



## Safeguarding & Child Protection at Ellesmere Port Catholic High School



Lord Jesus, May we welcome the kingdom of God into our hearts and lives, embracing discipleship and openness to others. You call us to walk with integrity in the service of others. May our service be filled with kindness, and respect for all God's people, giving special protection to children and the vulnerable. May we seek the truth, Listen to those wounded by harm, and choose to act with compassion and justice. Give us the strength, to serve humbly and faithfully, and to love one another as we are so loved by You.

Amen.

### IT COULD HAPPEN HERE - COUNTY LINES

County lines is the name given to drug dealing where organised criminal groups (OCGs) use phone lines to move and supply drugs, usually from cities into smaller towns and rural areas. The OCGs exploit vulnerable people, including children and those with mental health or addiction issues, by recruiting them to distribute drugs. OCGs often use high levels of violence and intimidation to protect the 'county line' and control them.

- Repeatedly going missing from school or home and being found in other areas
- Having money, new clothes or electronic devices and they can't explain how they paid for them
- Getting high numbers of texts or phone calls, being secretive about who they're speaking to
- A decline in school or work performance
- Significant changes in emotional or physical well-being

#### CUCKOOING:

One of the forms of control used by the OCGs, exploits vulnerable people by using their home as a base for dealing drugs, a process known as 'cuckooing'. Dealers often convince the vulnerable person to let their home be used for drug dealing by giving them free drugs or offering to pay for food or utilities. Often OCGs target people who are lonely, isolated, or have addiction issues—BUT this is NOT always the case. It's common for OCGs to use a property for a short amount of time, moving address frequently to reduce the chance of being caught

#### THE SIGNS:

- frequent visitors at unsociable hours
- changes in your neighbour's daily routine
- unusual smells coming from a property
- suspicious or unfamiliar vehicles outside an address

#### Where can you get help?

Cheshire Police, Tel: 101  
If an emergency, Tel: 999

Crimestoppers,  
Tel: 0800 555 111

ChildLine,  
Tel: 0800 1111

NSPCC Helpline,  
Tel: 0808 800 5000

### Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Mr Colin Jones**

### Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Mrs Carly Hughes**

### Useful Acronyms and Vocabulary

**CEOP** - Child Exploitation  
and On-line Protection  
Centre

**CYC**—Cheshire Young  
Carers

**CAMHS** - Child and  
Adolescent Mental Health  
Services

**KSCIE** - Keeping Children  
Safe in Education

**RSE** - Relationships and  
Sex Education

**ELSA** - Emotional Literacy  
Support Assistants

### Useful Websites

[youngminds.org.uk](http://youngminds.org.uk)

[nspcc.org.uk](http://nspcc.org.uk)

[childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk)

[cheshireyoungcarers.org](http://cheshireyoungcarers.org)

[ldas.org.uk](http://ldas.org.uk)

[papyrus-uk.org](http://papyrus-uk.org)

### Are all your contact details up-to-date?

If you change your home phone/email/mobile number, please let the school know, so that we have the most up-to-date contact details for you.



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about THE DANGERS OF VAPING

Data collected for ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) shows an increase in 11 to 17-year-olds experimenting with vaping: from 7.7% in 2022 to 11.6% in 2023. It's concerning that these age-restricted products are getting into the hands of under 18s as most contain nicotine, which can be detrimental to brain development and cause long-term addiction. Some schools have reported students having their focus in lessons affected by nicotine cravings; vaping in school toilets; and even trying vapes found in their local park. Raising awareness of the risks among young people could help to prevent these problems from escalating and reduce the number of young vapers.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### NICOTINE ADDICTION

Since they were initially developed to help people stop smoking, the vast majority of vape liquids contain nicotine. Not only is this a highly addictive stimulant, but it can also have detrimental effects on brain development in the under-25s. Nicotine can decrease the ability to pay attention, weaken impulse control, affect mood and increase the likelihood of substance addiction as an adult.

## WHAT IS VAPING?

Vapes contain a liquid (vape juice/e-liquid) that is heated by a battery and evaporates, creating a chemical vapour which the user inhales. They can be **disposable** (once the liquid or battery runs out, the vape is thrown away) or **rechargeable** (the user replaces the liquid and recharges the battery on demand). Most vape liquids contain nicotine and other chemicals.

