



Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you regarding a growing issue that is affecting young people across Britain and I am sad to say in Stockport too. The carrying of knives and other bladed weapons by young people is on the increase in every part of the country including our Borough. All our schools are therefore working with the Local authority, Police and other agencies to raise the profile of this problem in order to safeguard our young people.

Stockport Youth Justice and Targeted Youth Support Service (YOS), alongside Greater Manchester Police, have developed a new approach to tackling the rising concerns around knife and weapons related behaviour. Stockport schools are engaging with this very important work and many, like (school name) have already taken part in sessions.

On The Edge... is Stockport's partnership approach at dealing with knife and weapons-related crime within the Borough. A criminal justice based approach is not the sole solution to challenging this behaviour, and there is a need to work collaboratively across the Stockport community and specifically within schools. By working across schools, communities and with a range of agencies we are best placed to raise awareness and create stronger and more resilient communities.

The foundations of this approach lie in early intervention and prevention of risk-taking behaviour occurring in the first instance. 'On the Edge' aims to provide universal knowledge to all children and young people across the Borough, targeted interventions to those identified as being at risk of becoming involved, and a robust evidence-based programme to all those found carrying knives and/or weapons or convicted.

These programmes are designed to prevent students from engaging in risk-taking activities in the first place, as well as to offer support to those students who may already be involved in such activities in order to help them stop. Feedback to the sessions has been excellent with colleagues and young people commenting that they have been 'extremely impressed' with them. Ultimately our collective aim is to prevent young people carrying knives and putting themselves and others at risk.

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Headteachers and school leaders also have a duty to ensure that schools are safe places for both children and adults to attend. Therefore in addition to educating students about the danger of knives and supporting those who wish to stop carrying them or associating with those who do, we are very clear that knives or bladed instruments have no place what-so-ever in a school setting. As laid out in individual schools' behaviour policies, any student found in possession of a knife or bladed instrument will be punished and may well face permanent exclusion from their school.

Both I and the Headteachers of secondary schools across Stockport are committed to enabling all students to study in a school environment entirely free of the dangers of knives and knife crime. I trust we have your support on this issue and programme of work.

Yours sincerely,

L Hanson

Linda Hanson
Headteacher



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