



Winterton Community Academy

Newport Drive, Winterton, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN15 9QD

Telephone: (01724) 732777 Fax: (01724) 733051

email: reception@wintertoncommunityacademy.co.uk

Headteacher – Mr K Rowlands

Ref: KR/ AW

29TH April, 2022

Dear Parents / Carers,

During the last 4 years, we have worked hard to transform the culture within the school and develop an ethos where our students can be safe, happy and successful. As a result of the standards and expectations that we uphold, our school environment is a positive one and many of the negative choices that we may have experienced in the past are thankfully now rare.

It is of course important that we maintain those standards and expectations and respond appropriately when they arise. With that in mind, I am writing to advise you we have in recent weeks started to see a trend of vaping amongst a small number of our students and therefore I want to clearly communicate our position on this.

Vaping and e-cigarettes are protected by the same laws as smoking and you will no doubt be aware that the legal age for the purchase of tobacco in the UK is 18. Under no circumstances therefore are vaping products or tobacco products permitted in school. Any student found to be in possession of either will be subject to a fixed term exclusion and the products will be confiscated. To help ensure that our school is a safe environment for all children to attend, we do have the right to search our students if we have reason to believe that they are in possession of any item which may cause harm to either themselves or others.

Equally, we are conscious that young people are exposed to many high risk choices as they mature through adolescence. We do provide a level of support and education through our pastoral support and PSHE lessons to help them make the right choices to keep themselves safe. One of the risks that remains prevalent in society is that of cannabis and whilst we are not specifically aware of any circumstances where this has been brought into school, our local intelligence does suggest that some of our students may be exposed to the risk outside of school. Again, we would always hope that they make positive choices and we will do all that we can to educate them on these risks in school. Our position however is one of zero tolerance, and we will be communicating clearly to our students that we will look to a position of permanent exclusion for any young person who is handling or consuming illegal substances.

If you have any concerns that your son or daughter may be exposed to any of the risks mentioned, then we are happy to discuss this and direct you towards the appropriate support; please contact your relevant Head of Year in the first instance. There are simple swab tests available which can be used to detect the use of cannabis and in exceptional circumstances we may recommend this as a strategy. It is important that young people are able to evaluate the risks and that they understand that they are accountable for the choices that they make. I would appreciate it if you could make your child aware of the details of this communication and if you do feel that either you, or they would benefit from further advice and support, please do let us know.

Thank you as always for your support and understanding, the overwhelming majority of our students are getting it right every day and therefore, by working transparently and cooperatively, we can keep it that way and continue to develop the positive school environment that we are proud of.

Kind regards,

Mr Rowlands