



Re-founded 1555

Ripon Grammar School

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27 February 2023

Dear Parents

I am writing to you to make you aware of our concerns about the number of young people taking up vaping. Over recent months the number of students either found in possession of a vape or actively vaping in school has increased. This reflects national trends and no school in the country is immune to this recent phenomenon. While the typical age of take up is suggested as 16/17 it is clear that students younger than this are in fact regularly vaping and in some instances are in a state of addiction.

Our policy is, as always, to seek to educate and deter before sanctioning. The dangers of vaping and substance abuse are a key element in our PSHCEe programme: [Studying PSHCEe at Ripon Grammar School](#). In addition, I would like to thank Mrs Jarvis, our Chair of Governors, for coming into school and delivering a series of assemblies to all year groups which clearly set out the associated dangers to health. [Concerned doctor warns students of the dangers of vaping \(ripongrammar.co.uk\)](#). Posters and information are also clearly displayed across the school site.

Despite these messages, we know many young people continue to engage in risky behaviours such as vaping, both on and off the school site. We have increased routine surveillance in some areas such as toilets and, if given reasonable grounds for suspicion, will conduct searches in line with our Search Policy which is available on the school's website. Behind this policy are a set of protocols which ensure searches are conducted safely and sensitively. Where we can identify either retailers or dealers who supply such materials to students we will inform the police.

In line with recent ASH guidance [ASH-guidance-for-school-vaping-policies.pdf](#) we have adjusted our behaviour policy so that possession of a vape will result in an internal sanction, while students who are caught actively vaping will be suspended. This is because vaping represents a danger to others, does not role model the behaviours we expect and could encourage others to vape.

Parents can support the school in our approach by ensuring their sons/daughters do not come on to the school site with a vape to either vape in the presence of others or supply vapes. A simple search of bags and clothing [including linings and seams where we know such items are frequently stored] can help protect everyone from the dangers. Preventative action such as this will ensure that valuable staff time in school is not taken up in tackling this problem.

I do hope you can support us in our approach.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan M Webb
Headmaster