

These notes have been updated on 20 November 2023 following HMC Heads Webinar.

Important : It has come to our attention that vapes are now being used to transport and pass on drugs. When confiscating a vape check what the canister holds.

Where do you stand on vape detectors?

- Cost is a barrier to use; cheapest seem to be £600 - £700 +VAT and most are upwards of £2k for a single unit.
- They need wifi.
- When they go off you then need to look at CCTV camera footage, this takes a lot of time and resource.
- Schools have big campuses, you can't have them everywhere.
- Pupils move location to avoid detectors.

Suggestions:

- Most companies offer a 30 day free-trial which has helped inform decisions for some schools.
- Dummy vape detectors can work well.
- Portable not fixed vape detectors work best.
- Strong argument for putting them in areas where vaping problem is affecting others, e.g younger years not wanting to use toilets that older pupils are vaping in.
- Need a way for pupils impacted by the vaping of others to anonymously report the problem.
- Noise / alarm of some sort to trigger when detector goes off can be an added deterrent.
- Possibility of tying vaping alert into fire alarm panels, noise to be upon detection of vaping
- If regular vaping is taking place in toilets there was a suggestion to take the doors off the entrance to the toilets making the space more open and accessible, less likely to vape as it is no longer so private.
- **Vapourless vapes now exist** making vape detectors redundant.

Summary:

- They are expensive, take up a lot of time and resource, they might soon become useless, and ultimately schools cannot solve the problem just with detectors. They can however, be useful as a deterrent.

Education of pupils

- All felt education was the best course of action to take, early intervention is key!
- Be factual not scaremongering – vapes still have a part to play when it comes to smoking cessation
- Education should be for all not just those that have been caught
- All agreed it takes time and is difficult to crack

Suggestions:

- Education also as part of sanction, e.g sanction to include a 6 part course at school health centre or with school nurse.

- Education in assemblies, these work especially well if lead by pupils.
- Posters with relevant information and statistics to go up in areas where vaping is prevalent
- Panorama

Summary:

- Education is key – do lots of it!

Education of parents

- All agreed that parents are key, they need to play their part.
- Schools need to help educate parents.
- Parents can fuel the problem if they condone vaping and view it as your problem in school.
- Parents can support school and their child if they are using vapes to quit smoking by accessing NHS approved nicotine replacement products such as patches, pouches or gum.

Suggestions:

- Pupils to lead assemblies for parents on vaping.
- Talks to parents and pupils in same day so that they can have joined up approach and can discuss messages heard.
- Webinars
- Sign posting to resources – The Wellbeing Hub has lots!

Summary:

- Keeping parents educated on vaping and updated on trends is important to help prevention in your community

When / how do you sanction pupils?

- Sanction policies that were mentioned included; one being caught for the first-time vaping:
 - o 1 day suspension if caught vaping or in the company of someone who is vaping
 - o Headmasters detention with letter home on 1st offence
 - o 1 week detention
 - o 3 day suspension and 6 part session in health centre (education piece)

Suggestions:

- It was felt a good option to include education piece as part of the sanction.
- Sanction should be given to those in the company of anyone vaping.
- Upon being caught recommendation is to immediately drug test to see what type of vape was being used.
- Policies need to distinguish between what type of vape was being used - any that had THC or any other banned substance would hold greater, more serious sanctions in line with drugs policy
- Spot and search policies to be updated to reflect vaping

- Part of the sanction could be for pupils to run assemblies on vaping or similar.

Summary:

- Make sure your policies are updated and have education as part of your sanction.