



**BIDDULPH
HIGH
SCHOOL**



Potteries Educational Trust Head Office
City of Stoke on Trent Sixth Form College
Leek Road
Stoke on Trent
Staffordshire ST4 2RU
Chief Executive Officer: **Mark Kent**

Conway Road
Knypersley
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST8 7AR

Tel: 01782 523977
Fax: 01782 521820
Email: office@biddulphhigh.co.uk
Website: www.biddulphhigh.co.uk

Headteacher: **Mrs E C Robinson BA (Hons)**

6th January 2022

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE PERSON WITH PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Re: Vaping and drugs

Staffordshire Police have made us aware of concerns about new drugs trends young people may be exposed to, particularly around using vapes. We would remind you that it is illegal to buy vaping devices and liquids under the age of 18 and our school policy is to confiscate vaping devices and liquids and suspend students suspected of using them. If we believe that drugs are being used in vapes, we would also inform the police.

While e-cigarettes have health benefits over smoking cigarettes, it is important that the vaping liquid has been quality controlled. There are a number of vaping liquids available from unlicensed sources such as the dark web or advertised on social media that have not been controlled, a number of which contain illegal, harmful substances.

THC - tetrahydrocannabinol

There has been an increase in young people using vapes and in particular experimenting with THC vaping. THC is the psychoactive compound in cannabis and *is illegal in the UK*. The latest reports show that this has led to some young people overdosing on THC, causing them to become unwell and needing medical attention.

How do I know if my child is vaping THC?

Vaping tends to produce clouds of smoke that are scentless and disappear quickly, so it can be difficult to sense if your child is using a vape. Vaping THC will have similar effects to using cannabis. Vaping THC as opposed to smoking cannabis allows a larger amount of THC to be inhaled very quickly, potentially causing overdosing. The effects of vaping THC depends on the amount of THC/CBD in the vape, your child's mood, the environment and how often it is used.

The side effects are listed below and can be signs your child has vaped THC oil:

- Blood shot eyes
- Dazed/dreamy demeanour
- Light headedness, dizziness, confusion and tiredness
- Hot flushes, excessive sweating
- Mood swings - excited, agitated and aggressive
- Short term memory loss
- Faint, feeling sick, vomiting
- The giggles, munchies, dry mouth
- Anxiety, paranoia, hallucinations
- Suicidal thoughts
- Tremors, seizures and fits.



The liquid can be distributed in drink bottles and decanted into smaller, unlabelled bottles (see below).



What is the law?

Cannabis is an illegal Class B drug. There are consequences for the illegal possession, supply and production of cannabis:

- *Possession* - having (possessing) cannabis in any form, including edibles, can get you up to 5 years in prison, unlimited fine or both.
- *Supply* - supplying cannabis which includes giving it to your friends for free or sharing it with them can get you up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.
- *Dealing* - selling cannabis for any sized financial gain can get you up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.
- *Trafficking* - moving it around the country on transport or through private vehicle etc. can get you up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.
- *Production* - producing cannabis whether growing for self-consumption or to be sold can get you up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.

Young people who use cannabis are at increased risk of child criminal exploitation (CCE), and to be groomed into County Lines operations.

“Spice” or “Mamba”

Further concerns are raised after reported cases where young people had suffered adverse effects following buying and vaping what they believed to be THC but was later identified as a far more potent substance, “Spice” or “Mamba”, the effects of which required hospital treatment.

What can I do as a parent / carer?

We recommend monitoring for vaping devices, liquids and equipment as pictured above. On packaging and wrappers look for wording such as CBD or THC suggesting the items are cannabis oil infused.

We would advise you to talk to your child about drugs and don't wait until there's a problem before you decide to talk. Take time to listen to what they have to say and discuss the risks associated with substance misuse and possible consequences of their actions and support them to make the right choices.

Please be mindful of the medical needs should a child present with symptoms, or if you suspect they have consumed a drug-infused substance. In a medical emergency, always call 999.

What support is available?

Stoke on Trent Community Drug & Alcohol Service (CDAS)

01782 221090

referrals@sotcdas.org.uk

T3 stars

Suite 1, 7-8 Mill Street, Stafford ST162AJ

01785 241393

t3stars.stafford@humankindcharity.org.uk

Talk to FRANK

0300 1236600

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

For referrals:

Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support Service

0300 111 8007 (Mon – Thurs 8.30am to 5.00pm and Fri 8.30am – 4.30pm)

0345 604 2886 (emergency duty service out of hours)

Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD) (Stoke-on-Trent)

01782 235100 (Mon – Fri 8.30am – 6.00pm)

01782 234234 (emergency out of hours team)

ChAD.referral@stoke.gov.uk

If you have any local information or intelligence please share it with Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111, via their website or Staffordshire Police by direct messaging on Facebook or Twitter, online chat via the website or by calling 101.

Who can I speak to in school?

We appreciate that there is a lot of information in this letter and some of it may raise concerns for you or your child. Please do not hesitate to speak to a member of the pastoral or safeguarding team in school if you have worries or need advice as we are always here to listen and help. Please see the updated Head of Year information below:

- Year 9: Mrs Barry (Head of Year) and Miss Cicatello (Assistant Head of Year)
- Year 10: Mrs Taylor-Harte (Head of Year) and Miss Foster (Assistant Head of Year)
- Year 11: Mr Wiggins-Thomas (Head of Year) and Miss Winship (Assistant Head of Year)
- Head of Lower School Pastoral: Mrs Hatch
- Sixth Form: Mrs Taylor (Head of Sixth Form) and Mrs Homer (Assistant Head of Sixth Form)

Yours faithfully



Mrs Emma Moss
Assistant Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding Lead



Mrs Sarah Evans
Safeguarding & Student Welfare Co-ordinator
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

