



December 2018

Dear Parents

## Vaping

While the past few years have seen a national decline in smoking (amongst adults as well as teenagers), this has been accompanied by a rise in the use of vaping devices amongst both demographic groups. Research indicates that vaping is less harmful than tobacco, but the nicotine in e-cigarettes and vaping products (which contain a much higher nicotine content than cigarettes) makes them highly addictive, as well as containing other harmful toxicants such as carcinogens, formaldehyde and heavy metal particles. One can purchase nicotine-free vaping products, although it is illegal for these to be purchased by anyone under 18 years of age. Experimenting with nicotine-free substances may lead to taking up the addictive nicotine-based versions. There is also evidence to suggest that while vaping products may assist smokers in giving up cigarettes, they can act as a gateway to non-smokers taking up cigarettes later on. The long-term effects of vaping are not yet known, but it is apparent that it is a harmful and by no means risk-free activity. Further information on vaping and its effects can be found at the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSmEsaXLXp4>

Much is being done to educate Stoics on the effects of vaping through PSHE lessons, assemblies and house meetings, and we would ask for your support in reinforcing this message with your children.

It may also be helpful to clarify the School rules on vaping: vaping devices and e-cigarettes are banned by the School, and vaping offences are treated in the same way as smoking (ie a week of sanctions, a Saturday night detention and a fine for first offences, with escalation in punishments for further offences leading to possible suspension). Pupils who are found to be vaping indoors are liable to suspension which is the same punishment for smoking indoors. The School does not differentiate between the two because of the flagrant breach of school rules, vape chargers are usually non-compliant with fire safety regulations and we want to send out a strong message of deterrence to any pupils who may be tempted to experiment. Medical support will be provided by the School for pupils for whom vaping may have become habitual.

Thank you for your ongoing support in helping the School to educate pupils and ensure that the School rules are adhered to in this area.

Yours sincerely

Dr Anthony Wallersteiner



Stowe