



AUTUMN TERM 2023

# *Pastoral and Safeguarding Newsletter*

WHITBURN COFE ACADEMY

## **Welcome to Our New Year 7s**

Year 7s have made a fantastic start to their time at Whitburn Church of England Academy. Their transition to the school began last academic year with visits from our staff to primary school, transition days and our Summer School.



So far in Year 7 students have enjoyed many additional activities on top of daily school life.

- Fundraising and enterprise opportunities
- School nurse information sessions
- Assembly of Light and other collective worship opportunities
- Form Representative selection
- Musical Performances





### Attendance

Regular school attendance is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life. The aim should be to attend 100% of the time. Students who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams. Good attendance also shows potential employers that a young person is reliable. Research suggests that students who attend school regularly could also be at less risk of getting involved in antisocial behaviour or crime. Below is a table showing how children's percentage attendance equates to the amount of school time missed.

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent days	Equivalent sessions	Equivalent weeks	Equivalent lessons missed
95%	9 days	18 sessions	2 weeks	45 lessons
90%	19 days	38 sessions	4 weeks	95 lessons
85%	29 days	58 sessions	6 weeks	145 lessons
80%	38 days	72 sessions	8 weeks	190 lessons
75%	48 days	96 sessions	10 weeks	240 lessons
70%	57 days	114 sessions	11.5 weeks	285 lessons
65%	67 days	134 sessions	13.5 weeks	335 lessons

**17 days absent from school a year could mean a drop in a GCSE grade in all subjects!**

We have 181 students currently who still have 100% attendance since September – well done to those students!!

ATTENDANCE LEAGUE 2022-23											
YEAR 7 (points)		YEAR 8 (points)		YEAR 9 (points)		YEAR 10 (points)		YEAR 11 (points)		YEAR 12 (points)	
W	27	W	28	W	19	W	28	W	18	W	18
H	30	H	34	H	12	H	36	H	18	H	18
I	25	I	31	I	46	I	7	I	21	I	21
T	23	T	30	T	20	T	31	T	58	T	58
B	51	B	23	B	24	B	14	B	31	B	31
U	42	U	39	U	29	U	15	U	13	U	13
R	22	R	18	R	9	R	21	R	15	R	15
N	34	N	40	N	23	N	28	N	22	N	22

## Anti-Bullying Week

During **Anti-Bullying week** from 13<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> November, all year groups participated in a range of activities looking at issues around what bullying means to us, how banter can turn into something more hurtful, and what we can do to stop bullying. Students actively participated in 'odd socks' day on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November, to celebrate what makes us all unique.



**Themed assemblies that have taken place with our Pastoral Leads this term:**

- Remembrance day
- Anti-Bullying week 'Make a noise'
- Road Safety Week
- Online sexual offences
- Consent
- Alcohol
- E Safety





### **Mason French Memorial Service**

This term we gathered together to remember the life of Mason French. Having to say goodbye to someone we love is always very difficult. Saying goodbye to someone as young as Mason has been even more challenging. We came together as a whole school community, and shared laughter as some of Mason's friends shared lovely memories of him and the antics they got up to together. The service reminded students of the happy times as well as acknowledging their feelings of sadness and grief. Mason's family joined us for the service and told us how happy they are that Mason's legacy lives on at Whitburn.



Our October Charity Day was for Bikeability as part of Mason French Memorial Week. Mason loved his bike and this charity supports our local area with bike road safety. Year 8 had yum yums available in their break service and on the Friday we held a non-uniform day and the ever-popular karaoke, raising £1381.87. James Johnson in Year 8 did a superb job of compèring the show with tremendous confidence!

### **Harvest**

After a lovely Harvest assembly arranged by Miss Rogers, Key to Life were thrilled with our harvest donation. Sixth form held a non-uniform, raising £82.25 and staff donated another £10. A full mini-bus of House Captains, senior prefects, Deputy Principal Students and Sixth Form Charity Reps took along or donation and we had it labelled and sorted in to categories ready to go straight in to emergency food parcels.





We will be running a continual 'Rolling Harvest' – watch this space!

