

Aspiration  
Respect  
Endeavour

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Roding Valley  
HIGH SCHOOL

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Dear Parents/Carers

I have previously written to parents regarding the dangers of vaping. Following a very worrying incident in the local community last week, I feel compelled to write to you again and share the same information with our new parents.

We will be addressing this with students through assemblies and Personal Development over the next couple of weeks.

The legalisation of CBD (cannabidiol) in November 2019 has increased young people's interest in alternative medicines derived from the marijuana plant. Young people are naturally intrigued by the possible effects that something previously defined as illegal can have. The guidance released by the Government says that it should not be on sale to anyone under the age of 18 and therefore we would not want this in school. It should be used for medicinal purposes and under the guidance of a medical professional.

Linked to CBD, but very different is THC (tetrahydrocannabinol). This is the main active ingredient in cannabis and is entirely illegal for anyone to use, possess, sell, buy or share. We will once again be explaining the possible side effects of THC and attempting to expel the myth that it can create a feeling of euphoria or a 'high,' as it often in fact creates the opposite effect and can lead to very low mood, psychotic episodes and many more long-term damaging effects to a young person's health and wellbeing.

Unfortunately, it has come to our attention that THC is available in the local area and comes in many different forms. Worryingly, it does not look or smell like cannabis and can therefore remain largely undetected aside from the side effects it may have. Young people are using the oil form in vape pens. This can appear and smell like a normal vaping liquid, but is very different.

Included in the assemblies and as part of the Personal Development programme over the coming weeks, we will revisit vaping and the use of vape pens in today's society. We have continued to share with students the possible long-term side effects and tried to get them to see and understand the benefits of not starting something that was originally developed to help people stop smoking. We have tried to get them to see how ridiculous it would be to start vaping, if you were never a smoker.

As with lots of things associated with risky behaviours, there is the myth that 'everyone is doing it.' We have tried to dispel this myth; however, we are battling against vaping having been 'normalised' for young people, with the latest Snapchat craze being young people showing off their smoke ring tricks.



In addition to sharing what we know about CBD, THC and vaping, I have also made it very clear to students our stance in school on vape pens and would like to share the same information with you.

If a student has a vape pen or vaping paraphernalia in their possession in school, they are likely to be isolated, they will serve a Headteacher's 100-minute detention and we will consider a fixed term suspension from school.

If a student is discovered to have been vaping in school, they are likely to be issued with a fixed term suspension from school.

If a student is sharing a vape pen with others or carrying enough vape pen paraphernalia to be selling, then they will be issued with a fixed term suspension from school.

Finally, if there is any suspicion around the content of the vape pen, this may well lead to a permanent exclusion from the school.

In every case, parents and carers will be informed, the vape pen and paraphernalia will be destroyed or shared with the police if we are concerned about the content.

Should you wish to discuss any of this any further, please do not hesitate to contact me. I hope that we can work together to guide the young people in our community through the minefield of decisions and choices they are presented with in their teenage years.

You can find additional information about cannabis related drugs here:

<https://www.talktofrank.com/>

Yours faithfully,



Sam Dyer  
Deputy Headteacher.

