



Dear Parents and Carers

18 March 2019

Earlier this year, the Department for Education communicated with all schools asking them to outline what they have undertaken to support the prevention of knife crime. Knife crime has existed for some time and is not a new phenomenon, however the conditions that some young people find themselves in now, are more challenging than at any time in the past. Every young person has some mobile item of ready and saleable value that may expose them to unwarranted attention; vulnerable and impressionable young people are increasingly being targeted to join gangs for use in 'county lines' operations (using young people as drug couriers to transport drugs around the country) while gangs are also increasingly involved in sexual exploitation too. Young people often feel pressured, intimidated or afraid and may carry a knife as a means of 'protection' or they may be exploited or manipulated to carry it on behalf of another person.

Increasingly knife crime is an issue in London and the Metropolitan Police response has been to encourage schools to invite the local Schools Safety Officer Team to come on site for a day, bringing on to site a mobile archway with wands, for the detection of knives and other prohibited items. Some schools in Barnet have a permanent archway on site and have had for a considerable length of time now; some venues in London have security arches as a permanent fixture. Our school faces some of the challenges that you would expect to see in any school. In order to raise awareness with our students and also to remind them that we are part of a wider London society, the school will be inviting the Safety Team to bring an archway on site for a day, in the coming weeks. This will then happen intermittently as part of the school's general Safeguarding responses and its PSHCE curriculum, to ensure every opportunity is taken advantage of, to keep our students and staff safe.

There is reference to this in the recently reviewed Behaviour for Learning Policy which is available on the school website ('Searching, screening and confiscation' section). The information noted is taken in large part from DFE guidance for schools. Mrs Walker communicated the link to the policy in February's Newsletter. I am sharing it here again, below:

<https://www.qegschool.org.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=3668&type=pdf>

The school will be updating its home-school agreement before the end of the academic year, providing further clarity on expectations for Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Behaviour for Learning.

Thank you for your continued support in your daughter's education.

Yours faithfully

Mr M Duffy
Deputy Headteacher