**Year 8** had a visit from Miriam, a member of the Islamic Diversity Centre. This was a very informative session, with students engaging really well and demonstrating a great amount of prior knowledge. The students asked very intelligent and thoughtful questions, and showed huge respect for the beliefs and practises of other cultures, which may differ from their own.



### **Y11 Careers Fayre**

Year 11 had the opportunity to meet with various post 16 providers this term, and spent the session asking questions, getting further information and collecting free pens! The external providers were impressed with the student's mature approaches and attitudes towards their 'next steps' and commented how pleasant and polite they were. Year 11 have also had many assemblies from various colleges and sixth forms to ensure each student is able to make the right choice for September.





### **Year 11 Careers Interviews**

Following on from the careers fayre, Mr Moore, our careers advisor, has been meeting with all year 11 students individually to discuss potential paths into further education. Students have found these helpful and will be much more informed when making applications.

### **Remembrance**

In 2022, Oliver (Y10) took part in a national competition with The Western Front Association and his piece was chosen as one of the winners. His entry comprised of an historical written article and poster designed to help recruitment into the army and as part of the prize, Oliver's entry was published in their June 2023 magazine. He was also selected to lay a wreath at the cenotaph in London on Saturday November 11<sup>th</sup> 2023. What an honour! Oliver met with Mr Crowe to discuss incorporating the school badge into the wreath and below is a picture of Oliver in London before laying the wreath at the cenotaph. We are so proud of Oliver and his achievement.



### **Christmas Lunches**

Our annual Christmas dinner week was held w/b 11<sup>th</sup> December – and despite the missing crackers, the meal and year group get togethers did not disappoint. Well done to those of you who won a prize!

### **Year 7**



Year 8



Year 9





**Year 10**



**Year 11**



### **Christmas Gift Appeal**

This year we have supported Key2Life with their Christmas Gift Appeal. 8R did a tremendous job keeping the gifts organised while House Captains focused on their mock



exams.

These gifts and hampers will be matched to families in our local area who access the foodbank. Marie was very happy to collect a good half a van load of Christmas gifts, food, onsies and dressing gowns from us, along with £60 from the Sixth Form.

Instead of buying Christmas gifts for each other this year, some of our staff made a donation towards the “Key 2 Life” foodbank. We raised £390 in total which bought a lot of provisions for those in need.



If your family are struggling financially and are in need of support, please do contact your child's Pastoral Lead, in confidence. Details on how to access Key's services such as the foodbank [can be found here](#). Key also have a Community Bus (a shop on wheels), which offers big savings on groceries. The route can be found here on their [Facebook page](#).

### New Members of Staff

We gave a warm welcome to 3 experienced members of staff this term:

**Year 9 Inclusion Support Assistant:**  
**Mrs Sarah Murray**

**SEN Support Assistants:**  
**Miss Lauren Newham**

**SEN Support Assistants:**  
**Miss Daisy Bradbury**



### **Student Voice – School Council and Student Ambassadors**

This term has seen form representatives selected from each tutor group and school council formed from two form representatives from each year. Each year group have identified their own areas of priority for the academic year ahead and will take a turn at setting and leading the agendas. Year 11 have already led a meeting with a focus on preventing homophobic bullying and how to make the corridors a calmer and safer space for all students.

Year 7 have completed a Teams survey to give their views on their transition to the academy. This was overwhelmingly positive with 95% of students feeling they have settled well into Whitburn Church of England Academy.

### **School Council members 2023-2024**



**Emotional Resilience Team**



South Tyneside have an Emotional Resilience Team and 12 students have been referred since September for 1:1 work with Jade Purves from this Team.

### **Skittles Club**

We now have two different sessions for Skittles.

Wednesday lunch time is for Year 7 Students and Friday Lunch for Year 8's and above

The club offers a safe space and support for LGBTQ+A young people.

Please see Miss Kassapian if you have any questions about Skittles Club.

### **Equine Therapy**

On Friday 8th December the school had a visit from Macaroni the Shetland pony.

The therapeutic benefits of animals are well known, with horses being used to tackle a wide number of emotional and psychological issues. Several studies have shown that spending time with animals can reduce problems such as depression, stress and anxiety, and increase positive thinking and happiness levels. Interacting with animals can increase self-esteem, self-confidence and levels of aspiration.

