



## **Statement from the Governing Bodies and Headteachers from the Havant Federation of Schools:**

### **Health and Well-being – Vaping and Smoking**

As a Federation of Schools, we are concerned that pupils are not fully aware of the threat to their health from vaping. Some pupils are having a high daily nicotine intake and those who have never smoked are becoming addicted to vaping. This carries many physical risks and the risk of addiction. We have the concern that the effects of vaping can and will affect the progress of students academically, which can have an impact on their longer term educational and employment opportunities.

There has been a gradual increase in the use of vaping in society, for adults and young people. Originally, intended to support people to give up smoking, vaping is more commonplace among the pupils in our schools.

We are taking the rise in vaping seriously, particularly as it can have a negative effect on a young person's health and well-being both for now and their future. We are also concerned that young people might be partaking in illegal substances in vapes. Below is a summary of vaping, for your information.

#### **What is vaping?**

Vapes are electronic devices designed to allow people to inhale nicotine in a vapour. Using a vape is known as vaping. Vapes are also available without nicotine.

Nicotine vaping is recommended by the NHS as a way for adults to stop smoking. But it isn't recommended for non-smokers, especially children and young people under 18. Vaping is substantially less harmful than smoking but that doesn't mean it's harmless.

#### **The risks to our young people**

Smoking gives you nicotine by burning tobacco, which creates many harmful toxins that can cause serious illnesses including cancer, lung disease, heart disease and a stroke. Vaping gives you nicotine by heating e-liquid, which creates fewer toxins and at lower levels. In general, smokers who switch to vaping reduce their exposure to a wide range of toxic substances. This includes tar and carbon monoxide, very harmful compounds which are produced by cigarettes but not by vapes. But vaping still exposes users to some toxins and we don't yet know what the risks might be in the longer term.

Nicotine is an addictive substance which can be hard to stop using once you've started. Also, nicotine may be riskier for young people than for adults – there's some evidence that in adolescence the brain is more sensitive to its effects. Nicotine is a toxin and poisoning can happen if larger doses are taken. Nicotine is an addictive substance, and you can become dependent on vapes, especially if you vape nicotine regularly. Giving up nicotine can be difficult because the body must get used to functioning without it. Withdrawal symptoms can include cravings, irritability, anxiety, trouble concentrating, headaches and other mental and physical symptoms. Find out more about [nicotine](#).

Nicotine vaping products are covered by regulations to protect users, including maximum nicotine strength and bans on certain ingredients. But some disposable vapes on sale are illegal and don't meet UK quality and safety regulations. They might look like the real thing, but they aren't so it isn't possible to know what's in them. Non-nicotine vapes are not covered by the same regulations as nicotine vapes and are not without risk.

In the UK it is illegal to sell nicotine vaping products to someone under the age of 18, or for adults to buy these products for them. Whilst this is the law pupils younger than 18 are accessing vaping.

### **The way forward – it is important for parents, carers, and the school to work together on reducing vaping**

- As parents, please establish whether your child is vaping and or has access to vaping. Speak to your children about it and reinforce the negative effects of vaping with them. If necessary, seek further information, advice, and help.
- In school we will educate the students about vaping and its effects on health and well-being and reinforce this regularly.
- Vaping, smoking, or bringing vapes and cigarettes into school is not permitted as per the health and safety policy. Pupils will be sanctioned in each school according to the Behaviour Policy.

### **Vaping or in possession of a vape**

If a student is caught in possession of a vape or there is clear evidence they have been vaping (e.g. caught by member of staff coming out of cubicle with fumes), they will be placed on an internal exclusion for two days and lose a further three days of their free time. If they are found with boxes or other packaging, this would not follow this exactly, but should still be logged and a sanction put in place.

Children under 18 should be asked where they got the vape (or cigarette) from. Complaints can be made to trading standards through the [Citizens Advice online portal](#).

Teachers should be aware that vapes could be used to exploit the most vulnerable children, as is the case with other age restricted products such as tobacco and alcohol.

**Parents and pupils can access further reliable information from the [Frank Website](#).**

### **References**

ASH guidance on developing school policies on vaping <https://ash.org.uk/uploads/ASH-guidance-for-school-vaping-policies.pdf>

FRANK <https://www.talktofrank.com/drug/vapes#the-law>