



Beths Grammar School

an 11 – 18 selective school with academy status

Headteacher: Mr R J Blyghton

19 April 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you will be aware, from recent coverage in the press, the popularity of vaping among young people is on the increase and, alongside this is the emergence of illegal vapes containing excess nicotine above the legal limit, and metals such as lead and nickel. In addition, some vapes have been found to contain cannabinoid such as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and spice, which can be more potent than cannabis. This is an extremely dangerous substance and is reported to have led to students collapsing and being admitted to hospital.

It has become apparent that some students are bringing vapes into school and using them in toilets. To protect the school community a vape alert system was installed over the Easter break which has highlighted that this is a serious issue and must be addressed to keep our young people safe whilst in the care of the school. In addition, we are experiencing an increase in anti-social behaviour in the toilets which is unacceptable.

Yesterday, cameras were installed in some toilets, avoiding all sensitive areas such as cubicles and urinals, to support the vape system and enable us to immediately identify those putting themselves, and possibly others, at risk, and to combat the anti-social behaviour. This morning the incidents of vaping in key locations reduced to zero. Despite the immediate positive results shown because of this deterrent, I have reflected and considered the views of our students, and I feel the appropriate action is to deactivate the new cameras and have them relocated outside of the toilet area. I can confirm the cameras have been both de-commissioned and covered whilst awaiting their relocation. However, it is concerning that the incidents of vaping alerts began to rise following this action.

Moving forwards, the vape alert system will remain in place and will be supported with CCTV in operation outside all key areas. It is imperative that school remains a safe place for the whole community and to do nothing would jeopardise the safety of our students. I hope I can count on your support with this initiative.

Yours sincerely,

RJBlyghton

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