Some of our students had the opportunity to spend time with Macaroni. He also visited the older people at their coffee morning sparking lots of conversations around how horses have been used in the area over the years.



### **Operation Teacup**

On December 8th, we invited some of the residents in our community to attend a private showing of our Christmas Concert. Our Care in the Community Ambassadors took the



lead in this, serving our guests tea, coffee and cakes while they enjoyed the musical entertainment provided by our school choir and orchestra. The event was very well received and planning has already begun for our next event. Watch this space!



### **Youth Parliament**

Miss George took 6 of the Year 9 form class representatives to a 'Let's debate' event at South Tyneside Town Hall organised by the South Tyneside Participation team. We had a great morning putting our debate skills to good use. We were even given the experience of a live debate in the council chambers! Amazing !



### **School Nurse 'Drop-Ins'**

School Nurses have offered lunch time events to promote "chat health" where students can text a school nurse for health advice for topics such as Physical Health, Sexual Health, Emotional health, self harm, Bullying, Healthy Eating, alcohol, smoking and vaping



and drugs.

13/09/2023 Chat Health and Transition

18/10/2023 School Health Promotion Team Drop in - Dangers of smoking and Vaping

16/11/2023 School Nurses Health Promotion Team - Stress and Bullying

14/12/2023 School Nurses Health Promotion Team Topic - Alcohol and Risk Taking Behaviour

**Next Topic for Jan 24th Drop in – New year – New You!**



### **South Tyneside Young Carers**

Young Carers continue to have a drop in every month at school in Room 30. Anyone who is a Young Carer or thinks they might be a Young Carer can go along to the drop in.

The dates for the Spring Term Drop Ins 2024 are:

16th January, 6th February, 12th March

Young Carers Card

South Tyneside are introducing a new Young Carers Card for all Registered Young Carers.

The idea is that Young Carers will have a card that they can show to professionals to discreetly let them know about caring responsibilities without having to repeatedly share personal details and show that they might require some additional support.

Please see Miss Kassapian if you have any questions about Young Carers.





## Welcome to TEN South Tyneside Young Carers Service

### A Little Bit About Us

South Tyneside Young Carers Project has been delivering support to Young Carers and families for over 15 years, with the aim of improving their quality of life and reducing the risk of isolation.

We passionately believe that every Young Carer should be able to enjoy their childhood and have a supportive environment in which they can retreat from the pressures they often face.

Our team of experienced and caring staff work closely with local partners and schools to support Young Carers through a range of services including; age appropriate respite activities, school holidays activity programme, respite activity packs, personal development workshops, residential short breaks and small group sessions. We also provide support to Young Adult Carers support, one to one and emotional support, family support, adult support sessions, signposting and information advice and guidance. These services provide help that would otherwise not be available, contributing significantly to the health and wellbeing of our Young Carers and families.

### Meet the Team

Our small but mighty team are here to support our Young Carers and families, these will be the faces you see at clubs, activity pack collections and deliveries.

You can easily reach any of the team who will be happy to have a chat and tell you lots more about what the service has to offer.

Email us at: [admin@styoungcarers.org.uk](mailto:admin@styoungcarers.org.uk) or [levi@styoungcarers.org.uk](mailto:levi@styoungcarers.org.uk)

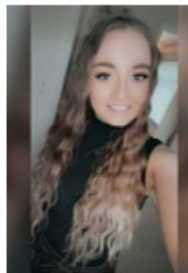
Call us on: 07984678878 - 07387109388 – 07772482330

[www.southtynesideyoungcarers.org](http://www.southtynesideyoungcarers.org)

Follow us on



**Levi**  
Service  
Manager



**Jayne**  
Activity Officer



**Tracey**  
Activity Officer



**Katherine**  
Activity Officer



**Rachel**  
Project Support

### What we do

The support we offer provides Young Carers with an opportunity to enjoy a break away from their caring role, meet new friends in similar situations to them and have fun ! Our hybrid service provides support to Young Carers and their families both face-to-face and online so there is something for everyone to get involved with.

