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## **PRENTON HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

### **VAPING POLICY**

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## **POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION**

This policy was devised using;

- Local Authority guidelines.
- Office for Health Improvement and disparities North West Schools vaping policy framework

This policy links specifically to the school Drug Policy and to other school policies, including the Behaviour Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

This policy was produced by Alison Roberts Designated Safeguarding Lead.  
Governors contribute to the development of this policy and have ratified it.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every year with the next review due in Summer 26.

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an increase in the availability and awareness of vapes (also known as e-cigarettes). Vapes are now the most common adult stop smoking aid in the UK and the latest evidence on vapes shows that they are significantly less harmful than smoking tobacco. The availability of vapes now offers an alternative route to quitting for many adult smokers.

Smoking is the leading cause of premature death in England. In 2022 adult smokers over 18 comprised 12.7% of the population. It is estimated that two-thirds will die early as a result. Despite an overall decline in prevalence, tobacco continues to have a long term, negative impact on smokers, families and communities. Supporting smokers to quit is therefore, the single biggest actionable activity to improve health and reduce inequalities.

### Smoking in children and young people:

Smoking rates have continued to fall among school age children. In 1996, 22% of 11 to 15 year olds in England reported smoking at least once a month. In 2021, the figure was 3%. A survey of over 13,000 14 to 17 years olds in the North West found 6% smoking. This is down from 22% in 2007. For most young people, vaping is not a gateway into smoking. As vape use has increased in children, there has been no associated increase in smoking. Rates for 11 to 15 year olds in England who smoke at least once a month has fallen from 9% in 2010 to 6% in 2016 and 3% in 2021

### Vaping in children and young people – prevalence:

There is clear advice from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence that vapes should not be used by children, or those who do not currently smoke, as nicotine is an addictive substance and the long term risks are unclear.

The law bans the sale of vapes for persons under 18 and bans the proxy purchasing of vapes for children by adults.

A large scale 2021 NHS Digital survey found 9% of 11 to 15 year olds vaping at least once a month. However, figures from the 2023 North West Trading Standards survey indicate that 14% of 14 to 17 year olds are vaping more than once a week.

The survey also indicates that 39% of children purchase vapes from local shops and 28% are given vapes by an under-18 friend.

### Vaping in children and young people – risks

Excessive use of vapes can produce nausea, sore throat, dizziness and headaches.

In addition, there is a substantial market in illicit, unregulated vapes with an associated risk of a more extreme reaction.

It is estimated that a quarter of the vapes sold to young people are not compliant with UK product regulations. The majority of vapes contain nicotine which is an addictive substance. Nicotine may be more risky for young people than for adults, as evidence suggests the brain in adolescence is more sensitive to its effects.

Sir Chris Whitty, England's Chief Medical Officer has advised that vaping is not risk free as the long-term effects are unknown.

Additionally, unsafe, illegal vapes are available with recent reports showing they may contain dangerous levels of metals such as lead and nickel.

To summarise, vaping is a valuable aid for adults to quit smoking, but the long-term effects are unknown.

Sir Chris Whitty, summarised the risks in a press article as:

*"If you smoke, vaping is much safer; if you don't smoke, don't vape"*

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## THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

### 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.

The school is a SMOKE FREE environment, and as such smoking of Vapes / E – cigarettes, Cigars, Tobacco is not permitted on the entire premises.

- Students, who vape or smoke on the school premises, or in school uniform, will receive consequences in accordance with the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy. Parents will be contacted unless this puts the child at risk.
- The school promotes the health and welfare of all who work in or visit the school.

### Searching, Screening and Confiscation:

Prenton High School prioritises the risk of youth uptake and treats vapes in the same way as other age restricted products, such as alcohol and tobacco, by prohibiting them onsite as a first step, and then confiscating and disposing of them.

Further information on searching, screening and confiscation can be found in our Drugs Policy and Behaviour Policy.

Searching, screening and confiscation is conducted in line with the DfE's [latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#).

## DISPOSAL AND SAFE STORAGE

### Disposing of confiscated vapes and vaping liquids

Single use disposable vapes 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.

Prenton High School will dispose of all confiscated vapes by handing them over to an approved collector of WEEE waste.

### Safe Storage

The vast majority of vaping devices have circuitry to regulate battery power and protect vapers from battery malfunctions.

