**Guidance for Primary schools and colleges regarding Electronic Cigarettes (E-Cigs)**

**The role of schools**

**Statutory duty**

As part of the statutory duty to promote pupils’ physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing, schools have a clear role to play in managing vapes as part of their pastoral responsibilities. Schools also have a statutory duty to deliver health education on drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

**The role schools have in managing vapes falls broadly into two categories:**

1. Incorporating vaping prevention into the whole school’s approach to health and wellbeing. This includes PSHE programmes and the wider curriculum, school policies, ethos and environment, and partnerships with parents and the local community.

2. Managing behaviour related to vapes and vaping.

**Types of behaviour relating to vapes and vaping**

Schools may need to tackle incidents associated with vaping, which might include:

* A child vaping in school or on school property.
* A child reported to be vaping in the local community.
* A child selling vapes to other pupils or peers.
* A child with vapes in their possession at school.
* Incidents related to vapes and coercion.

Children should not be excluded from school for vaping or smoking, unless it is associated with other disruptive behaviour which justifies this.

**Vaping**  
The annual YouGov youth survey for [ASH](https://ash.org.uk/media-and-news/press-releases-media-and-news/fears-of-growth-in-children-vaping-disposables-backed-up-by-new-national-survey/) carried out in March and published 7th July 2022 shows current vaping among children 11-17 up from 4% in 2020 to 7% in 2022. The proportion of children who admit ever having tried vaping has also risen from 14% in 2020 to 16% in 2022.

Disposable e-cigarettes are now the most used product among current vapers, up more than 7-fold from 7% in 2020 and 8% in 2021, to 52% in 2022.

It is illegal to sell cigarettes or nicotine containing vapes to under-18s, but it is not illegal to smoke or vape underage and punishment should be proportionate.

**Removal of Electronic Cigarettes from students:**

If a young person is found in possession of an Electronic Cigarette and/or associated paraphernalia (vape juice, pods, coils) confiscate the items. Make sure the confiscated items are placed into a labelled bag/envelope with the date, young person’s name and form class details on it. This will be returned to the parent at the end of the school day.

Store these items in a cool, temperature-controlled environment, in a safe, sealed, clearly labelled container for hazardous waste. Take care that any items containing rechargeable batteries are stored in a temperature-controlled environment.

If possible, store rechargeable batteries in a separate container.

Always be careful handling confiscated or discarded e-cigarettes, e-liquid products, and batteries. Liquid nicotine can be absorbed through the skin and cause accidental poisoning.

A notification needs to be made to the young person’s parent/carer about the incident of vaping and/or associated paraphernalia temporary removal and logged onto your safeguarding system.

**Only return a vape to parent at the end of the school day with a discussion about how a child has accessed the vape.**

**Following up on vaping behaviour**

Schools should respond when vapes are identified through searching and screening, or vaping behaviour is observed, or reported in the setting or school community. This might involve:

* Exploring any safeguarding concerns, mental or physical health concerns, or other potential risk behaviours, such as substance use; Conversations and Information worksheet needs to be completed with young person within 1 school day and uploaded onto the safeguarding system
* Exploring how any confiscated vapes were obtained and reporting any illegal sales and reported to [trading standards](https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Advice-and-support/Consumer-advice/Illegal-alcohol-and-tobacco-sales.aspx). Consideration to inform the police must also be taken.
* Communication with parents or carers about the pupil’s behaviour, the school’s policy, and rationale for the screening, searching, confiscation and disposal of the vapes and vaping products.
* Inform the school nurse of the vaping
* Referral into Blackpool NHS Tobacco Addiction Service made if young person is over the age of 12 and gives consent, along with parental consent and is wanting support in stopping smoking cigarettes.
* Information given to the young person and parents/carer about NHS Tobacco Addiction Service (BTAS), the specialist stop smoking service if the child is using tobacco as well as e – cigarettes.
* Excessive use of vapes will present as nausea, sore throat, dizziness and headaches. This should be reported to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Authority (MRHA) via the Yellow Card Scheme.
* Responding to any safety incidents.

**FREE helpline number 0808 1964324 for anyone : 01253 956651 for professionals only**