



Moor House School & College

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Dear Parents and Carers

It has been brought to our attention that a small minority of our college students are buying vapes or vaping equipment for themselves and/or others. As you are aware Moor House is a non- smoking site and smoking and / or vaping by students or staff is prohibited. Cigarettes, tobacco or vapes / vaping are prohibited items in terms of the Moor House Behaviour Policies. At our partner college sites, there are designated areas for smoking and / or vaping for students age 18 and above.

In October 2015, the law was changed to ban retailers from selling e-cigarettes or e-juices to anyone who is aged under 18 years, and this includes both online and bricks and mortar stores. It was also made illegal for any adult to try to buy e-cigarettes for anyone aged under 18.

Why are we concerned?

- The legal age for purchasing vapes/ vaping equipment in the UK is 18 and you must be 18 years of age to purchase e-cigarettes or e-liquids from any UK vape shop or online store, but we are aware that young people seem to find ways to purchase these items without ID.
- Many vapes contain nicotine (often more nicotine than cigarettes).
- It can be an effective and subtle way of smoking cannabis.
- Vape companies are increasingly targeting teenagers through producing flavours that appeal to younger people (Cherry Crush etc.). This is one way of detecting it in your son/ daughter's room as it often has a very potent fruity smell.

What are rules at Moor House around vaping and vape equipment?

- Students must not have vapes or vaping equipment on the Moor House site and must not vape anywhere on the Moor House School & College site. Vaping equipment is deemed prohibited items as outlined in the Moor House College Behaviour Policy.
- Students found to be vaping or with vapes or vaping related equipment in their bags / pockets etc will face a sanction in line with the Behaviour Policy which may include exclusion.
- If we suspect students are vaping, we may ask them to turn out their bags / pockets and conduct a bag/ property search with their consent. If a student does not consent to a bag search, we will call parents/ carers to attend the college site to enable us to conduct the search with parental consent and presence.
- If we have reports of students under the age of 18 vaping off school & college site in public areas, including at the partner colleges, they may also face a significant sanction and we will make you aware as parents so that you can help to ensure that your son/ daughter is safe.



Patron: HRH The Countess of Wessex GCVO



How are we supporting the education of Moor House College students around vaping?

Alongside previous PSHCE lessons and work through assemblies, tutorials and Speech and Language Therapy groups, Mrs van Niekerk will also speak to all students during tutor time/ assemblies in the week beginning the 18th of April 2022.

How can parents help?

Please continue to have conversations with your son/ daughters around vaping over the Easter break and help to make sure that they understand why adults might be concerned about vaping and also ensure that they are really clear around the law and the Moor House College rules on this. The more we have these honest and open conversations, the more it 'de-mystifies' it for our young people and perhaps makes it less appealing or glamorous.

Please ensure that your sons/daughters are not carrying any vaping equipment in their bags. Please note that vapes can be disguised as USB sticks, pens etc.

What about establishments who may be selling vapes to our students?

If we hear of anywhere that is selling vapes to students, we will report it to the police and we would encourage parents and carers to do the same. As well as vape shops there are also market stalls where vapes are readily available.

I am concerned that my son/daughter is vaping and I don't know how to help them?

Some young people believe that vaping is a way to cope with anxious feelings and if this is the case, we would love the opportunity to talk to them about alternative ways to manage anxiety, and even more importantly to try and discover the route of the anxiety, so that we can help.

If you have concerns that your son/daughter may have become increasingly dependent on vaping, please get in touch with your GP, or you can contact Mrs van Niekerk on van-niekerkm@moorhouseschool.co.uk or Mr Leung-Davis on Davisj@moorhouseschool.co.uk in confidence who will be able to offer guidance or signpost useful resources or agencies.

Please don't hesitate to contact me, or Mr Leung-Davies, if you would like to discuss this topic further - but in short, we want to help where there may be a dependency issue, but vaping, smoking and any prohibited items are not permitted at Moor House. This is for the safety and well-being of all our students.

Thank you in advance for your support in this regard.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine van Niekerk
Deputy Head Teacher

