



Ready - Respectful - Responsible

Parent Briefing 29.9.2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are only four weeks into the Autumn term and already a range of our young people have had the opportunity to work with a **professional artist, hear from a renowned author, attend a BFI seminar and take part in a leadership development challenge day**. These skim the surface of our mission to enrich the curriculum with additional experiences that expand knowledge and create memorable learning moments for young people. Bringing the outside world into school gives our young people an appreciation of the opportunities available to them and puts them directly in contact with the **wisdom of others**.

I am delighted to report that our **homework and study club** has been so successful and oversubscribed this year that we have now expanded the provision. I paid a visit to the **homework and study club** this week and was taken aback by the number of young people using our facilities constructively to manage their workload on school premises. I highly recommend its use as a forum for getting on top of homework demands but also as a **positive space** that provides a support network for assistance with adults and peers on hand to guide and help if needed. On the subject of homework I would recommend, even on days where homework is a little light, **that students spend at least 30 minutes recapping the knowledge they have picked up during the day**. This could be through:

- A Diary
- A Notebook
- Using YouTube to watch more about a particular project or check understanding
- Creating a mindmap

Or any other such method that **promotes recap and consolidation**. Further advice can be found by following [this link](#) for revision strategies on the school website. Research shows that recapping learning in any form in short regular bursts tends to **make learning 'stick'**.

I'm delighted to inform you that our **Jeans for Genes day raised £894** and continues John Colet's commitment to charitable causes. More 'MAD' events are in the pipeline so keep a lookout!

MACBETH is a key text for year 10/11 students and I'd like to draw your attention to a **local production at the Court Theatre in Tring**. This is a great opportunity to see the play and enrich student knowledge and understanding in preparation for examinations. See the flyer advert below for further information.

This week I have attached safety and **safeguarding advice around 'VAPING'**. I would urge parents to read through this advice and information as vaping issues related to society and our young people post-pandemic have become significant. The unregulated nature of the industry and the health hazards are a major concern and as adults we need to ensure we are informed about the dangers and hazards of this substance technology.

Take care, Ian Brierly -Headteacher

REMINDERS & NOTICES

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **Year 5/6 Open Evening** - 5 October (6.00-8.30pm)
- **Year 11 Consultation Evening** - 2 November (4.00-7.30pm)
- **Half-term finishes on Thursday 19 October** and we **return to school on Tuesday 31 October**.

SAFEGUARDING LEADS & INFORMATION



Mr Crawford
Deputy Headteacher
DSL



**Be Safe,
Be Kind**



Mrs Rowland
*Operational Safeguarding Lead
DDSL

County Lines

This week, Mr Crawford has been speaking to all year groups in assembly about County Lines, and how Buckinghamshire and the surrounding Home Counties are particularly at risk to this practice. The purpose of this assembly was to question:

- What is it?
- Why is it prevalent in the home counties?
- Why are young people at risk of exploitation?
- What can students do and where do they go if they have a concern?

For parents who are unsure about what County Lines refers to, it can be defined as: ***...where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries (although not exclusively), usually by children or vulnerable people who are coerced into it by gangs. The 'County Line' is the mobile phone line used to take the orders of drugs. (National Crime Agency, 2023)***

If parents have any concerns about this practice or, believe that any young person at John Colet School might be at risk, then please do contact one of the members of our Safeguarding Team via safeguarding@johncolet.co.uk

MENTAL HEALTH & PARENT SUPPORT



With the term well underway, our programme of webinars for you has plenty to offer. Explore our diverse series of webinars below, and follow the links to register.

October 4, 2023 - 10:30 BST [The Story of Afro Hair – Book](#)

[Discussion with Kandace Chimbiri and Professor Damien Page](#) Join Kandace Chimbiri and Professor Damien Page as they discuss Kandace's book 'The Story of Afro Hair, 5,000 Years of History, Fashion and Styles', which details the fascinating 5,000-year history of Afro hair. This webinar will be of interest to anyone wishing to learn more about Black history and how to celebrate children's individuality and identity.

November 14, 2023 - 19:00 GMT [Intercultural Couple Relationships with Dr Reenee Singh](#)

Intercultural, interracial and interfaith couples are on the rise all over the world. In this webinar, we'll look at what the latest research tells us about intercultural relationships, the discussion around them, and a few practical tools and techniques which both teachers and intercultural parents will be able to adopt.

November 21, 2023 - 19:30 GMT [Understanding Girls with Dr Tara Porter](#)

Clinical psychologist and author Dr Tara Porter explores why girls are struggling with their mental health so much at present and the potential underlying causes. In our webinar, she will discuss factors which may contribute to girls' suffering, and provide parents with ideas for supporting their daughters.