### We offer:

- Referral to Humankind for a Young Carer Assessment
- Welcome Pack and Initial Meeting
- Age Appropriate respite activity sessions
- School holiday activity programme
- Respite Activity Packs
- Residential Breaks
- Small group sessions
- Homework help
- Drop in's and peer support
- One to one sessions and emotional support
- Personal development workshops (DofE)
- Educational Support
- Family Support ie family activity days, information, advice, guidance, adult support sessions
- Young Adult Carers Support (Aged 16-24)
- Attendance to meetings (EH, CIN, CP)
- Grant Applications

Here's a little idea of the clubs and services we are currently operating that you could get involved with .....

### Meet some more of the Professionals working with us in the Academy

At Whitburn we are very lucky to work with some fantastic Professionals and Organisations.

Here is a bit more information about some of the people we work with!

#### Jane Spour BA (Hons) PCET

#### Job Title - Educational Practitioner

Hi my company is called REAL which stands for Relationship Education and Learning. My role within the school is to support and deliver bespoke educational interventions to young people on a variety of issues that impact in their lives. I cover

work on a variety of topics such as Healthy Relationships within their own family, personal relationships , peers and friends. I cover work on Mindfulness which teaches young people techniques and strategies to support their wellbeing. Prevention work is also a subject I cover to enable pupils to have early conversations around their risks and explore the consequences to their behaviour. The young people who are referred into the company by pastoral staff are informed that the sessions are confidential unless I'm concerned about them. They are informed the information will then be shared with school. Pupils are also told the appointment are voluntary. I support the LGBTQ + group called Skittles on a Wednesday lunchtime. I am in school Tuesday 9.00-3.20 Wednesday 9.00-12.30 Thursday 9.00-3.20



**Billy Spour**

**Job Title: Educational Practitioner**

My company designs and delivers bespoke educational interventions to young people aged between 5- 18 years of age, covering a range of social issues. The program is planned in partnership with the young person to enable their investment from the outset and designed in such a way that the young person experiences penny drop moments to affect behavioural change. I support the LGBTQ + group called Skittles on a Friday lunchtime.

I'm in school:

Monday 1.20- 3.20

Tuesday 1.20- 3.20

Thursday 1.20- 3.20

Friday 9.15- 3.20



## Matrix Service

**Who are you?**

Hi, we are the Matrix Young People's Service!



### **What do you do?**

We are a confidential service who work with young people who may be experiencing challenges with drugs or alcohol, as well as supporting associated sexual health, mental health, family, and relationship needs.

### **Do you work with parents/carers?**

Yes, we have a family support worker who can work with parents/carers of those young people who may be experiencing challenges – supporting with areas such as boundaries/rules, communication, and advice.

### **When are you in my school?**

You may have seen us around your school, either delivering information about our service or working with young people. We can offer sessions to young people at home or out in the community, at school or at our Matrix office (7 Burrow Street, South Shields, NE331PP).

### **Can I work with you?**

You can access our service if you are aged 18 or under and live in South Tyneside.

### **How do I refer to the service?**

It's really easy! You or your parent/carer can either call and speak with a worker to share your concerns or you can speak with a professional (school staff, social worker, etc) and they can email a completed referral form directly to us. It is important that you are honest about substance use so we can best support your needs.

### **How can I find out more information?**

You can call our office to speak with a worker on 01914975637 or visit our website <http://www.ypmatrix.org/>

Matrix have recently been into school to do a PSHE session for some of our Year 10 students. Here are some of our team:



### **Bright Futures – New After School Drop In**

Please see Miss Kassapian if you would like any more information about the Bright Futures Young Women's Drop in.



Room 7

## YOUNG WOMEN'S AFTER SCHOOL DROP IN

Meet new people

Non-judgemental environment

Informal chats

Build your self confidence

Ask questions

Feel empowered

EVERY TUESDAY

3:20 - 4PM

Starting 16th January



### Kooth and Qwell

Kooth is an online support service for young people and gives them online access to counsellors for 1:1 support, access to a judgement free forum board to get advice and support, and access to positive mental health support. Kooth will be coming in to do assemblies in the New Year about their services and a specific assembly for Year 11's on managing exam stress.

Qwell is a free digital well being support for adults in the UK.

