

Dear Parent/guardian

As I am sure you will be aware, the pressures facing young people have always been many, and our job as teachers, like you as parents, is to try and give them guidance to make the right choices in life both academically and personally. As schools we all try to do this in different ways be it through pastoral systems or PSHCEe programmes which include issues such as self-esteem, social media, bullying etc. One issue that has changed in recent years is that of drug use. Young people have perhaps more or easier access to illegal substances than in previous years and with the advent of 'legal highs' this has only complicated matters further.

As a group of schools locally we want to ensure, as far as is possible, that our schools are safe places and alongside this support yourselves and our young people regarding this issue. A step towards this goal is to receive potentially annual visits from North Yorkshire Police with a sniffer dog. I would like to advise you that a visit will be made before the end of term; however, subsequent visits will have no warning.

"Headmasters are within their rights to invite the police or private companies to bring sniffer dogs onto schools premises or employ drug testing" (See DfE and NPCC drug advice for Schools)

Through the local behaviour collaborative, all our secondary schools have agreed that we intend to support this initiative. However, let me reassure you that, this in no way means that we are seeking to criminalise young people, but we are seeking to ensure our schools are kept safe. We know that some young people will experiment and take risks, but we believe that this initiative can act as part of our ongoing support to guide them into making better choices for their lives beyond school.

Yours faithfully

Mrs H Keelan-Edwards

Assistant Headteacher