December 5, 2023 - 19:30 GMT [An Insight into Auditory Processing Disorder \(APD\) with Kate King](#) Difficulty in processing what we hear can have a significant impact on learning, daily living and social interaction. APD can be hard to identify, sharing traits with both ASD and ADHD. In this webinar, Kate King explains what parents and teachers might observe and provides practical strategies to support learners.

December 7, 2023 - 19:00 GMT [Mistakes and Mattering with Dr Kathy Weston](#)

Join Dr Kathy Weston as she talks about the importance of normalising mistakes in family life to reduce academic anxiety, and allow children an optimal chance of doing well in school. She looks at current research in this area and the practical ideas it offers to parents.

CAR PARKING ISSUES

It has been brought to our attention that a small minority of parents are using the **local doctors surgery car park** to drop off their children. One morning this week the staff from the surgery, including the doctors, couldn't access the surgery car park due to people using it when they shouldn't. - Could I remind you to be mindful of the car parking situation and where feasible ensure students walk to school (very healthy!) or cycle

SAFEGUARDING ADVICE FOR PARENTS

At The National College, we provide everything educators and trusted adults need to strengthen, manage and evidence their professional, and personal development, in one place, on one platform. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.thenationalcollege.co.uk for further information and resources.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about THE DANGERS OF VAPING

Data collected for ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) shows an increase in 11 to 17-year-olds experimenting with vaping: from 7.7% in 2022 to 11.6% in 2023. It's concerning that these age-restricted products are getting into the hands of under 18s as most contain nicotine, which can be detrimental to brain development and cause long-term addiction. Some schools have reported students having their focus in lessons affected by nicotine cravings; vaping in school toilets; and even trying vapes found in their local park. Raising awareness of the risks among young people could help to prevent these problems from escalating and reduce the number of young vapers.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

NICOTINE ADDICTION

Since they were initially developed to help people stop smoking, the vast majority of vape liquids contain nicotine. Not only is this a highly addictive stimulant, but it can also have detrimental effects on brain development in the under-25s. Nicotine can decrease the ability to pay attention, weaken impulse control, affect mood and increase the likelihood of substance addiction as an adult.

WHAT IS VAPING?

Vapes contain a liquid (vape juice/e-liquid) that is heated by a battery and evaporates, creating a chemical vapour which the user inhales. They can be **disposable** (once the liquid or battery runs out, the vape is thrown away) or **rechargeable** (the user replaces the liquid and recharges the battery on demand). Most vape liquids contain nicotine and other chemicals.

LACK OF AWARENESS

A proportion of young people tend to view vapes as harmless, mainly because of the products' appearance and the perception (often strengthened on social media) that "vaping is cool" and on trend. In many instances, young people don't fully appreciate the concept of addiction: that is, they aren't adequately aware of the risk of becoming hooked on nicotine before trying a vape.

POTENTIAL TOXICITY

Many vape liquids have been found to contain "heavy" metals such as lead, tin, nickel and (in some cases) mercury – all of which are toxic. These metals often take the form of tiny shards inside a device's liquid tank, which are then inhaled into the body. Some media reports have suggested these metals are particularly prevalent in illegally imported vapes which don't comply with UK regulations.

UNCLEAR LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

The liquids in vapes also contain solvents, which can create carcinogens at the point of evaporation. Vapes were only introduced into the UK in 2005 – and, because of the relatively short timeframe involved, there is insufficient medical evidence to assess the long-term harms that regular inhalation of these chemical fluids might have on the human body.

ATTRACTIVE PACKAGING

The packaging of many disposable vapes is very appealing to young people, frequently echoing the colours and flavours of the sweets or fizzy drinks they're used to buying. There's a relative lack of regulation around vape marketing, and vaping is often depicted positively on social media – which can lead young people to develop favourable views of vaping and overlook the possible harms.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In the UK alone, around 1.3 million disposable vapes go to landfill every week. Due to such significant numbers of these products not being recycled, their components – a lithium battery and a chemical liquid – pose a toxic risk to the environment, the ecosystem and wildlife. Vapes are also predominantly made of plastic and metal; materials that, of course, do not naturally decompose.

WIDER HEALTH CONCERNS

Studies are already showing a link between vaping and oral health problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. This is because vaping reduces the amount of saliva in the mouth, while increasing bacteria – resulting in bad breath and a build-up of plaque. There are also concerns that, in some users, vaping could lead to the development of asthma, a persistent cough and breathing difficulties.

UNREGULATED VAPING PRODUCTS

The number of retailers willing to sell vapes to under-18s is a worry, as the chance of these products being unregulated (and therefore containing illegal chemicals and higher levels of nicotine) is high. A related concern is that the mechanisms inside unregulated products are unlikely to have been tested and safety checked – presenting a possible fire risk if the liquid and battery come into contact.

