

Vaping and E-cigarettes Guidance for Schools



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What are vaping products/devices?

E-cigarette, or vaping products can be used to deliver nicotine, flavourings, chemicals, and other substances. They are known by many different names and come in many shapes, sizes, and device types. Using an e-cigarette is often referred to as “vaping” and the products may be referred to as “vapes”. There are legal as well as illicit vaping products. Some illegal vapes have been found to contain drugs such as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the main psychoactive ingredient in cannabis, or synthetic cannabinoids, commonly known as ‘spice’.

How many young people are using vaping products?

While it is illegal to sell e-cigarettes to under-18s, we know that some children and young people are accessing them. The Public Health team in Haringey Council surveys students in schools biannually to gain insight into their health behaviour and the possible barriers to making changes. We do this by commissioning the Health-Related Behaviours Questionnaire, which shows increased use of e-cigarettes amongst secondary school pupils. 1,412 secondary school pupils were surveyed in 2021-22.

The results show:

16% of students self-reported they had tried e-cigarettes, two percent increase from 2019-20 (14%)

5% reported vaping occasionally or regularly, two percent increase from 2019-20 (3%).



What is the law relating to vapes and vaping?

Selling a nicotine inhaling product to anyone aged under 18 is a **criminal offence**. This includes both devices, cartridges and refill substances (e-liquids). THC vape juice is illegal in the UK regardless of age.

Buying a nicotine inhaling product for anyone under 18 is a criminal offence (what is known as a proxy sale, where an adult buys the product for the young person).

Reporting illicit vapes and underage sales

If you know of anyone who does sell vapes, or tobacco illegally, you can **report them to trading standards** through the ► **Citizens Advice online portal** from 5pm Fridays-9am Mondays.

Alternatively, you can contact Citizens Advice Consumer Service for free on 0808 223 1133. They will take your report and alert trading standards. You can use this service to report anonymously if you prefer.

Why is there a concern about vaping amongst young people?

1. Health effects including nicotine addiction

Evidence regarding the long-term health effects of vaping is unclear, however there is growing evidence that suggests that e-cigarettes can negatively impact heart health, including heart rate and blood pressure. They may also impact on young people's developing lungs, particularly in those who already have asthma or other respiratory health issues.

Young people using nicotine-containing vaping devices are more likely to become addicted, have more difficulty quitting and are at higher risk of addiction to other substances in the future.

Signs and symptoms of nicotine dependency may include:

Mood changes, irritability, poor behaviour, hyperactivity

Symptoms of nicotine intake may include:

Headache, cough, throat irritation, dizziness, and nausea

There are concerns that vaping may affect their brain development, however, further research is needed to understand the short and long-term exposure of nicotine in young people.

2. Vaping and its impact on subsequent tobacco use and other substances

There are also growing concerns that vaping may lead some young people to take up tobacco smoking with all its known harmful effects.

How can schools respond to and address vaping amongst young people?

Whole school approaches to health and wellbeing are effective in meeting the needs of your school community across multiple health and wellbeing outcomes. Embedding the components of a whole school approach can have a positive impact on managing vape, tobacco, alcohol or substance use.

Haringey Public Health team advises schools to take three key actions in relation to vaping, which can help facilitate an appropriate curriculum and implementation of a whole school approach to health and wellbeing.

Key action 1: Review school policies and practices

Haringey Public Health team recommends schools create, implement and maintain a policy on vaping/e-cigarettes and should accompany their school's drugs policy to maintain consistency.

1. Schools vaping or smoking use policy

Based on National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines your policy should:

✓	Clearly apply the same prohibitions to vaping device use on the school site as it does to cigarettes/tobacco products
✓	Apply to the whole school community (for example staff, visitors and contractors as well as learners)
✓	Apply to the whole of the school grounds (for example car parks and other outdoor spaces)
✓	Apply to all school-related activity (e.g. school trips or events)
✓	Apply to the school premises outside of school hours (for example when being used by the community for after-hours events)
✓	Include the permanent confiscation of prohibited items. This should apply to vaping devices as well as to cigarettes
✓	Include clear processes for reporting known sources of illegal tobacco/vapes
✓	Be clear about the involvement of other agencies
✓	Identify sources of support for young people experiencing signs of nicotine dependency
✓	Be developed with learners, staff and the wider school community
✓	Be effectively communicated to everyone it affects so that they are aware of the content
✓	Include asking people not to vape directly outside your school grounds

When developing policy on vapes, it is recommended that schools prioritise reducing vaping among pupils and treat 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. In cases where vapes have been mixed with illegal substances, first aid may need to be administered. As such, schools should ensure any first aid policies are up to date.

2. Behaviour policies and practice

The school policy should also outline safeguarding and supporting procedures for pupils using or possessing these, with the aim of ensuring young people are offered and given the support they need as a priority rather than punitive measures such as exclusion.

As part of this recommended approach, your school may wish to follow the below example steps for students found to be vaping:

- 1. Share concerns with designated safeguarding lead in the school.**
- 2. Consider a warning letter or phone call home, including information on the health risks of vaping, and request a signed returned letter from parent/carer to confirm that they will reinforce the message.**
- 3. Consider referring young people identified as using vapes or at risk of using vapes, with consent, to Insight Platform who are the commissioned drug, tobacco, and alcohol service for young people in Haringey and can provide specialist advice and guidance. The allocated support worker will screen the young person and suggest a brief harm reduction/ educational intervention. Please be advised that screening does not mean a full comprehensive assessment as this would be subject to the consent of the young person and their parent/carer.**

Key action 2: Participate in Healthy Schools actions

We recommend a whole-school approach to health and wellbeing to best support students.

