



Barnsole Bulletin



TERM 1 | WEEK 5 | Friday 3rd October 2025

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Dear Parents & Carers,

This week, I would like to share some thoughts on a subject that often sparks strong and very personal views: the physical punishment of children. Many of us, as adults, may recall a time when smacking—or even the use of belts or canes—was more common. For some, these memories are framed as part of “how things were done.” However, it is important to recognise how the law in England views this issue today, and the role schools play in keeping children safe. The law states that while parents are allowed to use “reasonable punishment,” this is not clearly defined. What is clear, however, is that any physical punishment which leaves a mark, or where an implement is used, is against the law. As a school, our responsibility is not only to educate but also to safeguard every child in our care. This means that if we ever become aware of a child being hit with an implement, or showing injuries that may have resulted from physical punishment, we are legally obliged to report this to the local authority. This is never about judging parenting choices—it is about following the law and ensuring children are safe and protected. I know this can be a sensitive and sometimes divisive topic. Some parents may believe that a “tap” or “smack” has a place in discipline, while others feel strongly that no physical punishment is ever appropriate. Regardless of personal views, it is vital that we are all aware of the legal boundaries and the school’s duty of care.

Best wishes,
Mr J Smales

Hello
autumn

House Points (Overall Total for the Academic Year)



700

Invicta

617

Medway

452

Gordon

540

Adams





If you have concerns about a child in school, please contact one of the Safeguarding team:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jonathan Smales (Headteacher)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Liz Kramer (Deputy Headteacher)

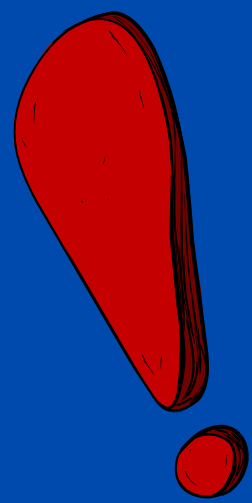
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Nicole Barber (Assistant Headteacher)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Stephanie Tollervey (Assistant Headteacher)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Michelle Kagan (FLO)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Helen Rixon (Office Manager)

If you are concerned about a child outside of school, either after school, at the weekends or during a school holiday, you can contact the following to report your concerns:



Helpful Contact Numbers

Medway Children Services – 01634 334466

Out of Hours Duty Team Medway – 03000 414141

NSPC – 0800 800 500

Police – 101

[Medway.gov.uk/mscb/](https://www.medway.gov.uk/mscb/)

Nursery

In Nursery this week we practised our cutting skills. Our abilities range from making snips around the edge to cutting along lines.