### LACK OF AWARENESS

A proportion of young people tend to view vapes as harmless, mainly because of the products' appearance and the perception (often strengthened on social media) that "vaping is cool" and on trend. In many instances, young people don't fully appreciate the concept of addiction; that is, they aren't adequately aware of the risk of becoming hooked on nicotine before trying a vape.

### POTENTIAL TOXICITY

Many vape liquids have been found to contain 'heavy' metals such as lead, tin, nickel and (in some cases) mercury – all of which are toxic. These metals often take the form of tiny shards inside a device's liquid tank, which are then inhaled into the body. Some media reports have suggested these metals are particularly prevalent in illegally imported vapes which don't comply with UK regulations.

### UNCLEAR LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

The liquids in vapes also contain solvents, which can create carcinogens at the point of evaporation. Vapes were only introduced into the UK in 2005 – and, because of the relatively short timeframe involved, there is insufficient medical evidence to assess the long-term harms that regular inhalation of these chemical fluids might have on the human body.

### ATTRACTIVE PACKAGING

The packaging of many disposable vapes is very appealing to young people, frequently echoing the colours and flavours of the sweets or fizzy drinks they're used to buying. There's a relative lack of regulation around vape marketing, and vaping is often depicted positively on social media – which can lead young people to develop favourable views of vaping and overlook the possible harms.

### ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In the UK alone, around 1.3 million disposable vapes go to landfill every week. Due to such significant numbers of these products not being recycled, their components – a lithium battery and a chemical liquid – pose a toxic risk to the environment, the ecosystem and wildlife. Vapes are also predominantly made of plastic and metal; materials that, of course, do not naturally decompose.

### WIDER HEALTH CONCERNS

Studies are already showing a link between vaping and oral health problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. This is because vaping reduces the amount of saliva in the mouth, while increasing bacteria – resulting in bad breath and a build-up of plaque. There are also concerns that, in some users, vaping could lead to the development of asthma, a persistent cough and breathing difficulties.

### UNREGULATED VAPING PRODUCTS

The number of retailers willing to sell vapes to under-18s is a worry, as the chance of these products being unregulated (and therefore containing illegal chemicals and higher levels of nicotine) is high. A related concern is that the mechanisms inside unregulated products are unlikely to have been tested and safety checked – presenting a possible fire risk if the liquid and battery come into contact.

### SCARCE INFORMATION

The lack of information about the ingredients and potentially harmful chemicals in a vape is troubling. Some vape fluids (unregulated in the UK) contain traces of nuts, which can cause an allergic reaction or anaphylactic shock. To date, medical warnings aren't required on vape packaging – with only medical disclaimers being found on the websites of the various brands.

### VAGUE INGREDIENTS LISTS

Early research has suggested that the chemicals used to produce some strawberry and banana flavour e-liquids can kill cells in the blood vessels and heart. These ingredients aren't identified on the packaging, instead falling under the umbrella term 'natural and artificial flavourings'. Such vague listings mean that consumers aren't aware of the liquid's content so can't identify potential risks.



<https://www.themix.org.uk/get-support>

0808 808 4994

The Mix is a UK based charity that provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile. There is an abundance of information for young people out there. The Mix is the UK's leading support service for young people. We are here to help you take on any challenge you're facing - from mental health to money, from homelessness to finding a job, from break-ups to drugs. Talk to us via our online community, on social, through our free, confidential helpline or our counselling service.



# 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Remember, mental health is a universal human right, and everyone deserves to live with dignity, respect and happiness.

## SAMARITANS:



You can access confidential emotional support at any time from Samaritans either by calling 116 123 or emailing [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

## Shout:



24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. Text 85258.

## NHS Choices:



Mental health services are free on the NHS. To get urgent medical help, use the NHS 111 online service, or call 111 if you're unable to get help online. Only available in mainland UK.

For life-threatening emergencies, call 999 for an ambulance

## Childline:



Childline is a free, private and confidential service that you can access online and on the phone. They can provide help and support for people up to their 19th birthday.

## Police:

If you or somebody else is in danger, or it feels like a situation might get dangerous and you need support right away, click here to find out how to contact the police.

## Report abuse:



CEOP help children stay safe online. If anybody acts inappropriately towards you or another child or young person online (such as sexual chat, or being asked to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable); you can report it here.

## What is mental health?

We all have mental health, just like we all have physical health. It's about how we think, feel and act. Sometimes we feel well, and sometimes we don't. When our mental health is good, we feel motivated and able to take on challenges and new experiences. But when our mental health is not so good, we can find it much harder to cope.