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On very rare occasions, a battery in a vaping device may fail by discharging all its stored energy at once. The risk is low; a 2022 OHID review reported 15 fires related to vaping products across London from 2017-21 compared to 6428 from smoking, i.e. 0.2% of fire service responses in this category.

However, as Prenton High School will not know the prior handling of a confiscated device, we will store confiscated vapes in a clearly marked container, away from flammable material until we can dispose or recycle.

### **Following up on vaping behaviour**

Prenton High School will respond when vapes are identified through searching and screening, or vaping behaviour is observed, or reported in the school or the local community when a young person is wearing a Prenton High School uniform. This might involve:

- Viewing CCTV when the school vape alarms have been activated.
- Searching a student's bag and blazer and confiscating any banned items found
- Exploring any safeguarding concerns, mental or physical health concerns, or other potential risk behaviours, such as substance use.
- Exploring how any confiscated vapes were obtained and reporting any illegal sales.
- 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.
- Making relevant referrals and/or providing advice and signposting to the pupil and their family.
- Responding to any safety incidents.
- Issuing a consequence in line with the school Behaviour Policy.
- Vaping behaviour may result in an internal exclusion or suspension consequence.

### **Working with Local Agencies:**

Prenton High School work with a range of external agencies to ensure appropriate support and early intervention for students as part of the school's safeguarding procedures.

A young person found with a banned substance, include vaping devices, may indicate "that the pupil is involved, or at risk of being involved, in anti-social or criminal behaviour including gang involvement, and in some cases may be involved in child criminal exploitation".

Prenton High school works with the Schools Drugs Adviser, and local agencies such as Young People's Services, Health Service in Schools (HSIS), ABL A Better Life, Trading Standards.

Police and Safeguarding Teams will aid overall management of school vaping and any adverse vaping events. See Appendix 1 for External agencies.

### **REPORTING:**

Prenton High School may also report incidents of vaping to local agencies.

### **Why it is important to report:**

Reporting enables:

- Identification of youth vaping trends.
- Investigations into any dangerous substances and toxicity levels.
- Investigations into the legality of product.
- Assessment of risk and development of a locally co-ordinated plan where alerts need to be issued to prevent harm.

It is also important as part of the media management of any vaping adverse event on the school premises.

### **Yellow card scheme:**

Excessive use of vapes will present as nausea, sore throat, dizziness and headaches.

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If students suspected of vaping present with the symptoms listed above. Prenton High School will report the incident to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Authority (MRHA) via the Yellow Card Scheme.

The more data received through the Yellow Card process, the more action all of the regulators can take to try to improve the safety of the products.

### **Adverse reactions:**

When a young person collapses or experiences an adverse effect, school will seek help from accident and emergency and refer to your local young person's substance use service.

### **Identifying Illicit Vapes**

All vapes must comply with the requirements of the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations and be labelled in accordance with the regulations for hazardous substances. The key requirements are listed below.

- Nicotine-containing vapes must not: - have a nicotine strength of more than 20mg/ml or 2% - contain more than 2ml of nicotine-containing liquid
- The packaging (box) of a nicotine-containing vape must be labelled with:
  - Nicotine strength (e.g., 20mg/ml) - Volume of nicotine-containing liquid in the product (e.g., 2ml)
  - Stating the number of puffs is not sufficient on its own, but if any vape declares more than 1000 puffs, then it will contain more than 2ml of nicotine
  - Name, address and telephone number of a GB based responsible person (manufacturer or importer).
  - Health warning, which must be this exact wording:  
"THIS PRODUCT CONTAINS NICOTINE WHICH IS A HIGHLY ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCE".  
  
This warning must appear on the front and back of the box and cover at least 30% of the area of each of those surfaces.
  - Ingredients list
  - Hazard symbol and associated signal word,
  - Tactile warning, to alert blind and partially sighted users to the above dangers. This is in the form of a raised triangle – run your hand over the box to find it.

### **CANNABIS AND OTHER ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES:**

Cannabis Vapes can be used to consume cannabis.

A vapouriser is used to heat the cannabis, rather than burning it.

Consumption of cannabis on school premises will be dealt with according to the school Substance Misuse Policy.

### **CBD:**

CBD oil is legal to sell in the UK, and this includes the sale of CBD vape juice.

However, UK law dictates that any CBD oil sold must contain no nicotine. It must also contain no detectable THC.