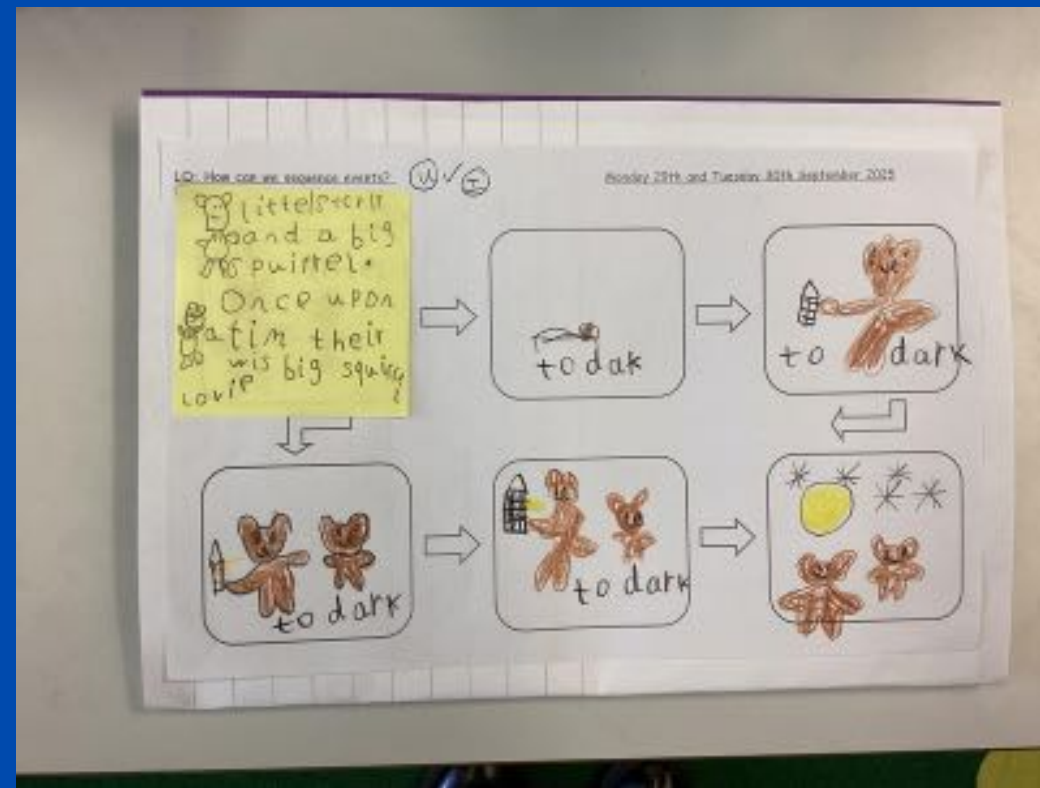
Year R

Reception have well and truly settled into school life and have been enjoying the outside area. We have been completing our rainbow challenges and taking ownership of our learning.



Year 1

In Year 1 we have been learning about the book 'Can't You Sleep Little Bear'. We have retold the story, sequenced the story and made story maps. In challenge time we also made lanterns for the little bear.



Year 2

Recently, we focused on primary and secondary colours through printmaking, which has sparked creativity and fun. The children have enjoyed mixing paints and discovering how colours change. We have now moved on to warm and cool colours, discussing how these can influence the feelings evoked by their artwork.



Year 3

In Year 3, we have been exploring Buddhism, focusing on one of the Buddha's key teachings. Buddhists believe that true happiness is not found in owning many things or having power. The children shared their own ideas about this teaching and discussed whether they agreed with it. It was a thoughtful and reflective session, giving everyone the opportunity to consider what truly makes us happy.



Year 4

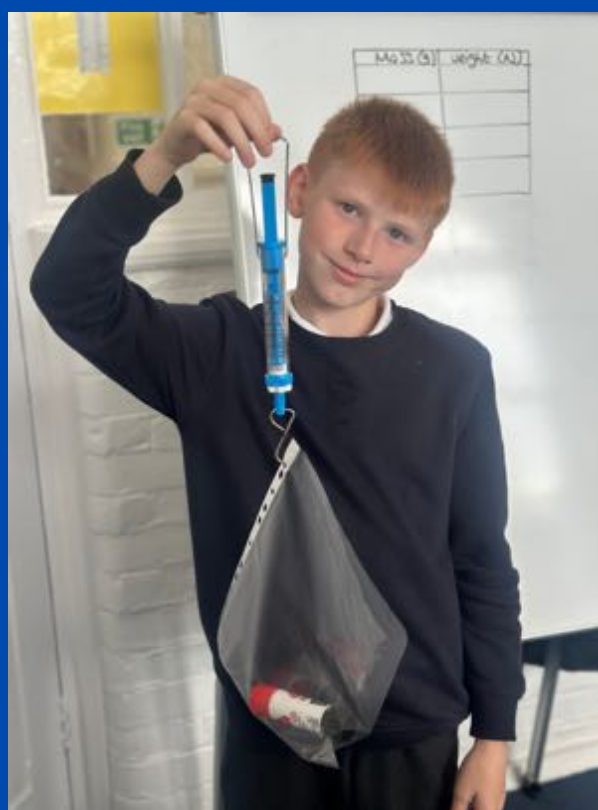
As part of our curriculum, we explored the different types of teeth, their functions, and how they helped us in the process of eating. To make our learning as hands-on as possible, we used some everyday objects to mimic the various types of teeth. We used water bottles to represent molars, pencils for canines, and scissors to illustrate incisors. This tactile approach helped the children understand how each type of tooth played a unique role in chewing and breaking down food, specifically bread in our experiment. By engaging with these representations, students were able to visualise and grasp the concept more effectively.



Year 5

This week, Year 5 have been investigating forces and learning all about mass and weight. We used force meters (also known as Newton meters) to measure how strong different forces are, and scales to measure mass. We also discovered that mass is measured in grams (g) and kilograms (kg), while weight—a force—is measured in Newtons (N).

