

## Letter Regarding Smoking/Vaping Concerns

Dear parents and carers,

I write to share my recent concerns regarding students smoking, including electronic cigarettes (vaping).

Students have been observed smoking/vaping in and around school grounds as well as on transport to and from school.

Smoking, which now includes the use of electronic cigarettes (vaping) has been prohibited on all school premises and in administrative areas since July 1988. Smoking/vaping is also prohibited at all public transport stops and stations in NSW and on transport to and from school.

### **Health risks**

**Smoking** is a major risk factor for a variety of diseases and conditions including:

- coronary heart disease: 10 times higher risk than non-smokers
- stroke and peripheral vascular disease
- lung cancer: 20 times higher risk than non-smokers
- other cancers such as stomach, bladder, mouth and cervical cancer
- emphysema
- osteoporosis
- type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome.

**Electronic cigarettes (E-cigarettes)** can contain high levels of nicotine. Adolescence is a critical period for brain development and exposure to nicotine can have long-term health consequences, impacting memory, attention and learning.

E-cigarettes are often available in different flavours which can be appealing to young people and may expose them to chemicals and toxins such as formaldehyde, heavy metals, particulate matter and flavouring chemicals, at levels that have the potential to cause adverse health effects.

**Second-hand smoke** exposure can cause disease and premature death in children and adults who do not smoke. Specifically children exposed to second-hand smoke experience a range of upper and lower respiratory illnesses and symptoms such as colds and flu, cough, phlegm production, wheezing and pneumonia.

### **What we are doing to support your child's health**

We will continue to take appropriate opportunities to promote the Department's policy on smoking on school premises. We will also report any breaches of outdoor smoking bans to NSW Health via an [online form found here](#).

**Your support**

There are ways you can help protect your children. These include:

- Talking to your child about why smoking/vaping are harmful for them. It is never too late to have the conversation
- Learning about the different types of e-cigarettes available and the risks associated with using these products
- Setting a good example by being tobacco free
- Reporting those who are selling cigarettes and e-cigarettes to minors. You can do this by completing the online reporting [form](#) or calling the Tobacco Information Line on 1800 357 412.

**Helpful resources**

You may find the below resources helpful when talking with your child:

<https://www.icanquit.com.au/reasons-to-quit/smoking-and-your-family/what-if-your-child-smokes>

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/tobacco/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/tobacco/Pages/e-cigarette-young-people.aspx>

Please contact the school if you have any particular concerns for your child and help will be made available as soon as possible.

**Telephone Interpreter Service**

If you would like more information and you need an interpreter, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. Tell the operator the phone number you want to call and the operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with the conversation.

You will not be charged for this service.

Yours sincerely



David Osland  
Principal

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