We are encouraging our students to wear a green ribbon to show their support around the issues of mental health. Wear a green ribbon to show colleagues, loved ones or simply those you walk past that you care about their mental health. It can also be worn in memory of a loved one.





## **Bonfire night injuries....**

Most injuries happen at private or family displays; Rocket, air bomb and sparkler incidents are the most common; Over 550 children under 16 are taken to A&E in the four weeks surrounding bonfire night alone; Many more boys than girls are injured by fireworks – especially boys aged 12 to 15 years.

### **STOP, DROP, ROLL**

Always remember, if your clothing catches fire - STOP, DROP and ROLL.

If your clothes catch fire, running around won't help. You must always stop, drop to the ground (cover you face with your hands) and roll over and over. Make sure you roll over a few times, to ensure that you put the fire out.

### **First aid - following a burn or scald**

Good first aid following a burn or scald can make an enormous difference in recovery times and the severity of scarring. Remember to COOL, CALL, COVER.

First aid advice from the British Burn Association:

Cool the burn with running cold tap water for 20 minutes and remove all clothing and jewellery (unless it is melted or firmly stuck to the wound).

Call for help: 999, 111 or local GP for advice.

Cover with cling film or a sterile, non-fluffy dressing or cloth. Make sure the patient is kept warm.

## **Did you know?**

- It is against the law to carry fireworks in public if you're under 18
- Fireworks must not be sold to anyone who is under 18
- It is an offence to let fireworks off during night hours (11pm to 7am), except on Bonfire Night (midnight), Diwali, New Year's Eve, and Chinese New Year (1am)
- It is an offence under the Explosives Act 1875 to tamper with or modify fireworks
- If you want to buy, possess and use fireworks (except indoor fireworks and sparklers), in Northern Ireland you must have a valid fireworks licence.

**PLEASE STAY SAFE THIS GUY FAWKES NIGHT.**

---

# Keep your child safe on Snapchat

---

Snapchat is an app for sending photos and videos (known as 'Snaps'), and text messages. The 'Stories' feature lets users share photos or videos with all their contacts at once.

Snaps disappear after being opened, usually within seconds. Stories disappear after 24 hours. Images and messages aren't automatically saved on phones.

The **minimum age** to use Snapchat is **13**, but it's easy to sign up if you're younger.

---

## What's the problem?

There's a risk of seeing sexual content, and of bullying.

Your child's location could be shared automatically with their contacts, which could put them in danger if they have strangers as 'friends' on the app. A new 'Meet Up' feature allows people to get directions to another user's location, if they're sharing their location

There's a risk of children being 'groomed' by strangers into sharing pictures and information about themselves. Gangs also use apps to groom and recruit children .

## 4 steps to help your child use Snapchat safely

### 1. Tell your child to only use it with real friends

Anyone could pretend to be a child or teenager online, so encourage your child not to talk to people they don't know in real life. Encourage them not to share information such as what school they go to or where they live with people they don't know offline.

### 2. Use privacy settings

By default, only 'friends' your child has added on Snapchat can contact them directly and see their story or location, so encourage your child to keep those default settings.

To check and change the settings:

Tap the person icon in the top-left of Snapchat, then the cog in the top-right

Scroll down to the 'Privacy Control' section and tap the relevant options (e.g. 'Contact Me' and 'View My Story')

Under 'See My Location', enable 'Ghost Map' to turn location sharing off

Under 'See Me In Quick Add' you can stop your child's profile from being suggested to strangers as a potential 'friend'

### 3. Talk to your child about image sharing and being careful about what they share

Even though images disappear in Snapchat, they can be screenshotted and then shared – outside of the original sender's control.

So, remind your child to think carefully about the images they share, and with whom. Before they share anything, tell them to ask: "Would I be happy for other people to see this?"

In particular, make sure your child knows the risks of **taking, sharing or viewing naked or sexually explicit pictures of themselves or another child, either voluntarily or if asked to by someone else**.

This is known as 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' or 'sexting' and is illegal, even when the person doing it is a child. It can also be distressing for a child to have their image shared more widely, or to see an inappropriate image that someone else has shared.

### 4. Make sure your child knows how to use reporting and blocking functions

To **report** a Snap or Story, press and hold on it, tap 'Report Snap', then explain the problem

To **remove** or **block** a friend, swipe to the right to go to the 'Chat' screen, then tap and hold on the person's name. Tap 'Manage Friendship', then choose 'Remove Friend' or 'Block'

---