

Safeguarding Bulletin Autumn 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Educating our young people about the risks surrounding knife crime

Each term we write to you to help raise awareness of different issues that young people may experience or encounter. It is our hope that this will help to educate our students of the different risks, encourage them to make the right choices, and provide parents with more information to support this education at home.

Knife crime is one of the issues that schools, police, local authorities and communities continue to address.

Although knife crime appears to be declining, incidents are still around 20% higher among young people than they were a decade ago. There is also a growing trend of young people choosing to carry plastic replicas, often sold online in places such as Amazon and Etsy as fidget toys, gaming accessories, and training gadgets, or created using 3D printers. An example of one is shown below:



If you have any concerns or questions about your child, or another child's behaviour, you can also contact the school's safeguarding team on thinkpink@lintonvc.org

Mrs Louise Keen – Director of Safeguarding, Designated Safeguarding Lead

What are we doing in school?

At Linton Village College, our students are taught about the topic of knife crime and the danger of carrying weapons in Year 8 and Year 9 through their PSHE curriculum. This is delivered in partnership with Cambridgeshire Police so that this can be delivered sensitively by our safeguarding team or by our local community police officers.

In addition to this, our students are involved in other initiatives around this topic. For example, some of our Year 9 students were involved in a knife crime awareness day at Ely Magistrates Court. This day involved interactive sessions and discussions with the police and youth mentors to provide greater understanding of the dangers and consequences of using or carrying offensive weapons. This is something we will continue to engage with.

As a school, we also have a responsibility to report any suspicions or incidents to the police and local safeguarding teams. Carrying any offensive items in school will also result in our behaviour policy being followed, which could result in a permanent exclusion, or reports on their school records which can hinder future applications to college or employment.

Useful information for parents

As parents, carers and educators, we all have a responsibility to protect and support young people and recognise the signs or reasons why people may carry weapons, and what we can do if we suspect anything.

Cambridgeshire Police have identified the following possible reasons for young people carrying weapons:

- Fear
- To gain respect
- Protection
- Defence
- To steal
- To harass or intimidate
- Peer pressure or feeling pressured to carry it for someone else

Myth Busting

Fearless is a campaign by Crimestoppers <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/fearless> which helps young people report their concerns anonymously about any crimes. They have produced the following 'myth busting' facts:

Myth

If it is illegal to carry a knife, then other sharp objects can be carried for protection

Fact

Any object that is being carried with the intention of using it in a threatening way could be classed as an offensive weapon.

Myth

Most young people carry knives

Fact

Actually, 99% of young people **DO NOT** carry knives. Sometimes it may feel like more people carry knives because of stories they've heard, or what they have seen online, on social media or in the news. Most young people aged between 10 – 29 do not carry knives, so this hopefully provides some reassurance that this doesn't happen as much as it may seem.

Myth

Carrying a knife provides a person with protection

Fact

It has been proven that if you carry a knife, you are more likely to be hurt or threatened by someone else. People are often wounded by their own knife they were carrying, putting them at greater risk.

The Law in the UK – What do young people need to know?

Below is more information about the laws around this issue in the UK. More information can be found by visiting <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/fearless>

- An offensive weapon is defined as **any item that has been made, adapted or intended to hurt or cause harm to another person**, under the Offences Weapon Act 2019.
- It is against the law to carry a knife in a public place, unless the blade is less than 3 inches long, is a manual folding knife and there is a lawful and valid reason for having it. Carrying a knife can lead to a prison sentence of up to 4 years even if it is not used in England & Wales.
- It is against the law to carry a knife on behalf of someone else
- Using any knife in a threatening way, is a criminal offence.
- A person must be 18 or over to purchase a knife. This includes cutlery and kitchen knives.
- In the UK, it is illegal to bring into the country, sell, possess, hire or give someone a banned knife. Banned knives include butterfly knives, disguised knives, flick knives, and zombie knives. A full list of banned knives in the UK can be found on the GOV website.
- Young people can also be prosecuted if they have 'intentionally assisted and encouraged another to commit an offence', even if it is not known who committed the crime and who was the 'accessory'.

What should you do if you are concerned your child or another child might be involved in or at risk of knife crime?

- In an emergency, or where you believe any criminal activity is taking place, you must contact the police using 999 (in an emergency) or 101 (in a non-emergency).
- You and young people can also report concerns anonymously to Fearless on 0800 555 111