Both Kooth and Qwell are open over Christmas at the following times and dates;

**kooth**

### Kooth's live chat hours over the holiday period

24th December (Christmas Eve) - 4pm - 8pm  
25th December (Christmas Day) - 4pm - 8pm  
26th December (Boxing Day) - 4pm - 8pm  
31st December (New Years Eve) - 4pm - 8pm  
1st January (New Years Day) - 4pm - 8pm

Other days over the holiday period will follow our usual live chat hours of 12pm - 10pm on weekdays and 6pm - 10pm on weekends.

**kooth.com**



### Year 7 Survey

Our Student Voice survey was recently sent out to all Year 7 students. The survey highlighted some areas for development which will be discussed further by the student council but overall the results were very positive with 95% of students saying they feel they have settled well into Whitburn Church of England Academy and 82% have joined an



extra-curricular club.

One of our favourite quotes from the survey was:

*"I am enjoying the school and everyone makes me feel welcome, and the lessons are interesting."*

### **Safeguarding**

A reminder that we have a team of 12 Designated Safeguarding Leads in school; this includes members of the senior team as well as the Pastoral Year Leads in school.

The Designated Safeguarding Teacher is Mrs Tennet and the Main Deputy is Miss Kassapian. The Designated Governor is Mr D Coombes.

### **E-Safety**

An ongoing concern for all of our young people is the mis-use of social media and exposure to harmful messages/narratives on-line. We recognise the importance of developing 'healthier habits' when using our phones and the Internet and we continue to speak to our students in tutor time assemblies and in class about keeping themselves safe. Information and helpful guidance for parents/carers is in abundance on-line. You can find: [More information heres](#) information here and some useful information on: [Social Media Tips](#)

### **PSHE – an overview of what each year group has been looking at/discussing**

#### **Year 7**

Young Carers  
Anti-Racism  
Mental Health

#### **Year 8**

Prevent/Extremism  
E-Safety: PREVENT  
Healthy Lifestyle  
Relationships  
Mental Wellbeing  
Alcohol

#### **Year 9**

Gambling Awareness  
E-Safety  
Teenage Cancer  
Positive Bystander  
Rights in Relationships  
Gender Stereotypes

#### **Year 10**

Relationships/Friendships  
Oddballs  
Mental Health  
'Consent'  
Banking System  
Knife Crime

#### **Year 11**

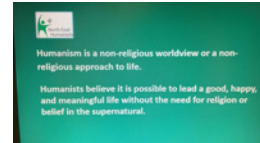
Healthy Relationships  
First Aid  
Careers and Networking  
E-Safety

### **Sixth Form World Views Programme**

We kicked off this year's 'World Views' programme with a visit from Kate and Ian from North East Humanists. The series comprises three sessions in each of Year 12 and 13 which aims to open students' minds to other world views. As they become young adults and enter the workplace they can expect to be working alongside, treating, teaching, policing, representing etc many people who have different views to themselves. We are hoping to help students prepare for their futures by learning more about other belief systems. Humanists Kate and Ian shared their story, their main beliefs and ran a session which asked students a series of questions aimed at making students think. Feedback from the speakers was excellent and they were really impressed with our young people.

Year 13 had their first session with Dr Tim Dixon. After working for several years as a chaplain in the prison service, he is now a chaplain in a mental health hospital and he

shared his experiences from both backgrounds in what was a fascinating and very thought-provoking session. We had some impressive contributions from our students throughout. Other guests in this series include a Buddhist monk, a University chaplain and a speaker from the Islamist Diversity Centre.



### **Sixth Form Road Safety Event, Wednesday 8th November**

We marked Road Safety week by hosting a large-scale event, 'Arrive Alive' operated jointly by Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue, the North East Ambulance Service and Northumbria Police. Starting with some stalls where students could test their reaction/braking times (with and without 'beer goggles'!), get breathalysed, rank drinks for alcohol content and see an ambulance crew's kit, the main event was a talk delivered by representatives from each of the services. Mixing live testimony from their professional experience, with a quiz that students participated in, students were introduced to the 'fatal four' – speed, seatbelts, alcohol and drugs. Surprising to (almost) all was that a pint of lager contains more units of alcohol than a shot of tequila or a double G&T! Students were clearly impacted by some of the testimony and especially by a clip that told the story of a young boy hit at speed by a young driver who failed a road-side drugs test. We hope this event has made students think and will change behaviours.



