

Vaping in school bathrooms scares other pupils

Edinburgh schoolchildren are “too scared to go to the toilet” due to a growing number of kids vaping in bathrooms, a council meeting has heard.

Concerns over the affect of teen vaping on education and health were raised at a parents’ forum this week, with plans agreed to step-up work with the NHS and schools to spread awareness of the risks.

It comes as The Scottish Government is considering a ban on disposable e-cigarettes due to their environmental impact and growing popularity among young people.

Speaking at the Consultative Committee with Parents on Wednesday the council’s head of schools Lorna French said pupils vaping in toilets was increasingly being reported as a problem by youngsters, teachers and other staff, adding that the issue “is not getting better”.

Parent Alistair Turnbull said: “I think every secondary school has got this looming large on the agenda, it’s causing a lot of anti-social behaviour, people scared to go into toilets – the whole nine yards of problems.”

Samantha, another parent who attended the meeting, said as well as children being frightened to go into loos some schools were closing them due to “a handful which is growing and growing of children using toilets for vaping”.

Headteacher at Liberton High Stephen Kelly said: “There isn’t a school in the city that is tolerating this.

“We can’t have a situation and we shouldn’t have a situation where people don’t have access to toilets.”

Ms French said: “We recognise this issue is not getting better, if I can put it that way.

“What we’ve undertaken to do is talk to our colleagues in the children’s partnership and health protection Lothian, so we have different NHS colleagues that we link in with, we’re going to see if they can pull together with us and potentially a couple of parents to see if we can take the original guidance and improve it, looking at things like a parent leaflet, a pupil leaflet, assemblies – just different ideas that we can get that message out across the community about the impacts of vaping.”

by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter