



Dear Head Teacher

We recognise that there is significant work ongoing to address the many issues affecting our young people and that schools already play a huge part in this. It is vital that collectively our focus is to prevent and divert young people from being drawn into gangs or weapon-enabled violence. By working together to deter young people, we can better protect them from the increased danger that carrying weapons creates and the life changing punishment they may receive if they are caught.

Regionally, in recent months we have sadly seen a number of incidents involving school age people involved in knife related fights, some with devastating affects where young lives have been lost. Therefore we ask for your support in elevating the approach being taken to raise the profile of the dangers of knife crime amongst young people. To do this we ask for your support in two ways:

- To ensure every pupil is involved in a conversation with their teacher before the end of the summer term to discuss the risk;
- That parents are made aware and encouraged to have difficult conversations to prevent the loss of another young life and the devastating affects this has for all.

We must all come together to protect our young people and help them feel safe, understand carrying a weapon only increases the risks in many ways and to understand the consequences this can have on many lives. There are so many positive opportunities, diversion activities and support groups that young people can be referred to and we are working with partners and the voluntary sector to make these as visible and accessible for all. The overall aim is to change the mind set and culture so that societally the carrying of weapons is totally unacceptable to all.

To assist our collective efforts, a resource pack has been created to bring together information and resources suitable for schools to use in addressing the subject with students. The pack includes the following:

For school staff:

- WMP Weapons in School Guidance for Schools
- DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice (January 2018)
- Home Office – Preventing youth violence and gang involvement
- Resources
- Lesson Plans

For parents:

- School & Police advisory letter
- Home Office Advice for Parents
- Knife Warning letter

We will continue to keep this issue as a priority for work with schools to ensure awareness is high among students and parents.

Kind regards,

Chief Superintendent Basit Javid
Solihull Commander
West Midlands Police