## **Special feature: Teenage Vaping – Information for Parents/Carers**

No doubt you will have seen much in the news recently around the issues of teenage vaping. This will undoubtedly raise alarm bells for parents/carers, with many stories circulating about vapes being confiscated in schools, and growing fears of the damage vaping products could do in young hands.

### **How Does Vaping Work?**

E-cigarettes (or "vape pens") heat a liquid until it becomes a vapor, which is inhaled. The liquid (called e-liquid or "vape juice") can contain nicotine or marijuana distillate or oil. E-cigarettes can be refillable or pre-filled with cartridges containing the e-liquid. The pre-filled e-cigarettes (called "Puff Bars") are designed for one-time use. After taking a certain number of "puffs," the user throws the device away. There are also vapes being sold that contain THC - the active ingredient in cannabis. Vapes containing THC are illegal in the UK. THC is a Class B drug, like cannabis. This means it is illegal to have it, give it away or sell it. This could lead to prison or unlimited fines. There is no regulation of the contents of



illegal vapes – you have no idea what other ingredients there are, or their strength.

(Source: Frank)

### **What are the health risks?**

- addiction: E-cigarettes contain nicotine, a drug that's highly addictive. You don't have to vape every day to get addicted.
- anxiety and depression: Nicotine makes anxiety and depression worse. It also affects memory, concentration, self-control, and attention, especially in developing brains.
- becoming a smoker: Young people who vape are more likely to start smoking regular (tobacco) cigarettes and may be more likely to develop other addictions in the future.
- sleep problems
- exposure to cancer-causing chemicals
- chronic bronchitis
- lung damage that can be life-threatening

Other health effects are possible that we don't yet know about. Vaping hasn't been around that long, so its health risks aren't all known. The most recent data from the NHS shows that in 2022:

- 9% of 11-15 year olds regularly vape. It is assumed that this figure is increasing.
- 21% of 15 year old girls in England regularly vape – that's roughly 1 in 5.
- Most young people don't smoke or vape.
- Vapes and vaping products containing nicotine, like tobacco, are age restricted. It is illegal to sell them to under 18s or for an adult to buy them on their behalf. (Source: NHS Digital )

### **Why do young people vape?**

It's the nicotine in a vape that gives the 'buzz' – leads to adrenaline release, increase in heart rate and blood pressure and faster breathing. Nicotine also stimulates pleasure and reward centres in brain. Longer term users build up a tolerance to these effects, and may experience: mild stimulation, increased ability to concentrate, relaxation, temporary reduction in urge to vape.

### **How Do I Know if My Child Is Vaping?**

Start by asking your child in a non-judgmental, concerned way if they have tried vaping. You want to encourage conversation, not shut it down. Even if you don't think your kids vape, talk about it with them anyway so they know it's unhealthy.

Signs of vaping include:

- new health issues such as coughing or wheezing
- e-cigarette supplies, like cartridges or other suspicious looking items
- new smells (some flavourings are banned, but others are in nicotine and marijuana vapes — so parents might notice fruity or sweet scents)

### **Can you become addicted to vapes?**

Yes - Nicotine is an addictive substance and you may become dependent on vapes,

particularly if you vape regularly. Giving up nicotine can be difficult because the body has to get used to functioning without it. You may get withdrawal symptoms such as cravings, irritability, anxiety, trouble concentrating, headaches and other mental and physical symptoms.

### **Is vaping a problem at Whitburn C of E Academy?**

Like all schools in the UK, our Academy has seen a rapid rise in the prevalence of vaping. The availability of cheap, attractive and disposable vapes has helped drive this increase, along with the ever-present influence of social media.

We have had to adapt very quickly from a situation of next to zero incidents of smoking in the past, to becoming aware that some students have and are vaping on school site.

We have confiscated an array of vapes. These are shown below. As you can see, the vapes come in variety of sizes, designs and flavours.



