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Telephone: 0208 284 9269

26/02/2024

Dear Parents/Caregivers

Subject: Warning Regarding Dangerous Vape Devices in Bexley Borough.

I hope this letter finds you well. We write to bring your attention to a concerning issue affecting our school community. There have been reports in London of young individuals experiencing health complications after using vape devices containing drugs.

We wish to emphasise the importance of informing parents about the hazards associated with unregulated vape pens, given the recent surge in related incidents. Law enforcement authorities across London, including our local police officers, have seized numerous vapes from students in the past weeks. Some of these devices are currently undergoing testing to detect dangerous Class B substances such as Spice or THC, the active component in cannabis.

It has come to our understanding that certain reusable vape pens are being illicitly filled with drugs by dealers. Officers have received information about students falling ill after using these altered devices, which are then believed to be distributed among young people through platforms like Snapchat and other social media apps.

Parents/Caregivers must be aware that unregulated vape pens pose a serious threat to the health of young individuals. Those contemplating the purchase of these unauthorised, home-filled devices are unaware of their contents and the potential dangers they pose. THC and Spice are harmful psychoactive substances that can lead to severe health problems, necessitating heightened vigilance on the part of parents/caregivers.

THC, the primary psychoactive compound in cannabis, and Spice, a group of synthetic Class B drugs, are known to mimic the effects of cannabis. Inhaling Spice through a vaping pen is particularly hazardous for young people, leading to various health issues such as breathing difficulties, chest pains, heart palpitations, seizures, extreme anxiety, paranoia, suicidal thoughts, psychosis, vomiting or diarrhoea, and acute kidney injury. In some instances, a single dose can prove fatal.

Our Bexley Borough Schools Police Officers are collaborating closely with our schools and partners to share information and intelligence on this matter so we can better understand the issues. We urge parents, guardians, and anyone with pertinent information about those supplying these vapes to contact the Police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously online at www.crimestoppers-uk.org, <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/fearless> or by calling 0800 555 111.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. Your co-operation and awareness are crucial in ensuring the safety and well-being of our children.

Sincerely,

PC Mark Watson 3327SE
Bexley Safer Schools team