We learnt that mass and weight are often mixed up, but they're actually quite different! Mass is the amount of matter in an object, while weight is the force of gravity acting on it. It was really interesting to see how easily people confuse the two—and how our experiments helped us understand the difference. Everyone enjoyed testing different objects and bringing science to life through hands-on learning!



Year 6

Year 6 have been learning all about the circulatory system and how blood travels around the body. To bring their learning to life, the children had the opportunity to see a dissection of a lamb's heart. They carefully explored the chambers, valves and vessels, gaining a hands-on understanding of how this vital organ works. It was a fascinating and memorable experience that deepened their knowledge of the human body.





PHONICS WORKSHOPS

We are excited to invite you to a special event at Barnsole where we will be sharing how we teach Little Wandle phonics in classes, followed by an opportunity to watch teachers delivering phonics learning to your children. Understanding how children learn to read and write is a key part of their educational journey, and we would like to offer an opportunity for you to see firsthand the interactive approach and activities that we use to support your children's reading development. Look out for the Google form to sign up if you are a parent of a Year 1 or Reception child.

- Presentations will take place on Monday 13th October at 9:00 am and Wednesday 5th November at 9:00am for parents of Year 1 and Reception children, followed up in your child's class.
- Can't make the morning session - we have an additional phonics observation session on Monday 13th November at 3:30pm - 4pm during the Phonics Club.

To sign up please complete this google form:
<https://forms.gle/LTEdevN57tMJ3Qrp7>



Congratulations to Mrs Baker and her husband who welcomes a baby boy on Friday 19th September weighing 7lb 1oz. Everyone is doing well.



Thank you to all the parents/Grandparents, family friends etc who came to our Macmillan Coffee morning, it was a great success again and we raised £452.01



Thank you again for supporting another charity event. We raised £269.00



Thank you to Friends of Barnsole for organising the family disco. It was great to see so many families come along and the children having a great time. We raised £489.00 which will go back to supporting the school.



Reminder

Our school and Trust operates a zero-debt policy. Therefore, all wraparound care sessions must be booked and paid for at least 24 hours in advance.

Please check your child's MCAS account and pay any outstanding debt. Moving forward if your child's account is in debt, we will not be able to admit them to any wraparound care sessions until the debt is cleared.

The school office will be contacting you either to assist with making payment or ask you to collect your child.

Wraparound care is an additional, non-compulsory service. Continued booking without payment may result in a review of the offer of these provisions to you in the future.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Parent Information – Uniform Reminder



School Uniform

Please can we remind parents of our school uniform policy. Please take the time to read this on our school website.

Jewellery & Hair Accessories

Earrings – plain Studs only

Hair bands or hair ties should be plain colours and small

No necklaces, bracelets or any other item of jewellery is allowed

Items of Religious Significance

Children from the Sikh community are allowed to wear a kara, which is a steel or iron bracelet. As part of the Sikh faith, the kara must not be removed.

Head coverings (hijab) should be plain navy blue or black without any embellishments, patterns or additional decorations.

PE Days

For PE Days, children should be wearing black shorts, leggings or tracksuit bottoms. T-shirt in the colour of your child's house team or a plain white t-shirt and Black trainers (no bright ones).

On the days that the children have PE they can come to school already their PE kit. It is essential that all items of clothing are clearly marked with your child's name, including coats and PE kit.

U12 GIRLS BASKETBALL TRAINING SCHOOL YEAR 5 & 6



#GIRLSGOTGAME

DAY: MONDAY & TUESDAY
VENUE: CHATHAM GRAMMAR
TIME: 17:30-19:00

SESSIONS WILL OFFER GIRLS A POSITIVE OUTLET DELIVERING SKILLS BOTH ON & OFF THE COURT INCLUDING GREATER CONFIDENCE, INCREASED FOCUS, ENHANCED TEAM WORKING SKILLS, RESILIENCE AND IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH.

@KENTCRUSADERSBB



GILL.JAMES@KENTCRUSADERS.CO.UK



SOCCER SCHOOLS OCTOBER HALF TERM

21st 22nd 23rd October

3 Days Of Football Fun and Games

Official GFC First Team Training Ground

Boys & Girls

9:00am - 3:00pm

5-14 Year Olds



Just £20 a day when book before the 4th of October!!

A FANTASTIC ENVIRONMENT TO ENJOY FOOTBALL, LEARN & GET ACTIVE!

BOOK NOW!



