



ORMISTON  
**SWB**  
ACADEMY

Autumn 2017

# SAFEGUARDING BULLETIN

## Message from Mrs Dickens— Vice Principal (Student Engagement and Safety)

This half term the Safeguarding newsletter is focusing on anti-social behaviour. West Midlands Police have asked all schools to support and share their guidance on knife crime, the campaign has been promoted in the press and in the media. Keeping our students safe from harm is of upmost importance to the Academy and we pride ourselves in educating our students how to stay safe through assemblies, tutor time and Learning for Life days; this includes knife crime, anti-social behaviour and gang activities.

Whilst most young people **do not** carry knives, it is still a conversation worth having with your child. You have a role to play in helping your child make the right choice on this subject. If there is one person your child will listen to it's you!

Should you wish to discuss any of the advice further, please do not hesitate to contact the Safeguarding Team at Ormiston SWB Academy .

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Find out about the law. Before talking to your child about knives, you might want to consider the following points:

- ◆ It is illegal to carry any knife if there is intent to use it, even defensively, as a weapon. Even if the knife belongs to someone else, such as a friend.
- ◆ Police can and will search someone if they believe they are carrying a knife. Police and school staff can also search young people for weapons at school.
- ◆ Carrying a knife could mean being arrested, going to court and ending up with a criminal record or even a prison sentence. This can affect the rest of someone's life. Having a criminal record can prevent that person getting a job, going to University or College or even travelling abroad to some countries.

Most children decide they need to start carrying a knife because they feel threatened. Signs to look out for that may suggest your child is feeling this way are:

- School is not going well/they don't want to go into school at all;
- They have been a recent victim of theft/ bullying/mugging;
- A different network of friends who may be older than your child.

**Remind your child that they should always walk away if confronted with the threat of violence.**

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- ◆ Have a chat with your child and see what they think about carrying a knife—you may have seen something in the news about knife crime that you could discuss.
- ◆ This can be a tricky conversation—your child may be scared or unwilling to talk about this. But it is never a bad thing to talk and it's important to be clear that your child does have a choice, even when they think they may not.
- ◆ Think about raising these points with your child:

By carrying a knife you:

- ◆ Have a false sense of security
- ◆ Could be arming your attacker, increasing the risk of getting stabbed or injured
- ◆ Are breaking the law.

Not carrying, and walking away from confrontation:

- ◆ Is what the vast majority do
- ◆ Is the tougher thing to do
- ◆ Means you'll be safer from serious harm and not breaking the law.

**There are many organisations out there willing to help if you have concerns about your child.**

**You can contact your local authority for a list of local groups and organisations who can offer advice, as well as information on setting up your own group.**

### Warning Signs

There are 10 warning signs below that can be passed on to the parents:

1. Has your child withdrawn from the family and/or school?
2. Is your child's school or college reporting worrying changes in behaviour, academic achievement or attendance?
3. Has he or she lost interest in positive activities such as sports clubs?
4. Does he or she stay out unusually late without giving a reason and is vague about his/her whereabouts?
5. Has he or she stopped seeing old friends and started hanging out with a new group?
6. Are they secretive about the contents of their bag?
7. Are they defensive if you ask what is in their possession or if they're hiding anything?
8. Has their attitude changed about carrying knives?
9. Have any items gone missing from the kitchen, tool box or garage?
10. Have you found a weapon hidden amongst their possessions?

### USEFUL CONTACTS:

**Parentline Plus**—a national charity that works for and with parents. They give advice on all aspects of parenting and are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call free on 0808 800 22 22

**Victim Support**—the national charity can help you and your child if they have been a victim of knife crime. 0845 30 30 900

### To find out what Parents are doing:

**Mothers Against Violence**—

[www.mothersagainstviolence.org.uk](http://www.mothersagainstviolence.org.uk)

**Mothers Against Murder and Aggression**—

[www.mamaa.org](http://www.mamaa.org)

**KnifeCrimes.org**—[www.knifecrimes.org/](http://www.knifecrimes.org/)