

Substance Use Policy

Interim Procedures Appendix Vaping - November 2022

Our current Substance Use policy addresses both education concerning alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, and the procedures for managing incidents relating to these substances. Our current Code of Behaviour states that, “Vaping is treated in the same manner as the use of tobacco”.

‘Vaping’ is the term used for inhaling vapour through an E-cigarette or other electronic vaping devices. The device operates by heating a pod of liquid that turns into vapour.

Vaping on the school grounds is not permitted by any persons under any circumstances. Occurrences of a person vaping on the school grounds will be managed in the context of the school’s current Substance Use Policy and Code of Behaviour.

Education concerning Vaping

The increased prevalence of vaping among young people has become a concern within the school.

As set out in the school’s Substance Use Policy, education of students is seen as the most effective way to inform students about possible misconceptions regarding the use of nicotine related products. The issue of vaping has been addressed at year group assemblies in October, 2022.

Recent research has shown that adolescents may be more likely to take up vaping rather than cigarettes. Adolescents may start vaping for a number of reasons.

These include:

A misconception that vaping is a healthier alternative to traditional tobacco products,
The influence of increased marketing aimed at adolescents, including social media ‘trends’,
Appealing flavours that again target adolescents,
Peer pressure and curiosity.

Another challenge for young people is that vaping has become extremely popular with this target audience, and there may be some peer pressure to 'fit in'. The congregation of groups of students in small areas such as toilets can be seen as intimidating for other students. This may result in some students feeling uncomfortable and they may avoid using toilet areas within the school grounds.

Medical evidence suggests that smoking and vaping (and passive smoking) is associated with conditions such as respiratory diseases, heart disease and lung cancer. The school has an obligation to educate pupils about these risks; to discourage pupils from smoking and vaping; to help any who are addicted and wish to stop; and to uphold the law.

We endeavour to do this through:

- Health education (in our SPHE, Science and Social Health classes) ;
- Disciplinary restrictions and sanctions;
- Pastoral support;
- Ensuring that the school is a non-smoking/non-vaping environment.

Management of Vape related incidences

In an effort to deter students from vaping, the management of the school may install vaping detectors inside buildings within the school. This may include areas that are deemed 'hot spots' for vaping incidents such as toilet areas.

- Where a student is found to be vaping within the school grounds, including inside of buildings, the vape will be confiscated, parents/guardians will be contacted and the student may be kept in school, out of circulation, under supervision, until the guardians arrive to discuss the situation.
- If a student is found to be vaping within the school grounds on a subsequent occasion or occasions, following contact with their parents/guardians, sanctions may include being sent home for the remainder of the school day.
- Where a student is found in the company of another student vaping, their parents will be contacted. If it happens again, it will result in a Wednesday detention.
- If a student is found in the company of another student vaping on a subsequent occasion, their parents/guardians will be contacted and the student may be kept in school, out of circulation, under supervision, until the guardians arrive to discuss the situation.
- If a student is found in the company of another student vaping on a third or subsequent occasion, following contact with their parents/guardians, sanctions may include being sent home for the remainder of the school day .
- If a student is found to be supplying vapes to other students, their parents will be contacted and the student will be kept in school, out of circulation, under supervision, until the guardians arrive to discuss the situation. Any incidents of distributing e-cigarettes, vapes or vaping fluid will be dealt with in accordance with the schools current Substance Use Policy.