

Our ref: SC/SSt

October 2015

Dear Parents / Carers,

You know that as a caring School we want to offer your children the best advice to help them lead healthy, happy lives. Recently some pupils have brought caffeinated 'energy' drinks into school. We believe they possibly have a detrimental effect on pupils and could potentially lead to health problems.

While most energy drinks don't have as much caffeine as a strong coffee, they are often heavily sweetened which appeals to many youngsters. We do not wish to be alarmist but below we have highlighted the latest guidance offered by British Medical Council about the potential side-effects of these drinks.

Changing your daily caffeine intake can cause headaches. Energy drinks are addictive stimulants which keep people awake, but they can also cause some people to miss sleep all together. This lack of sleep causes headaches impairs functioning and can affect the ability to concentrate. We also know that too many energy drinks can lead to vomiting. This causes dehydration and acid erosion of teeth and the oesophagus if frequent and since there are many ingredients in energy drinks, other reactions might occur, from minor itching to airway constriction.

Some caffeinated drinks are very high in sugar and can eventually wear out our insulin producing ability which leads to Type 2 Diabetes and some of the ingredients in such drinks can interact with prescription medications - especially medications taken for depression. This can lead to lack of functioning and even financial stress from having to buy several expensive drinks daily.

A study in *The Journal of American College Health* showed teenagers are more likely to take dangerous risks when high on caffeine. Additionally, too much caffeine from these drinks causes some people to shake and be anxious. This can be unsafe and cause emotional issues.

Given this advice, we will not allow pupils to drink these types of drinks in lessons and they will be confiscated. We will however allow pupils to bring in bottles of water which can be consumed in lessons.

We know you will understand this approach and see that we have your child's best interests at heart.

Yours sincerely



Simon Cox  
Head Teacher