



# Investigative response to reports of suspected THC / Spice laced vapes use by children

## **\*SCHOOLS/EDUCATION\***

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**This document is intended for Schools/educational settings. Another guidance document is available for Police only.**

## Investigative Response to reports of THC / Spice laced Vapes

In recent years there has been an increase in the use of electronic vape pens used for the consumption of nicotine as opposed to normal cigarette consumption. However, the use of flavours and other ingredients are becoming more common and now the use of controlled drugs within vapes is commonplace.

Intelligence suggests that vapes containing THC [tetrahydrocannabinol] the active psychoactive ingredients in cannabis have become popular with school pupils, teenagers and younger adults, as opposed to smoking a joint/reefer. THC extracts contain higher percentage / higher doses of THC compared to cannabis. 50 to 80% compared to 10 to 15% which commonly causes overdose.

The use of THC vapes is a national trend running alongside the increased use of several cannabis type products such as oils, edibles and juice all of which are class B controlled drugs under the misuse of drugs act 1971.

Further intelligence suggests vapes have also been found to contain synthetic cannabinoid receptor agonists [SCRAs] commonly known as 'spice' which can be many times more potent than THC itself, and there has also been anecdotal reports of Xylazine [a powerful tranquilliser type drug] and Nitazenes [potent synthetic opioids type drugs, of which 14 have recently been classified as class A controlled drugs] being found with vapes also.

Warwickshire police have received numerous reports on the use of vapes being laced with controlled drugs, normally after a report from a school of pupils being taken ill. The response to these types of incidents has been varied and this guidance document seeks to offer advice and support to professionals in improve our initial investigation and ensure wider safeguarding is considered.

Officers should be reminded that those **under 18 years of age** are banned from having any vapes whatsoever, and that it is illegal for **anyone** to be in possession of a Vape which contains THC/spice or any other controlled drug. THC and Spice are both controlled substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

## Objective

The objective of this guidance is to provide a clear and consistent approach upon attending incidents in schools or an educational setting, where vapes suspected of containing controlled drugs, are being used by children. It also highlights the response plan when children are taken ill through suspected use. It is also intended to advise schools/educational settings.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Response plan:

**The scenario being – a child presents ill from using a vape.**

1. **School** - Initial care to child – recovery position/999 for ambulance and Police
2. **School** - Ensure a Multi Agency Contact [MAC] referral is made to the front door as well as reporting to police to ensure a prompt response for any strategy meeting/Children Services response.
3. **School** - Secure vape and mobile phone of child\*
4. **School** - Identify witnesses – Police to obtain VW1 accounts
5. **Police** - Identify suspect – Through liaison with school/witnesses a suspect may be identified. Make an early arrest and secure evidence [Seizure of mobile phone/house searches etc]
6. **Police** - Identify any CCTV or other evidence
7. **Police** – Create an investigation with a Child Protection classification (primary or secondary) and a CRA *including consent* and graded at the appropriate risk.
8. **Police** - To inform the drug focus desk of the incident  
[drugfocusdesk@warwickshire.police.uk](mailto:drugfocusdesk@warwickshire.police.uk)
9. **Police** - Complete MG21 and send vape off for analysis
10. **Police** - Urgent download of the mobile device [See attached guidance]
11. **Police** – Submit intelligence reports