This includes attending the Haringey Healthy Schools and P/RSHE Network meetings, which offer valuable resources and a space to share your school's experiences and any successes or continuing challenges you may have seen.

Participating in Haringey's biannual Health-Related Behaviours Questionnaire is also a very effective way to gather evidence about your pupils' health and wellbeing, including attitudes towards and use of vaping and smoking. This can help more effectively target your policies and PSHE lessons on vaping and smoking and to measure their impact on student attitudes and behaviour.

Key action 3: Access sources of support

If you are concerned about pupils who are vaping or how to cover the topic in P/RSHE lessons, there is support available.

School Nurses

Your School Nursing Service can provide support, including delivering health promotion sessions in class or assemblies.

Insight Platform

Insight is Haringey's local confidential support service offering free advice, information and support on substance use and alcohol for children, young people and families in Haringey. Professional and self-referrals by phone or e-mail, or simply fill out the 'contact us form' on the website:



► **Referral form** Call: 020 8493 8525

A national 24-hour helpline and website offering information and advice to anybody concerned about drugs and substance use.

Call: 0300 1236600

► **Vapes** / *talktofrank*

► **'Cannabis' vapes - do you know what you're vaping?** / *talktofrank*

Mental health resources

There are a variety of local and national mental health services for both parents and young people. Including:

Young Minds

Parents Helpline for advice, support and signposting about a child or young person under 25.

Call: 0808 802 5544, Monday - Friday 9:30am - 4:00pm.

Shout

Shout provides 24/7 text support for young people and adults.

Text SHOUT to 85258.

Kooth

► **Kooth.com** provides free, safe and anonymous online support to those aged 11-25.

For a more detailed list of mental health resources, please visit our online

► **Mental Health Resource Hub.**



Resources for School Leadership

Haringey Healthy Schools Programme supports schools to improve the health and wellbeing of students. Resources include:

Termly Healthy Schools Network Meetings

Termly P/RSHE Network Meetings

School Superzone Vaping project working directly with schools to pilot responses to vaping

For questions about these or additional support, contact

► ***healthy.schools@haringey.gov.uk***

► ***Association of Directors of Public Health South East -***

Managing Vaping in Schools: Advice and guidance for schools on how to manage vaping.

► ***NHS Wales*** - Guidance on Vaping for Secondary Schools

► ***London Tobacco Alliance (LTA)*** - Children and Young People Toolkit: Brief overview and sources of further information on youth vaping

► ***LTA - Webinar Series*** - Recorded webinars on young people and vaping, focusing on local authorities, education, and health

► ***LTA - Briefing: Creating a Smokefree Generation Consultation*** - A comprehensive briefing on the recently launched UK-wide Government consultation "Creating a Smokefree Generation and Tackling Youth Vaping", aimed at curbing youth smoking and vaping.

► ***Action on Smoking & Health (ASH)*** - Brief and resources on youth vaping

► **ASH - Guidance for School Vaping Policies** - Includes curriculum headlines, key questions, and further resources.

► **ASH – Fact Sheet on Youth Vaping** - includes information on youth vaping prevalence, reasons young people vape, and types of vapes used.

► **Daneil Spargo-Mabbs (DSM) Foundation** - Information for Schools

► **DSM Foundation** - Vaping Resource Pack for 13-18 Year Olds & Staff Briefing

► **Smokefree Sheffield** - information and Resources: Includes:

Two posters for display in school toilets, classrooms, canteens, and noticeboards: ► **1**, ► **2**

Resources for Teachers

► **Wiltshire Healthy Schools** - Smoking & Vaping Education: Includes PSHE resources and advice.

► **Smokefree Sheffield** - information and Resources: Includes:

► **A short, animated film** - to start discussions in PSHE lessons, form times and assemblies. Animation also available on

► **YouTube:** <https://youtu.be/rod4d4yFeaE>.

► **Classroom presentation** - for use by teachers alongside the animated film. Notes pages ► **here**.

Teachers Toolkit with more detail to back up the classroom presentation ► **here**.

- ▶ **New Zealand Vapefree Schools** - Support for Teaching
- ▶ **PSHE Association** - Year 9 PSHE Vaping Lesson Pack
- ▶ **Vaping – KS3 form time activities** - PHE School Zone: resource pack for schools on vaping, aimed at KS3.
- ▶ **DSM Foundation** - Lessons/form time PSHE resource packs
- ▶ **Vaping presentation** - used by Greig City Academy – please contact ▶ **Healthy.Schools@haringey.gov.uk** to receive a copy.

Resources for Parents

- ▶ **Smokefree Sheffield** - information and Resources: Includes:
- ▶ **Electronic leaflet** - for parents and carers. Version with pages as spreads available
- ▶ **DSM Foundation** - Vaping Resource Pack for 13-18 Year Olds & Staff Briefing
- ▶ **New Zealand Vapefree Schools** - Support for Parents
- ▶ **New Zealand Vapefree Schools** - Support for Students

Resource hub for parents on how to support their child and have conversations around drugs and vaping.

- ▶ **Uxbridge Adolescent Development Services** - THC Vaping Parent/Guardian Resource



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