As vapes have become disposable they have also become smaller and much easier to conceal and can also easily be mistaken for make up or pens. Some children are hiding these on their person, eg. in their underwear. The age restriction labelling on vapes is clear and carries health warnings similar to cigarettes.





Despite restrictions on advertising and promotion, many vape manufacturers clearly target young people in the packaging, presentation and flavouring.



### What is our Academy doing about vaping?

Like all schools, we have to take drugs, alcohol, smoking and vaping very seriously. These are all either illegal or age restricted items for young people. We have a duty of care to protect our students and their families from such illegal activity.

- If a student is seen vaping at school or on the journey to or from school then we will take it very seriously – parents/carers will be informed and the student will be suspended from school.
- If students are behaving suspiciously (for example, occupying toilet cubicles with other students) or it is reported to us that students are in possession of vaping (or other illicit) equipment, then we will take this very seriously. This will involve us asking the student to empty their pockets and bags. Like many other schools, we also have access to detectors designed to detect vapes being carried by students

(any search and confiscation will be carried out in line with the DFE guidance on Searching, screening and confiscation)

- If a student is found to be in possession of vaping (or other illicit) equipment, then we will take this very seriously. The items will be confiscated, parents/carers will be informed, and the student will be suspended.
- If a student persists in vaping related incidents in school the student could be permanently excluded from school.
- On an everyday basis, we have increased our supervision of student toilet areas, although of course, we cannot control what goes on behind cubicle doors.
- We will continue to educate and encourage our young people to make good choices and our first assemblies back in the New Year will have a focus on smoking and Vaping.

### **What can you do as parents and carers?**

Take a look at this [leaflet](#) which gives more information and suggests ways to talk to your child about these issues. Watch this [Video](#) that we have shown the students which provides a good summary of the key issues and messages. Be vigilant in looking out for vaping equipment – our experience is that this is an issue that has affected students from Years 7 - 13. Don't assume that your child is not involved – peer pressure and social media are extremely influential, and we have found students to be highly creative in their deception.

#### **How Can Kids and Teens Quit Vaping?**

For those who want to quit, it can help to:

- Decide why they want to quit and write it down or put it in their phone. They can look at the reason(s) when they feel the urge to vape.
- Pick a day to stop vaping. They can put it on the calendar and tell supportive friends and family that they're quitting on that day.
- For some people, chewing sugar-free gum or lollipops can help distract them from cravings.
- Get rid of all vaping supplies.
- Download tools (such as apps and texting programs) to their phone that can help with cravings and give encouragement while they're trying to stop vaping. Truth Initiative's This Is Quitting texting program, for example, can help young people quit vaping. Smokefree.gov also offers free apps and other tools that can help someone trying to quit smoking or vaping.
- Understand withdrawal. Nicotine addiction leads to very strong cravings for nicotine, especially in the first few days after stopping. It also can lead to headaches; feeling tired, cranky, angry, or depressed; trouble concentrating or sleeping; hunger; and restlessness. These problems get better over the following days and weeks.

Further help and support:

[e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/SGR\\_Ecig\\_ParentTipsheet\\_508.pdf](https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/SGR_Ecig_ParentTipsheet_508.pdf) Vapes | FRANK ([talktofrank.com](http://talktofrank.com))



### **Upcoming events in Spring 2024:**

**Mocks** - Year 11 mocks begin w/b 29th January



- Kooth will be doing a Lunch time Drop in on 17th Jan outside dinner hall
- 5th-11th February – Children’s Mental Health Week
- 7th February – Safer Internet Day
- Year group assembly focus on: Smoking and Vaping, Protected characteristics, drugs, anti-racism, e-safety, LGBT and History month, water safety, healthy relationships
- ‘Breakfast with the Principal’ for students recognised for their commitment to the Academy, hard work ethic and excellent manners.
- Meeting with PC Lauren re. policing in the local area
- Safer schools meeting – attended by school and Inspectors for neighbourhood policing
- Year 8 student voice
- Year 10 Prefect applications open
- Sixth form survey

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us at Whitburn C of E Academy**

....and that includes our scholars bus drivers who have shown great Christmas spirit in the lead up to the Christmas holidays. Here is Stacey, one of our scholars drivers....



*Excellence for All*

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