels of nicotine than cigarettes.

Redbridge Alternative Provision's behaviour policy states ***any use and/or possession of cigarettes, smoking paraphernalia, including lighters and e-smoking devices, is prohibited in school, and has associated consequences.*** Depending on the offence, this may result in a period in our isolation facility. In more serious cases, such as selling or reoffending, it may lead to a period of fixed-term exclusion. To ensure the safety of our students, we will be undertaking random searches during registration periods when we have reason to suspect pupils have vape pens. **The use of any tobacco product within the school buildings, during school-related activities, on school grounds or in the local area by any individual is always prohibited.**

Should you need any support with this issue, please don't hesitate to contact your child's form tutor or a member of the pastoral team. We thank you in advance for your continued support. As always, we need to work together as new trends emerge that risk the health and safety of our children. For further information about vaping and young people, please see the following link.