

SORTED

Drug and Alcohol Service

SORTED is Northumberland's substance misuse service for young people.



January 2026

Message from Craig Newbigin-Team Manager

As we move into 2026, I would like to take a moment to thank schools across Northumberland for your continued engagement with Sorted and for the referrals you have made throughout the last year. Your early identification of concerns and willingness to work in partnership has had a real impact on our ability to support young people around substance use, health, and wellbeing.

As we look ahead to 2026, we are keen to continue building on our strong relationships with schools and working together to respond to emerging needs, offer timely support, and improve outcomes for young people across the county.

Thank you again for your ongoing commitment, and we look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

Highlights & Updates

Over the past year, we have seen some clear trends emerging. In particular, there has been an increase in referrals linked to ketamine use, which we know can present specific risks for young people – we shared information on this in our last edition. We have also seen a significant uptake in referrals for vaping and smoking support, reflecting the challenges many schools are currently facing in this area.

Trends -THC Liquid/Dab Vapes

As you all know, vaping nicotine has become extremely popular. People are now buying THC (the psychoactive chemical in cannabis) liquid or Dab (concentrated wax type cannabis) to vape. These are both higher in strength and can therefore lead to increased tolerance and potential significant withdrawal if people are using daily.

The main risk however is, as these are illegal substances there is no way of knowing what is in the substance that is being bought.

A study completed by Wedinos in 2023 found that approximately 43.9% of tested THC liquid, contained synthetic cannabis commonly known as spice which was twice as common as THC.

The effects can be unpleasant or even dangerous, especially when people have a few puffs quickly before they know how strong it is, or what effect it's having on them.

We would advise, if using, to take small amounts and have a break to see how they feel and if they become unwell to not be left alone and contact 111 if required.

17 **Upcoming Training**

We are continuing to offer our Bitesize substance awareness sessions via Learning Together

We can also deliver assemblies, specifically around vaping and general substance awareness. Please contact us for more details.

If any teams/services have a particular concern or interest we can also tailor make training sessions to fit your needs.

Spotlight: Government Campaign

The government has launched a new campaign to alert young people to the dangers of ketamine, counterfeit medicines and adulterated THC vapes.

All of the videos and resources can be found on our padlet.

Resources & Support

Scan to make a
referral



Contact us: sorted@northumberland.gov.uk
01670 536 400

Resources:

Sorted padlet:

<https://padlet.com/sorted1/sorted-drug-resources-g6yoi1jvgnee31ek>

Email Helena.swarbrook@northumberland.gov.uk for Substance Awareness Training or group work