



Dear Parents and Carers,

Tackling Teenage Vaping and Nicotine Pouches

As a school, we are committed to safeguarding the health, wellbeing and future opportunities of all our students. Whilst the majority of young people make positive choices, schools nationally continue to see incidents involving vaping and, in some cases, the use of nicotine pouches.

According to the latest data from **Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)**, approximately **19% of 11 to 17 year-olds in Great Britain have tried vaping**. Although youth vaping rates have recently stabilised following significant increases in previous years, the use of nicotine products among young people remains a serious concern.

We know that many parents and carers have questions about vaping and nicotine pouches and are often unaware of how discreet these products can be. This letter aims to:

- Provide information about vaping and nicotine pouches.
- Explain the risks associated with nicotine use in adolescence.
- Outline the school's expectations and behaviour procedures.
- Signpost sources of support and guidance for families.

Why Are We Concerned?

Vaping involves inhaling an aerosol produced by an electronic cigarette or vape device. Whilst vaping is generally considered less harmful than smoking and may help adult smokers quit, it is **not risk-free and should not be used by children or young people**.

Many vaping products contain nicotine, which is highly addictive. Young people's brains are still developing, making them particularly vulnerable to the effects of nicotine dependence.

Many modern vaping devices are specifically designed to be discreet and can resemble everyday items such as pens, highlighters or USB devices. Products are often marketed in appealing flavours and colourful packaging, making them particularly attractive to young people.

It is also important to recognise that some illicit or modified vaping products may contain substances other than nicotine, including THC or other drugs.



Key Facts About Vaping

- Many vapes contain nicotine, making them highly addictive.
- Vape aerosol is not simply harmless water vapour.
- Young people's brains and lungs are still developing and are more susceptible to harm.
- Nicotine use can affect attention, learning, memory and impulse control.
- Dependence can develop surprisingly quickly in adolescents.
- Some products may contain substances not listed on the packaging.
- Long-term health effects continue to be researched.
- Vaping products can be extremely easy to conceal.

Parents should be aware that vaping devices may not always be obvious. We encourage families to have open conversations with their children and remain vigilant to the signs of nicotine use.

Nicotine Pouches



Alongside vaping, schools have recently noticed the use of **oral nicotine pouches by some young people**.

These small pouches are placed between the lip and gum and release nicotine directly into the body. Because they do not produce smoke or vapour, they can be used very discreetly and can be difficult to detect.

Although some young people perceive nicotine pouches as a harmless alternative to vaping, they still contain nicotine and carry the same risk of developing addiction.

As with vaping products, nicotine pouches are not appropriate for children and young people.

Changes to the Law

It is already illegal to sell nicotine-containing vapes to anyone under the age of 18.

In addition, from **29 October 2026**, legislation introduces a minimum age of sale of **18 for nicotine pouches**. This closes a loophole that previously meant nicotine pouches were not subject to the same restrictions as vaping products.

Where we become aware of businesses supplying vaping or nicotine products illegally to children, we may report these concerns to Trading Standards.

School Expectations and Behaviour Policy

If a student is found to have Vapes, e-cigarettes, nicotine pouches, tobacco products and associated paraphernalia are prohibited on the school site they run the very strong risk of being sanctioned with a suspension for the incident. If students refuse to be searched, the school will see this as supporting their suspicions and a sanction will be put in place.

Where there is reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of a prohibited item, authorised staff may conduct searches in line with Department for Education guidance and the school's Behaviour Policy. This may include searching bags, coats, blazers or other possessions and, where appropriate, using a hand-held metal detector.

Parents and carers will be informed if a search has taken place.

Students found in possession of vaping products, nicotine pouches or related items should expect a serious consequence. **Suspension is likely to be considered as an appropriate sanction.**

Students are also expected to cooperate with reasonable search requests. Refusal to do so is likely to result in further sanctions under the Behaviour Policy including suspension.

Behaviour when travelling to and from school

Students are expected to uphold the school's standards of behaviour when travelling to and from school. This includes their conduct on public transport, on the journey to and from school, and in the local community.

Where the school receives information or reports that a student may have been involved in inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour while travelling to or from school, the school will consider and investigate the information provided. The nature and extent of any investigation will depend on the information available, including the reliability and validity of the information received.

Where there is sufficient evidence to support concerns about a student's behaviour, the school's Behaviour Policy will be followed, and appropriate sanctions may be implemented. Students should therefore be aware that the school's expectations do not end at the school gates and that behaviour outside school can have consequences where it is connected to the school community or brings the school's expectations into question.

While vaping remains relatively uncommon at Waddesdon, we believe that maintaining clear expectations and robust procedures is essential in protecting the vast majority of students who make positive choices.

If you are concerned that your child may be vaping or using nicotine pouches, we encourage you to contact the school so that we can work together to support them.

You may wish to:

- Talk openly about vaping and nicotine use.
- Discuss the health risks and addictive nature of nicotine.
- Encourage your child to speak honestly about any peer pressure they may experience.
- Familiarise yourself with the appearance of vaping devices and nicotine pouches.
- Seek advice from your GP or other healthcare professionals if you are concerned about nicotine dependence.

Further Information

Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)

<https://ash.org.uk/key-topics/youth-vaping>

NHS – Young People and Vaping

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/help-others-quit/young-people-and-vaping/>

Talk to FRANK

<https://www.talktofrank.com>

Working Together

The dangers associated with vaping and nicotine use are addressed through our curriculum, assemblies and pastoral support programmes. However, the greatest impact comes when schools and families work together with a shared message.

We encourage you to discuss these issues with your child and to contact us if you require support or guidance. By working in partnership, we can help our young people make informed, healthy decisions and ensure that Waddesdon remains a safe and positive environment for all students.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Maciejewski
Behaviour Lead

Mr Sturla
Designated Safeguarding Lead