### **THC:**

THC vape liquid is illegal and can produce the same effect as cannabis. It may contain synthetic cannabinoids. These products are more potent than cannabis and can produce adverse reactions and behaviour change, including excessive sweating, rapid heart rate, vomiting and fainting.

THC liquid may also include vitamin E acetate. This is used to dilute the liquid and can produce a toxic gas with associated lung injuries. It is not possible to tell by sight if this has been added to the liquid.

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### **Other illegal substances:**

Some schools report concerns that vaping devices could be used and/or modified for delivering other substances. The management of these situations are covered in our Screening, Searching and Confiscation Guidance and school drug and behavioural policies.

Prenton High School will seek support from relevant partners, such as drug and alcohol services, police, and safeguarding if there is suspicion that a vaping device has been used or modified to deliver other substances.

### **Resources and training for staff**

Resources to incorporate vaping into lessons or Learning for Life material include:

- The PSHE Association year 9 lesson plans. The lesson includes the environmental cost of vapes and analyses ways to challenge influences and misconceptions about vaping.
- Talk to Frank on vapes. Talk to Frank provides clear, non-judgemental information on alcohol and drugs for young people. It has a 24 helpline on 0300 123 600.
- ASH / Smoke Free Sheffield materials. This includes posters, leaflets, a short, animated film with associated notes and a classroom presentation.
- OHID School Zone resources. These are three flexible bitesize sessions with film content aimed at Y7 & 8. The sessions cover the impact of vaping and the effects of nicotine on young people.

### **Resources to support pupils, staff, families and carers to quit smoking**

Prenton High School is aware that some staff, parents and carers may be smokers, with many making positive steps to a quit by using a vape. The resources below may be helpful to support this.

The NHS Better Health site provides information on vaping devices and e-liquids, side effects, and vaping in pregnancy. Details of the local stop smoking service can also be found via the Better Health site.

The NHS Live Well site has information on vape safety and choosing the right vape for you.

## **POLICY PRODUCTION AND APPLICABILITY**

This policy has been informed by the following;

- 2023 North West Vaping Schools Policy Framework (OHID)

This policy links to other school policies, including the Drugs Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Behaviour Policy.

This policy applies at all times on the school premises and extends to cover journeys to and from school. It also covers students on work experience, alternative provision placements and to all school trips, including those abroad.

## **WHO DOES THE POLICY APPLY TO?**

The policy applies to all members of staff in our school, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers, parents, contractors and external services or activity providers

This policy applies to all students in this school.

This policy links to other school policies, including Drugs, Safeguarding, Behavioural Management and Health and Safety. This policy applies at all times on the school premises and extends to cover journeys to and from school. It also covers students on work experience, alternative provision placements and to all school trips, including those abroad. School policies can be found on the school website at <http://prentonhighschool.co.uk/>

This policy will be updated and reviewed every 2 years and will act as a central reference point for all school staff, or following identification of new/emerging trends in children and young people's behaviour.

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## **STAFF TRAINING**

Safeguarding is delivered to all members of staff. Initial teacher training requires Early Career Teachers to be familiar with the Learning for Life curriculum, and to be prepared for their Form Tutor responsibilities.

The school's programme of Continuing Professional Development provides opportunities for teachers who teach vape education or deal with vaping related incidents to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence required when addressing issues with students.

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## DISPOSAL FORM

NAME OF STUDENT(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(WHO PROVIDED THE ITEM(S) FOR DISPOSAL)  
FORM \_\_\_\_\_

### **APPENDIX 1: DISPOSAL OF ITEM**

Item for disposal \_\_\_\_\_ Date of receipt \_\_\_\_\_  
Method of disposal \_\_\_\_\_ Date of disposal: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff members who witnessed disposal \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures of staff who witnessed disposal \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL NOTES: FULL NOTE OF PROCEDURES FOLLOWING RESPONSES FROM  
CHILD/CARER

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NAME OF STUDENT(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(WHO PROVIDED THE ITEM(S) FOR DISPOSAL)  
FORM \_\_\_\_\_

### **APPENDIX 1: DISPOSAL OF ITEM**

Item for disposal \_\_\_\_\_ Date of receipt \_\_\_\_\_  
Method of disposal \_\_\_\_\_ Date of disposal: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff members who witnessed disposal \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures of staff who witnessed disposal \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL NOTES: FULL NOTE OF PROCEDURES FOLLOWING RESPONSES FROM  
CHILD/CARER

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