PRICING: £25.00 PER DAY - £66 FOR 3 DAYS
WWW.GILLINGHAMFOOTBALLCLUB.COM

Supporting a Child with ADHD



Challenge the stereotypes and get practical help

Monday 13th October 10-11:30am

Tuesday 11th November 7-8:30pm

90 minute session. Recording available for 48hrs

£24.

Available to book now
facefamilyadvice.co.uk



TERM TIME ONLY

JOIN OUR SATURDAY MUSIC CENTRE

AGES 5 - 18

EVERYONE WELCOME

COMPLETE BEGINNERS TO
ADVANCED MUSICIANS

RAINHAM MARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL



DISCOVER MORE

www.medwaymusicassociation.co.uk



MMA's Free Online Music Technology Sessions
 Open to ages 9-18
 Join our virtual sessions
 Tuesday 16:30 - 17:30 (term time only)

For full details visit

www.medwaymusicassociation.co.uk
 MEDWAY MUSIC ASSOCIATION





Apply for a Primary and Secondary School place for September 2026



Primary School applications

The deadline for applications to be submitted for national offer day for primary school is 15th January 2026. Please be advised that if your child attends Barnsole Nursery it is NOT an automatic admission into Yr R.

To apply, visit this link:

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200137/schools_and_learning/1059/applying_for_a_primary_school_place/3

Secondary School applications

Wednesday 15 October 2025	Results of the Medway Test.
Friday 31 October 2025	Secondary school applications close.
Monday 2 March 2026	Offers sent to parents and carers.
Friday 27 March 2026	Deadline for accepting/refusing offers, waiting requests and appeal requests.
Monday 20 April 2026	Re-allocation of school places and processing of late applications.
Monday 31 August 2026	End of admissions process and waiting lists close.

To apply, visit this link:

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200137/schools_and_learning/1061/applying_for_a_secondary_school_place



Class Attendance for the year so far ...

Infants

Saturn - 97%
Mercury - 97%
Neptune - 96%
Jupiter - 95%
Comet - 92%
Venus - 91%
Moonbeams - 91%
Mars - 89%



Juniors

Oberon - 98%
Apollo - 97%
Icarus - 97%
Phoenix - 96%
Juno - 96%
Titan - 96%
Capricorn - 94%
Aquarius - 93%
Aquila - 92%
Dragon - 92%
Orion - 90%
Pegasus - 89%
Polaris - 88%

Dates for the Diary

Monday 13 th October	Phonics Workshops for parents (Yr 1 & 2 Parents) (9am-10am) - FULL
Wednesday 15 th October	Phonics Workshops for parents (Yr 1 & 2 Parents) (9am-10am) <i>Further information to follow</i>
Thursday 16th October	Autumn Term 1 Ends
HALF TERM	Friday 17th October - 31st October
Monday 3rd November	SCHOOL RETURNS
Wednesday 5 th November	Parents Consultation Meetings (3.30pm-5.30pm) <i>Further information to follow</i>
Wednesday 12 th November	Parents Consultation Meetings (3.30pm-5.30pm) Further information to follow
Friday 14 th November	Children in Need <i>Further information to follow</i>
Friday 12 th December	Non-Uniform Day <i>Donations to the Christmas Fayre - further information to follow</i>
Wednesday 17 th December	Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Dinner Day
Friday 19th December	Autumn Term 2 Ends
CHRISTMAS BREAK	Monday 22nd December-Friday 2nd January 2026
Monday 5th January	SCHOOL RETURNS
Thursday 15 th January	School Census (Special Menu)
Tuesday 10 th February	Yr R and Yr 6 Height, Weight and Measure
Friday 13th February	Spring Term 1 ends
HALF TERM	Monday 16th February-Friday 20th February
Monday 23rd February	SCHOOL RETURNS
Thursday 5 th March	World Book Day <i>Further information to follow</i>
Thursday 11 th March-Wednesday 18 th March	Scholastic Book Fair <i>Further information to follow</i>
Friday 13 th March	Red Nose Day <i>Further information to follow</i>
Friday 20th March	INSET DAY
Wednesday 25 th March	Parents Consultation Meetings 3.30pm-5.30pm <i>Further details to follow</i>

