Vaping Policy

School	Bowlee Park
Lead member of staff responsible	K. Larkins
Date policy ratified	20.3.25
Review date	20.3.27

Introduction

Bowlee Park School provides all children with a first-class education laying the foundations for children's future success.

One of our core aims is to protect and develop our children's mental health, wellbeing and emotional resilience and, as such, we have a strong ethos of promoting good health and minimising negative health behaviours.

Due to the recent proliferation of single-use vapes, and a coinciding black market for unregulated versions, there has been a large increase in the number of children and young people vaping.

While we welcome the significant decrease in children and young people smoking, the surge in youth vaping is concerning and has a number of health risks, environmental impacts, and safeguarding implications.

In line with advice from the Chief Medical Officer for England, Chris Whitty, we recognise that they are safer than smoking, and that they are a useful stop smoking aid for adult smokers trying to quit, but that they are not for children.

This policy, therefore, outlines our whole school approach to addressing vaping in children/young people at Bowlee Park.

Objectives

- To provide a vape free environment for the whole school community.
- To ensure that vaping education is part of the school's progressive entitlement curriculum of drug education / PSHE (including the health effects, legal, economic and social aspects of vape use).
- To promote a 'proud to be smoke free/vape free' message to all children/young people.

- To ensure that all staff promote positive attitudes and behaviour in relation to smoking and vaping.
- To ensure that staff have the knowledge and understanding of policies, procedures and agreed practice to support the implementation of the vape free policy.
- To involve all staff, governors, pupils, parents/carers and members of the wider school community including outside agencies as appropriate, in the development of policy and practice in relation to vaping.
- To adopt and support interventions that aim to prevent the uptake of vaping amongst pupils.
- To involve the wider school community in interventions to prevent the uptake of vaping in children and young people, by providing support for parents and carers through helping them to talk to their children about vaping and other risk taking behaviours.
- To provide assistance for pupils, staff and other members of the school community who vape and wish to stop.
- To ensure that the school's vape free policy is applied when children / young people are taken off site.

The Role of Schools & Staff

As part of the statutory duty to promote pupils' physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing, Bowlee Park has a clear role to play in managing vapes as part of their pastoral responsibilities. Schools also have a statutory duty to deliver health education on drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Bowlee Park may also need to tackle incidents associated with vaping that include:

- A child vaping in school or on school property.
- A child reported to be vaping in the local community.
- A child selling vapes to other pupils or peers.
- A child with vapes in their possession at school.
- Safeguarding incidents related to vapes and coercion or childhood sexual exploitation.

The following, therefore, outlines the role of Bowlee Park and all its staff.

- The school will prohibit vaping and possession of any vaping products by students on school property and at school-sponsored events. This ban includes vaping devices, e-liquids, disposables, and any associated paraphernalia.
- School staff will confiscate any vaping products from students in violation of the policy. Confiscated items will be disposed of properly as hazardous e-waste.
- The school will incorporate vaping prevention education across the curriculum through health/wellness programs, science/biology lessons, and drug and alcohol units in PSHE classes.
- School staff will model and promote a vape-free environment.
- The school will post clear signage on premises indicating vaping and vape products, as well as smoking, are prohibited for all students and staff.
- Violations of the vaping policy by students will initiate disciplinary actions and interventions as outlined in the code of conduct, including parental notification.
- The school will collaborate closely with health agencies, community partners, law enforcement, and families to fully enforce the vaping policy and reduce youth vaping.
- School staff will receive training on vaping trends, health risks, methods of prevention, policy enforcement, and supporting struggling students.

- The school will conduct annual reviews of the vaping policy to assess effectiveness and make revisions to improve outcomes and align with current best practices.
- The school will comply with all applicable laws and regulations regarding youth vaping and school policy.

