



27th March 2019

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Ensuring Yardleys School is a safe community - Knife Crime Focus

Yardleys School like other local schools has been working very closely with West Midlands Police on a number of safeguarding issues. A key issue has been knife crime and anti-social behaviour. This has been covered through the PSHE curriculum, assemblies such as Precious Lives and external Loudmouth Theatre productions. Today we have supported the police in a Knife Arch initiative. This operation is being carried out by all local schools and is to raise awareness of the dangers of knife crime. Below is the information on dangers of knife crime provided by West Midlands Police.

Did you know?

Knife Crime

Knife crime includes any crimes that involve the use of a sharpened weapon or blade. It is illegal to sell or buy a knife to anyone who is under 18 years old. Carrying a weapon to protect yourself is still a crime in the eyes of the law and in fact you are much more likely to become a victim of knife crime if you carry one. Possession of a knife can carry a prison sentence of up to 4 years even if it's not used.

Knife Crime in Birmingham on the rise

Nearly 300 people were treated for knife wounds in Birmingham hospitals last year. This is the highest number for the last 5 years. There have been several fatalities on our door steps.

Key Messages for our students:

Gun and knife crime includes stabbing or shooting someone. But it's also illegal to:

- carry a knife
- threaten someone with a knife or gun
- commit a crime with the use of a weapon - like a robbery
- Commit a crime by pretending you have a real knife or gun

If you carry a weapon, you are more likely to:

- be attacked or threatened by other gangs who use weapons
- be arrested by the police
- kill or injure yourself badly with your weapon
- hurt or kill others with your weapon
- hurt innocent people if a fight happens
- be charged with murder through joint enterprise if you're at a place where someone is killed, even if you weren't carrying the weapon

So what are we doing at Yardleys School to make our students more aware of the dangers surrounding weapons and knife crime:

- West Midlands Police have recently purchased a metal detector for schools in Birmingham to use. It cost over £5000. On 27th March the detector was used at Yardleys School and we selected Year 9 to be searched and scanned.

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- Precious Lives assemblies and Loudmouth Theatre productions.
- As part of this process, students were given 10 minute assembly, delivered by PC Matt Kay, again highlighting the dangers of carrying weapons and more importantly understanding what action to take if you are aware someone in the community is carrying something they shouldn't be.

We are being proactive as a school and are giving the students key messages and information that will prepare them to deal with such situations if they arise. There is **not** a knife crime issue at Yardleys School but it is vital we do not ignore this increasing issue in our community.

Please remember if you are suspicious about a student or over hear conversations that make you feel uneasy, **PASS** this on to any member of the Senior Leadership Team or Pastoral Team. It may well be a false alarm but we are far better off to be safe than sorry.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to get in contact.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brynley Evans', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

BRYNLEY EVANS
Headteacher