Dates for the Diary

Wednesday 1 st April	Parents Consultation Meetings 3.30pm-5.30pm <i>Further details to follow</i>
Thursday 2nd April	Spring Term 2 ends
Friday 3 rd April-Friday 17 th April	Easter Holidays
Monday 20 th April	SCHOOL RETURNS
Monday 4 th May	May Bank Holiday
Monday 11 th May-Thursday 14 th May	Yr 6 SATs Week
Monday 25 th May-Friday 29 th May	May Half Term
Monday 1 st June	School Returns
Wednesday 8 th July	Summer Fayre
Tuesday 21 st July	End of School Year
HALF TERM	Friday 17 th October - 31st October
Monday 3 rd November	SCHOOL RETURNS
Wednesday 5 th November	Parents Consultation Meetings (3.30pm-5..30pm)



The Medway Skills Academy is BACK!

We had so much fun in our first year, we just can't wait to do it all over again - and we would love you to come and join us!

It's a 10 week course of fun activities for children aged 7-11, every Saturday morning, from 10am-1pm, at Featherby in Gillingham.



We're talking sports, robotics, art, cooking and drama - oh, and we haven't told you the best bit yet...



It's completely **FREE!**



Look out for more details and information on how to sign up in September. We're so excited to get started!...

Engineering
Minds



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about EA SPORTS FC 26



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AN ANNUAL RELEASE SCHEDULE

As was the case with the last two EA Sports FC games and the FIFA series before it, the franchise rolls out once a year with updated squads and new features. This can make it expensive to keep up with, particularly when so many dedicated players are keen to get their hands on the latest edition.



VOICE CHAT

Voice chat can be enabled across all platforms, meaning young people can speak to anyone they play with or against. While it can be switched off, some children will no doubt want to speak to their friends while they play. This also means they may encounter strangers much older than them, which can expose them to inappropriate language or behaviours.



IN-GAME PURCHASES THROUGH ULTIMATE TEAM

Ultimate Team is the big draw for EA Sports FC, letting players spend real money on packs that they can open to build a squad of the world's best players. They're not always easy to obtain, and new, improved versions of players will be regularly added as limited-time offerings. Young people could feel pressured into spending money and experience fear of missing out.



SCAMMERS IN ULTIMATE TEAM

Ultimate Team is managed by EA itself, but that hasn't stopped scammers from looking to dupe players out of money and in-game coins. Some scammers sell their accounts, which is a violation of EA's terms of service, while others will 'sell' coins - something the developer is still working to crack down on. Some try to gain access to others' accounts, potentially giving them access to payment information.



POTENTIAL FOR ADDICTION

While EA Sports FC is potentially addictive, thanks to its fast-paced gameplay and mirroring of the real-world skill and glamour of football, Ultimate Team's focus on limited-time rewards and the lottery of winning packs can make it feel closer to gambling than gaming, which may lead to addiction and impulsive spending of money.



Advice for Parents & Educators

PREPARE FOR ANOTHER GAME IN A YEAR

The annual-release cadence aligns with the return of the school year, and can be a great way to incentivise good behaviour at the start of term. If children are applying themselves and preparing for a new year of school, or were particularly well behaved in the summer, EA Sports FC 26 could make a great reward.



LIMIT SPENDING

If you're worried about children accidentally spending real money in Ultimate Team, whether in game or on the EA Sports FC companion app, don't link a payment card to their account. Reclaiming funds can be a mountain to climb, and the dopamine hit of opening flashy packs with slick animations means one purchase can lead to another very quickly. It's also worth adding a prepaid card if you'd prefer them to make their own choices with their budget.



MONITOR VOICE CHAT

As in-game chat is open, be sure to adjust the settings in EA Sports FC 26 to lock it down. If children want to chat with their friends while they play, consider setting up a safe space for them to call, to allow them to play without fear of outsiders.



BE VIGILANT

As with last year, there are ways to keep scammers at bay. Ensure passwords are locked down, and consider using a password manager application to keep them secure. EA will never contact players through the game itself, so be vigilant with incoming messages, and block and report suspected spam. EA will contact players by email if needed, but they will never ask for usernames or passwords. Players should also avoid buying in-game currency from unofficial websites - doing so can lead to accounts being banned and could cost players money in the process.



Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is an experienced freelance writer and has been working in the gaming and tech industry for seven years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. He's also a tech and fitness writer and has been published at sites including IGN, TechRadar, and plenty more.