The Role of Pupils

Pupils of Bowlee Park have an important role in meeting the objectives of this policy, and need to be aware of the following:

- Vaping is prohibited on school property and at school-sponsored events. This includes use of any electronic smoking device to vape any substance.
- Possession of vaping paraphernalia, including devices and e-liquids, is not allowed on school property or at school events.
- Students are expected to avoid vaping during school hours, even off campus. Vaping is prohibited during any school trips, activities or extracurricular events.
- Students are prohibited from distributing or selling any vaping-related products on school property or to other students.
- While on school grounds or attending school events, students are expected to refrain from behaviours that promote vaping culture and norms, including conversations, clothing, social media posts, etc.
- Students should inform staff if they witness vaping or suspect someone is violating the school vaping policy.
- Violating the school vaping policy may result in specific disciplinary actions as outlined in the policy. Potential consequences may include parental notification, mandated education sessions, suspension, or others depending on severity.
- Students struggling with nicotine addiction should proactively seek counselling and resources to quit through school nurses. The school will aim to provide supportive interventions.
- Disciplinary measures will be applied in a fair, consistent and age-appropriate manner to enforce a safe, vape-free environment.

Disposal and Safe Storage

Safe Storage

Most vapes regulate battery power to protect users, but on rare occasions batteries malfunction, discharging all their energy at once. The risk is low, but the school will store confiscated devices away from flammables in a marked container until disposal.

Disposal

Disposable vapes contain batteries and electronic components and are therefore considered Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) in UK law. Such equipment should never be disposed of in household waste and should instead be handed in to an approved collector of WEEE waste.

Larger vape stores may operate collection points or you can deliver confiscated vapes to Number One Riverside, Rochdale, OL16 1XU to be disposed of appropriately. Please contact trading.standards@rochdale.gov.uk to arrange this.

Support for Vaping Behaviour

When vapes are identified through searching and screening, or vaping behaviour is observe, or reported in the setting or school community, Bowlee Park will:

- Explore any safeguarding concerns, mental or physical health concerns, or other potential risk behaviours, such as substance use.
- Explore how any confiscated vapes were obtained and report any illegal sales to relevant authorities and partners.
- Communicate with parents or carers about the pupil's behaviour, the school's policy, and rationale for the screening, searching, confiscation and disposal of the vapes and vaping products.
- Make relevant referrals and/or provide advice and signposting to the pupil and their family.
- Responding to any safety incidents.

Pupils can get support for stopping using vapes through the school nursing team [see Annex 1].

Managing the use of cannabis and other illegal substances in vapes

Vapes can be used to consume illegal substances, such as cannabis and THC. Instances of vapes being used to consume illegal substances will be dealt with according to the Substance Misuse Policy, Behaviour Policy, and other relevant policies.

Pupils can get support for stopping using vapes to consume illegal substances, such as cannabis, through Early Break [see Annex 1].

Working with Wider Partners

Early Break Young People's Substance Misuse Services should be contacted where there is a concern about a young person vaping with illegal substances. Early Break are able to deliver interventions to the young person which may include exploration of the harms of vaping with illegal substances and if there is an underlying reason why a young person has chosen to vape in school.

School Nurses School nurses should be contacted where there is a health concern about a young person vaping and/or where support is needed to stop vaping. School nurses are able to deliver interventions to the young person which may include exploration of the harms of vaping with illegal substances and if there is an underlying reason why a young person has chosen to vape in school.

Trading Standards Trading Standards teams should be contacted on trading.standards@rochdale.gov.uk or 0808 223 1133 if schools have concerns about underage sales of vapes and/or tobacco in their local community. These teams are also keen to be informed of any activity relating to illicit vape or tobacco products. If you wish to report an incident to Trading Standards or require advice, please contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on **0808 223 1133**.

Police Illicit products may pull crime into the local area. Therefore, if appropriate, the local police may also need to be made aware of any vaping issues. This will be addressed as part of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, and behaviour policy. DfE's Searching, Screening and Confiscation, states that being in possession of a prohibited item "*may mean that the pupil is involved, or at risk of being involved, in anti-social or criminal behaviour including gang involvement, and in some cases may be involved in child criminal exploitation".*

Safeguarding A search may play a vital role in identifying pupils who may benefit from early help or a referral to the local authority children's social care services. Local safeguarding teams will be informed of any concerns, as per schools' standard escalation processes.

Public Health Please inform Rochdale Borough Council's public health team if there are any new health concerns or trends related to vaping and young people.

Annex 1

