

Ref: JMG/tlb

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023

## **INFORMATION LETTER TO ALL PARENTS AND CARERS OF NEWQUAY TRETHERRAS STUDENTS**

The purpose of this letter is to inform and provide you with access to resources on electronic cigarettes/vapes. It also details our educational provision on this topic and the sanctions that we apply.

The charity Action for Health and Smoking (ASH) have produced a briefing for local authorities with key messages for schools and parents which you may find useful and can be found at [ASH resources on youth vaping - ASH](#)

### **What is vaping?**

Vapes are electronic devices designed to allow people to inhale nicotine in a vapour. Using a vape is known as vaping. Vapes are also available without nicotine. In the UK, the NHS recommends vapes for adults to use as an aid to quit smoking tobacco which carries far greater health risks. Vaping is not recommended for non-smokers or young people.

Vaping, though less harmful than smoking tobacco, exposes its users to some toxins that can cause unpleasant health effects, and they also often contain nicotine which is an addictive substance that evidence suggests adolescents are more sensitive to (NHS, ASH 2022). We are aware that there have been reports of young people becoming unwell and needing medical attention after using vapes.

It is also important to acknowledge that clinicians do not know the long-term health effects of vaping, at this time. There is a growing body of clinical evidence that vaping at a young age may affect the development of the lungs and may lead to respiratory conditions later in life.

Like cigarettes, vapes are age restricted products and therefore it is illegal for shops and other retailers to sell vaping items including vaping equipment such as liquids to people under the age of 18. It is also against the law to buy vapes on behalf of anyone under the age of 18. It is, therefore, clear that young people under the age of 18 should not be purchasing or be in possession of alternative nicotine products such as vapes. Local councils and schools will pass any reports of shops selling to underage young people to Trading Standards.

### **What are local schools, including Newquay Tretherras, doing about this?**

We recognise that this is not an issue specific to any individual school but rather one that exists within the community and local area, impacting all schools.

We take our responsibilities seriously and educate students regarding the health risks of vaping, the significantly greater risks of tobacco smoking and the law through our PSHE and Pastoral curriculum.

We regularly remind students of our behavioural expectations through NT Ready, which is delivered every Monday during form period.

We embed our work within our whole school and trust policies. Our behaviour policy is available at [NT Policies - Behaviour Policy UPDATE JULY 2022.pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#) and the drugs policy, that covers vaping at [NT Policies - NT Drugs PolicyMay22JMG \(md\).pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Vapes can come in a variety of different forms, shapes, and sizes. Some common styles of vapes include ones which look like a thick pen or highlighter pen. These devices are usually very small and can be concealed on a person or blend in with school equipment, therefore they can be easily mistaken or missed.

When students are found in possession of a prohibited item such as a Vape or are caught vaping a strong sanction is always applied. Parents are informed and detentions are awarded. If a student is involved with the provision of vapes to other students, then the sanctions applied are escalated, as per our policy, and may result in suspension or exclusion.

Please note that we will report possession of any illegal substances to the police, and we do not return confiscated items, they are either thrown away or passed to the police.

Students suspected of having an electronic cigarette/vape will have their bags searched and asked to show us their pockets and demonstrate that vapes are not hidden in their socks or shoes. This is always carried out in the presence of two members of staff and is gender specific. If a student refuses to comply with this request, then parents will be called and asked, if possible, to attend and support.

### What can parents do?

- Know and understand the risks presented by smoking, electronic cigarettes and vapes.
- Talk to your child openly about these risks to ensure that they are well informed and have clear guidance that these products are to be avoided.
- Support school sanctions.
- Get in touch with your GP if you require medical guidance regarding your child.
- Get in touch with your child's Head of Year and let them know if you have concerns.

We hope that you welcome this letter in the spirit with which it is intended and that you share and understand our concerns about this potentially harmful issue.

Kind regards



**MISS J MCGLYNN**  
**Deputy Headteacher**