The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/ea-sports-fc-26>

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about YOUTH VIOLENCE

Youth violence affects one in four children in the UK, but it doesn't have to. When parents, carers, and educators understand the risks, they're better placed to support young people. The right support, mentoring, therapy, and guidance can help young people affected by violence to feel safe, manage conflict, and make positive choices.

UNDERSTANDING YOUTH VIOLENCE

WHY DO YOUNG PEOPLE COMMIT SERIOUS VIOLENCE?

A recent study surveyed over 10,000 young people affected by violence, asking why serious violence occurs among their peers, such as an assault involving a weapon or sexual violence. The most common reasons given were due to a personal characteristic of the victim e.g., race, religion, sexuality, gender, a gang or school rivalry, and being provoked. While not all young people face these issues, many lack the emotional regulation skills needed to manage provocation.

WHAT ARE SIGNS A YOUNG PERSON IS AT RISK?

Children and young people often express that something is wrong through behaviour rather than words. Be alert to signs such as sudden mood changes, secrecy around friendships, excessive phone use, unfamiliar slang, unexplained injuries, fear of school, aggression, going missing, or substance use. They may also be associating with older peers. These behaviours can indicate underlying issues that can lead to violence.

ONLINE INFLUENCES

Social media plays a powerful role in normalising and escalating violence. Platforms like TikTok and Snapchat can expose young people to harmful content, often shaped by algorithms. Many see violent material that distorts reality, leading to fear and desensitisation. A recent study found 70% had seen real-world violence online, and 80% felt less safe in their communities. Alarming, 39% said it made them more likely to carry a weapon. Online conflict can often spill into real life, with serious and sometimes tragic consequences.

WHEN IS VIOLENCE MORE LIKELY TO HAPPEN?

For children and young people in England and Wales, the hours between 4 pm and 8 pm – just after school – carry a particularly high risk for serious violence. This can stem from conflicts that escalate during the school day, online arguments, or simply moving through unfamiliar areas on the way home. Understanding this risk helps us support safer travel and routines. Our recent report found that over one in three young people don't feel safe in the area they live in, and 36% don't feel safe walking the streets.

WHY MIGHT A YOUNG PERSON CARRY A WEAPON?

Young people may carry weapons due to fear, threats, peer pressure, or a false sense of protection. Many young people tell us they feel unsafe and carry weapons 'just in case', while others may be influenced by social media, peers, or criminal activity. Some don't realise it's illegal or may believe it earns respect.

WHERE IS VIOLENCE MORE LIKELY TO HAPPEN?

Violence often happens in certain places. Busy areas like transport hubs carry risk simply because lots of people gather there. Other hotspots, like places linked to drug activity, attract those more likely to be involved in violence. Some areas become risky due to poor supervision, such as under-resourced public spaces. Understanding where violence tends to occur helps us guide young people safely through their communities and advocate for better support and safer spaces.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT STAYING SAFE

Choose a safe moment for the conversation, emotionally and physically. If a child is upset or angry, help them settle before discussing serious topics. Listen actively without judgement, even if what they share is difficult. Avoid interrupting and offer advice when the time feels right. If you're worried, you're not alone; support is available.



HELP CHILDREN UNDERSTAND CONSEQUENCES

Young people can be searched by police or teachers if suspected of carrying a weapon. If found with a knife, they could face arrest and criminal proceedings. A conviction can result in a criminal record. Even being present during a violent assault, encouraging it, filming, or sharing footage can lead to prosecution. Open and honest conversations can help children understand these risks and make safer choices.



AVOID CONFLICT & MANAGE ESCALATIONS

Encourage young people to consider the 'Safe T's' – Trust instincts, Take a breath, and Talk to a trusted adult. When triggered or provoked, they may react from their 'survival brain', unable to think clearly about the consequences. Taking a breath helps calm, and helps them access their 'thinking brain'. Remind them that moments pass, and seeking support from trusted adults builds resilience and safer decision-making.



REPORT INFORMATION

We all have a role in preventing violence. If a child shares concerns, you can act. For educators, it's important to follow your school's safeguarding procedures. Other adults can report anonymously through Fearless or Crimestoppers, and speak with other parents, the school, or local police through 101. If someone is in immediate danger, always call 999. These steps help protect children and the wider community.



Meet Our Expert

The Ben Kinsella Trust is a UK anti-knife crime charity educating young people through immersive workshops, awareness campaigns, and community resources. Visit: benkinsella.org.uk



The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/youth-violence>



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