SCARCE INFORMATION

The lack of information about the ingredients and potentially harmful chemicals in a vape is troubling. Some vape fluids (unregulated in the UK) contain traces of nuts, which can cause an allergic reaction or anaphylactic shock. To date, medical warnings aren't required on vape packaging – with only medical disclaimers being found on the websites of the various brands.

VAGUE INGREDIENTS LISTS

Early research has suggested that the chemicals used to produce some strawberry and banana flavour e-liquids can kill cells in the blood vessels and heart. These ingredients aren't identified on the packaging, instead falling under the umbrella term "natural and artificial flavourings". Such vague listings mean that consumers aren't aware of the liquid's content so can't identify potential risks.

Meet Our Expert

Run by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Healthy Schools Service (commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council), Catch Your Breath is a school-based project aimed at young people. Its goal is to embed a positive, coordinated approach among both primary and secondary schools in discouraging smoking and vaping behaviours.



Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-65809924>



www.thenationalcollege.co.uk



@thenatcollege



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Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 27.09.2023

UNIFORM

- **Shoes** - Please check that they will conform - there are diagrams on the website to help.
- **Piercings** - the rule is for a small, single, plain stud in the earlobe of each ear. Getting additional piercings that are not healed in time for the start of term means spending time in isolation until the item can be removed.
- Optional plain black v-neck jumper (worn with, not instead of the blazer). **A number of black sweatshirts have crept in. These are not acceptable.**
- **Plain outdoor coat**, no large logos. So no hoodies, zipped or otherwise.
- **No visible body art**, please ensure holiday tattoos are removed.
- Clear nail varnish may be worn but **fingernails must be short and nail extensions of any kind are not permitted.**
- **False eyelashes are not permitted.**
- **Jewellery** (except a watch and earrings as stated above) is not permitted. In the case of jewellery and other accessories, the student will be asked to remove the item, which will be confiscated. A parent/carer will then need to come into school to collect the item in line with school policy.

The full uniform policy can be viewed in the policies section of the school website.

LOCAL UPDATES / EVENTS

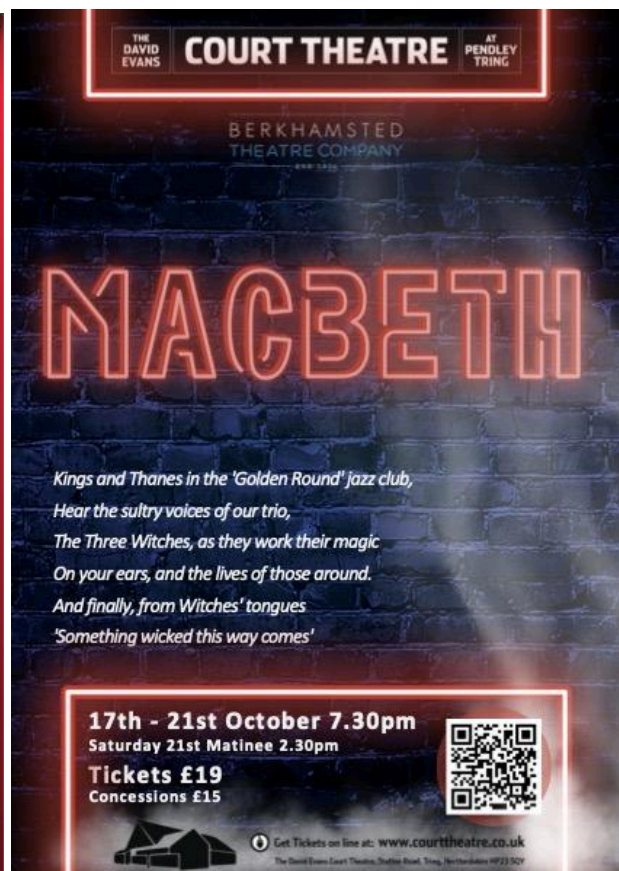


Save the Date

Wendover Christmas Celebration Event
Saturday 2nd December, 4 - 7pm
on Manor Waste

Ellesborough Silver Band
at the December Local Produce Market
Saturday 16th December, 10am - 2pm
on Manor Waste

Carols Around the Tree
with Chinnor Silver Band
Friday 22nd December, 6.30pm - 7.30pm
on Manor Waste



THE DAVID EVANS COURT THEATRE AT PENDLEY TRING


BERKHAMSTED THEATRE COMPANY

MACBETH

*Kings and Thanes in the 'Golden Round' jazz club,
Hear the sultry voices of our trio,
The Three Witches, as they work their magic
On your ears, and the lives of those around.
And finally, from Witches' tongues
'Something wicked this way comes'*

17th - 21st October 7.30pm
Saturday 21st Matinee 2.30pm

Tickets £19
Concessions £15



Get Tickets on line at: www.courttheatre.co.uk

The David Evans Court Theatre, Station Road, Tring, Berkhamsted HP23 3DZ