

## **Vaping and Cadets**

### **Definition and Legal Status**

Vapes are electronic devices that let you inhale nicotine in an aerosol, or vapour, instead of smoke. This is done by heating a solution (e-liquid) that typically contains propylene glycol, vegetable glycerine, flavourings and nicotine.

The legal age to buy vapes in the UK is 18 years old. The law which made it illegal to sell e-cigarettes or vape juice to anyone under 18 came into force on 1 October 2015.

The current Prime Minister (Feb 2024) has set out plans to introduce a new law to stop children who turn 15 this year or younger from ever legally being sold cigarettes and banning disposable vapes.

Being cheap and easy to use, disposable vapes are also the vape of choice for children with 69% of current vapers aged 11 to 17 in UK using disposable vapes (up from 7.7% in 2021).

There are serious environmental concerns over disposable vapes. Over 5 million disposable vapes are either littered or thrown away in general waste every week. This has quadrupled in the last year.

#### Is vaping a safeguarding concern?

In terms of young people, the issue is availability. Vapes (containing nicotine) aren't supposed to be sold to under 18s: a fact at odds with the rising number of school-age users and the products' colourful packaging and child-friendly flavours.

Vapes are also linked to **exploitation**

### **National VPC Statement**

It is illegal for under 18-year-olds to Vape or purchase Vapes. Therefore, cadets are not permitted to do so, under any circumstance within the building, or when wearing their uniform. Adult leaders and or staff and volunteers are asked to refrain from doing so as above.

Leaders are asked to support the national campaign to stop Vaping in underage young people. As such, we are recognising the important role they play in ensuring cadets are aware of the risks of using vape products. This means:

- Talk openly and honestly with your cadets about the potential health hazards associated with nicotine as well as the legal age for smoking/vaping (18 years old).
- Set a good example by not smoking or vaping
- If you think cadets are already vaping it is essential to talk to them about it and provide them with the support to stop.

## Find Related Guidance

### How to help Young People stop Vaping – Padlets

Padlet with step by step guidance and resources: [Individual or group approach page](#)

[Fact Sheet](#) for Young People and Parents – Very helpful and simple to use.

[Fact Sheet](#) for Leaders – Excellent learning toolkit for open discussions

Vaping and the NHS – [Vaping Myths and the Facts](#)