



# West Park

*'A caring school where we put pupils and their achievement first'*

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June 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

As you may have read in the news, there continues to be a significant concern about the number of young people using vapes or e-cigarettes. As schools in Derby, we also share these concerns, particularly about the health implications of vaping at this age.

As we did last year, Derby secondary schools are working together to highlight these concerns with our pupils and their families/carers. This letter is designed to provide you with some key information about the health concerns and the law around vaping.

## Health Risks

Vaping is not risk free, and NICE (the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) recommends that vaping should be discouraged in children and young people and people who have never smoked. This is because:

- A child's brain is still developing, scientific studies show that it isn't safe for them to use any tobacco product that contains nicotine, including vapes.
- Taking nicotine from a vape is still risky even though it isn't from a cigarette.
- Some vape batteries have even exploded and caused serious harm to people.
- Some vapes are known to contain illegal drugs such as Cannabis, THC, NPS (new psychoactive substances) and spice. These have been known to cause young people to suddenly collapse and need urgent hospital attention.

## Vaping and the Law

In the UK it is illegal to sell nicotine vaping products to under 18s or for adults to buy them on their behalf. Any retailers selling vapes illegally should be reported to Trading Standards. The recent government consultation has recommended that the following aspects of vaping are written into law:

- restrict vape flavours.
- restrict how vapes are displayed in stores.
- restrict packaging and product presentation for vapes.

The UK Government thinks there is a strong case to take action to reduce the affordability of vapes and is continuing to consider options, including a new duty, to achieve this.

To assist in enforcement, the UK Government will introduce new fixed penalty notices (fines) of £100 for breaches of age of sale and free distribution legislation for tobacco and all types of vapes.

You can read the full details of this consultation and its recommendations here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/creating-a-smokefree-generation-and-tackling-youth-vaping>

## **School Policy**

Education is one of the most effective ways of preventing drug and alcohol misuse and the degree of associated harm.

In Derby secondary schools we are committed to providing a quality health education curriculum. As part of this, pupils receive quality drug education that includes drugs, alcohol, volatile substances and vaping. This aims to:

- Provide opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding, skills and attitudes about vaping.
- Provide accurate information about vaping.
- Increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
- Widen understanding about related health and social issues.

At each school, vaping incidents will be managed individually and responded to proportionately. The school will need to consider a range of responses and follow their own disciplinary procedures (as outlined in the schools' behaviour policy). Sanctions will be issued for students who:

- Are in possession of vapes/vaping materials.
- Have used vapes on school grounds.
- Are selling vapes to other pupils.

The school sanctions may include some of the following:

- Confiscation and informing parent/carer.
- Brief intervention to support health behaviour changes.
- Behaviour/pastoral support.
- Counselling.
- Suspension.

Each school will apply their own behaviour policy to each individual situation.

## **Awareness Week**

Derby secondary schools are working together to continue to raise awareness of the concerns around vaping. We are planning our second awareness week on the week commencing 17<sup>th</sup> June. During this week we will be delivering assemblies, lessons and sharing awareness raising material with students and families across the city. We are working with the Derby City Public Health team on this important topic too.

## **Further Information for Parents/Carers:**

Please do take time to talk to your child/children about vaping. We have provided an information leaflet for you that may help with this conversation.

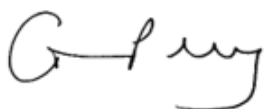
If there are vaping products in your house, please store them securely away from children/young people.

If you think a retailer has sold these products to your child then please report this to Trading Standards via the link below:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/report-to-trading-standards/>

We hope that this information is useful for you to understand the risks for young people in vaping. We appreciate your support with working together to tackle this issue and support all of our young people in Derby City.

Sincerely,



Gemma Penny  
Headteacher  
Allestree Woodlands School

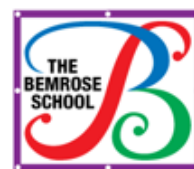


Gemma Tyers  
Headteacher  
Alvaston Moor Academy



Neil Wilkinson

Neil Wilkinson  
Executive Headteacher  
The Bemrose School



Phil Smith  
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Chellaston Academy



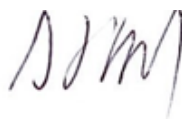
Adrian Harding  
Headteacher  
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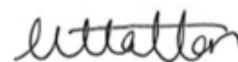
Jayne Scattergood  
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Kate Richardson  
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Noel-Baker Academy



Emmet Bunting  
Executive Headteacher  
Respect Collaboration of Schools  
Kingsmead School, Bridge Street School,  
Castle School & Junction 16

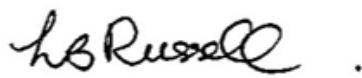


Paul Burrows  
Headteacher  
Royal School for the Deaf Derby



Hazel Boyce  
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Michelle Robinson  
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Derby City Council