



## Joseph Leckie Academy

March 4th 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

### **KEEPING OUR STUDENTS SAFE – KNIFE CRIME**

I am sure that you will be aware that knife crime and youth violence have become depressingly regular features in the national and local news / media. Week after week we hear about another young life taken, a family heartbroken and a community shattered.

All over the country, young people are under threat because of individuals carrying knives. There has been a sharp rise in incidents in the West Midlands, which includes Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton and Walsall. The region has already recorded the highest number of youth knife deaths in 40 years, with six young people aged 8 - 19 dying from knife attacks this year.

As an Academy, our approach is to be proactive rather than reactive, to provide young people with the information they need to keep themselves safe and to reduce the risk of harm. Therefore, on Thursday March 5th March 2020 Walsall Police will be in Joseph Leckie Academy from 8.00 am to 12:15pm.

We have decided the best way to raise awareness of knife crime is to have a knife arch in the Academy. The arch will be brought into a number of classrooms and students will be asked to walk through the arch.

Police will work along the corridor going into each classroom, the arch will then move to another building and carry out the same task.

I appreciate that some students may find the experience upsetting however, it is essential we are pro-active to protect our students from the threat of knives while they are in the Academy as well as educating them about the dangers of carrying a weapon.

### Joseph Leckie Academy

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I hope that you will agree that our approach to keeping our students safe is one that you are able to support and that you will take the opportunity to discuss the intervention with your son or daughter and impress on him / her the dangers of carrying a knife and to ensure as much as you are able that they do not ever carry a knife and do not associate with anyone else who may do so. It might be helpful to routinely search your child's bedroom and their school bag before they leave for school. In addition, please remind them that there are a number of ways that they can report anything that concerns them such as someone carrying a knife or banned item, bullying or any other concerns via the Sharp system and that any information they give is confidential between your child and me.

Should you have any questions or need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



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Keith Whittlestone

Principal