

# **REPORT TO: CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL**

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**REPORT AUTHOR/S:**

**Safer School Partnership, Police Officer Handbook V.1.6, Youth Strategy, Engagement & Schools – Version 1.6.**

**PS 517 EWEN (North Area), Safer School Partnership Sergeant**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT: To provide the committee with a response in regards to the question “The Police should revamp the ‘safer schools’ programme for the Borough’s schools”**

There are two Police Sergeants for Enfield North supervising eighteen Police Officers (this number is not a true reflection on staffing levels as some of these officers are awaiting dates to move to different departments and some are restricted duties).

The Police Officers cover Secondary and Primary schools and there is a dedicated officer for Special Need Provisions and a dedicated officer for Primary Schools and for Pupil Referral Units.

There are over 20 secondary schools & over 60 primary schools on the North side of the BCU, not including Special Need Provisions, Other School Provisions and Behavioural Provisions.

Each Secondary School has a dedicated Officer or a point of contact. Primaries, Special Need Provisions and Pupil Referral Units have an individual allocated officer.

Police and all the schools sign up to a Safer School partnership formal agreement to work together in order to keep young people safe.

“What is the Safer schools Partnership? There are currently around 300 officers across London dedicated to working in schools and with young people. The program of the safer schools role is driven centrally. We do have support from other units such as the Youth Strategy, Engagement and Schools team provides which give advice, guidance and support to supervisors and officers working in a youth based roles including Safer Schools Partnerships (SSP) and Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC). Their aim is to ensure a consistent and corporate approach across London.

Safer Schools Officers are the first point of contact for all schools in London, and the gatekeepers to educational establishments for the rest of the MPS. Our role is wide and varied and we aim to:

- Minimise the risk of Serious Youth Violence (SYV) and crime to young Londoners by delivering preventive education, intervening with those already involved in criminal activity, and reducing the availability of weapons within our communities.
  - Ensure a targeted approach is taken against those who engage in criminal behaviour to reduce levels of knife crime, gang-related crime, sexual abuse and SYV.
  - Significantly reduce the number of young victims of crime through preventative education on subjects like personal / property safety, etc.
  - Increase actionable intelligence on weapon carriage and storage, gangs and crime.
  - Increase positive engagement with C&YP, parents and teachers to increase confidence.
  - Provide reassurance to young people, parents and the wider community through greater visibility and accessibility by developing partnership activities like safer routes to and from schools.
- (MPS Children and Young People Engagement Strategy 2017-2021)

Safer Schools Officers work in conjunction with head teachers and school leadership teams to cultivate strong working relationships that address issues in the school community and the community around the school. Communication and understanding forms a very important part of this. It also supports the flow of information and intelligence between partners, the safeguarding of vulnerable children and early intervention schemes to help prevent children from being subjected to crime or committing crime. We also report crimes that occur in school, conduct investigations, and ensure that both the victims and the suspects are safeguarded.

Some of the work we do I have highlighted below but as you can understand the work that we do is so much more, In schools we will deal with a multitude of different incidents around safe guarding, partnership working support no two days are ever the same.

### **Priority 1: Children and young people are empowered, included and respected**

Presenting classes around a host of different subject with regard to their personal safety, crime and consequences and advising with regard to their personal development, learning for life, Well- being.

Listening to their questions and having open discussions within the classroom environment.

Holding surgeries within the school so can discuss other matters or concerns.

Attending events at the school supporting the students

Speaking with school council and listening to students concerns

Officers deliver lessons to Voluntary Police cadets supporting them in community project work. Supporting with DofE objective / goals.

**Priority 2: Children and young people can thrive through effective early help**

Working closing with partnership agencies, Social services attending Strat. Meetings, Child Protection Meetings, TAFs, CAFs

Meeting with school Child Protection and Safeguarding Officers addressing any concerns or disclosures. CAIT

Being aware of the vulnerable children within school at risk and those on the fringes of criminality and engaging. CSE /CCE

Working closely with YOS.

Working closely with Educational Welfare Officers around students attendance / school refusers. County Line concerns / gangs.

Educating young people in classroom work and assemblies.

**Priority 3: Children, young people and their families are supported to achieve the best possible health and well-being**

Promoting Well-being and effects of Mental Health in assemblies and classroom work.

Working with COMPASS with regard to substance misuse and making necessary referrals.

Meeting with staff and talking to students, being a reassuring presence for students within school and as they leave and travel home.

**Priority 4: Children and young people have access to an excellent education, are ready to learn when they start school and leave with the skills they need for life and the world of work**

Safer School officers support the school with any challenging students and advise them regarding poor behaviour. If there are conflicts between peers these are resolved by trained officers in Restorative Justice. Officers link in with their Attendance Officers and the Educational Welfare Officer, should any students not attending school and carry out home visits to those school refusers.

Give presentations on careers within the Police and the differing roles there are as a prospective difference they could make to develop themselves and help others.

### **Priority 5: Children and young people are safe and protected from harm in all places and spaces**

Safer School Officers are a visible presence in the school and carry out High visibility patrols after school, walking with students waiting with them at the bus stops ensuring travel safely. Giving personal safety advice if using mobiles or anything of value on show.

Challenging suspicious characters, stop and searching.

Carrying out visible and plain clothed patrols in areas that have a higher number of robberies

Developing (in partnership with students and school), safe routes with travel plans

Liaising with Community Help Point Scheme (CHiPS). (Safe places around Borough)

Carrying out weapons sweeps in areas around school and along travel route and any nearby parks / green spaces.

Specialist officers within school partnership taking Video Recorded statements (A.B.E. / V.R.I. ) from vulnerable students to secure a detailed account in a holistic approach.

### **Priority 6: Children and young people have an environmentally sustainable future**

Promoting the community within the school to take ownership and have pride. Supporting students on projects within school and local community. Litter picking to removing graffiti.

The principle aim of the criminal justice system is to prevent offending by the child. I believe specialist staff and teacher at the school working in conjunction with the safer schools officer is better placed to educate and divert the child away from criminal activity. It is important to avoid 'criminalising' children and young people unnecessarily; the primary purpose in some cases around youth is to encourage children and young people to take responsibility for their own actions and promote re-integration into school and society rather than to punish, especially when dealing with children so young.

The current pandemic has provide new challenges for everyone, with the introduction of restrictions and the current Lockdown. Schools Officers have continued to support their schools and young people.

Many Primary, Secondary schools and Special Need provisions have remained open for key worker's students and our vulnerable students.

The majority of learning for the students is online learning and School Officers are providing online sessions to schools for all year groups and smaller interactive on line classroom presentations. The subjects presented are varied and focus on Staying Safe on line, CSE, and Well-being, Education around COVID, Updates on

the current Government Guidelines, Mental Health and support available. Many parents are also engaging in these sessions.

School Officers are also providing advice around apprenticeships and future employment opportunities for the older students.

If students are not engaging in online learning or the school is unable to get in contact with a student or family, School Officers are carrying out welfare checks at their home addresses.

Daily patrols are also carried out to ensure young people are adhering to the lockdown and restrictions, this also enables us to act fast time around safe guarding concerns and county lines.

In addition to the above School Officers are also supporting their colleagues within different departments if staff have to isolate or are unwell.

PS 517NA Ewen