**Guidance for Education providers regarding Vapes/E-Cigarettes (E-Cigs)**

**The role of educational settings:**

**Statutory duty**

Due to the single-use vape ban due to come into effect across England from 1st June 2025, this guidance to education providers is being updated. If you would like further information about the [Single-use Vape Ban](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/single-use-vapes-ban#:~:text=Vapes%20should%20be%20disposed%20of,and%20regularly%20collected%20for%20recycling.) click the hyperlink.

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 education providers have in managing vapes/E-cigarettes falls broadly into two categories:**

1. Incorporating vaping/E-Cigarette prevention into the whole school/college approach to health and wellbeing. This includes PSHE/PD programmes and the wider curriculum, policies, ethos and environment, and partnerships with parents and the local community.

2. Managing behaviour related to vapes/e-cigarettes and vaping.

**Types of behaviour relating to vapes/e-cigarettes and vaping**

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

* A child vaping within an educational setting or within the footprint (playground, outside main entrance etc...)
* 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 the educational setting
* Incidents related to vapes and coercion

Children should not be excluded from educational settings 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/resources/view/use-of-e-cigarettes-among-young-people-in-great-britain) published in August 2024 shows current vaping among children 11-17 up from 4% in 2020 to 7% in 2024. The proportion of children who admit ever having tried vaping has also risen from 16% in 2022 to 18% in 2024. In Blackpool, a report on Children and Young People vaping from 2023 found that 31% of young people who completed the survey currently or sometimes vape. Of those 31% of young people, 42% have been vaping for 1-2 years. For more information relating to the HealthWatch Blackpool report, click [HERE](https://healthwatchblackpool.co.uk/children-and-young-peoples-vaping-report-blackpool/).

Vapes/Disposable e-cigarettes are now the most used product among current vapers, up more than 7-fold from 7% in 2020 to 54% in 2024.

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

**Removal of Vapes/E-Cigarettes from students:**

* If a young person is found in possession of a Vape/E-Cigarette and/or associated, paraphernalia (vape juice, pods, and coils) confiscate the items. Make sure the confiscated items are placed into a fit for purpose bin for e-cigarettes (if you have one). For further guidance on management and safe storing of items, each education provider should refer to their own internal policy
* Always be careful handling confiscated or discarded vape/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 removal and logged onto your safeguarding system

**Disposing of confiscated vapes/e-cigarettes and vaping liquids**

* Single use disposable vapes/e-cigarettes contain electrical components, including lithium-ion batteries, and are therefore considered Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), in UK law. WEEE includes most products that have a plug or need a battery.
* Such equipment should **never** be disposed of in household waste and should instead be handed in to an approved collector of WEEE waste.
* A vape recycling initiative is now in place at the ENVECO Household Waste Recycling Centre in Blackpool. For full details, click [HERE.](https://enveconw.co.uk/vape-recycling-at-at-the-hwrc/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR1ANcGwNSiTQrDGUQEjFO3xuXjQVvh-NLbyQq_GB16opm4xwVejpKDzrRQ_aem_chlIlmq8axsYICdFogIx7A)

**Following up on vaping behaviour**

Schools should respond when vapes/e-cigarettes 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/e-cigarettes 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
* FREE helpline number 0808 1964324 for anyone : 01253 956651 for professionals only

**Incidents where a child has an adverse reaction to the vape**

Schools are advised to follow their policies and procedures regarding an unwell child. In an emergency situation, it is important to ensure if a young person becomes unconscious, they are put into the recovery position and an ambulance called. To support the emergency services in what the young person has taken, please try to find out how the young person took the substance, how much they have taken if you are able to.

If the vape is near the child or within the child’s possessions (bag) then please remove carefully and store before calling **101 to arrange for collection by the Police for testing – obtain a log number**

**Only vapes that may have caused an ill health incident can be tested.**

On return to the education setting, to support further understanding of what the young person has taken, please try to find out (particularly if unable to at time of incident) how the young person took the substance, how much they have taken, where they may have got it from and how much it cost and relay this to the police with the allocated log number.

To monitor the level of incidents happening across Blackpool and to support around any awareness raising in terms of substances it would be useful if you could report the details of the incident (including generic age or year group, gender and any further information gathered but not person identifiable data) of the incident to [**RTS.Notifications@blackpool.gov.uk**](mailto:RTS.Notifications@blackpool.gov.uk)**.**

**Learning about Vapes/E-cigarettes**

If you are working with children and young people and would like further information on the different types of vapes/e-cigarettes, the associated risks and how to signpost young people to support services in Blackpool, please click [HERE](https://healthierblackpool.co.uk/vaping-briefing/) to access a short briefing on vaping.