



Our Ref MW/RC

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Parents/Carers of Pupils at Aberdeenshire Academies

Maria Walker

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Dear Parent/Carer

I write to you in relation to recent media interest around incidences of weapons within schools across the north east of Scotland which has put the spotlight on this issue.

Police Scotland has dealt with three incidents in Turriff, Alford and Inverurie recently where three secondary school pupils have been found in possession of knives and have been reported as a result. No-one has been injured as a result of these incidents.

Together with Police Scotland and neighbouring authorities, I wanted to reassure you of our commitment to working with you to ensure we all keep our young people as safe as possible.

It is in all of our interests to keep young people and staff safe from harm and as an education authority we will continue to review current practices and procedures to ensure our combined actions help to reduce incidents.

As some incidents have been connected to issues around bullying I reassure you that extensive work has taken place with young people in schools on anti-bullying measures. This includes work with Youth Commissioners over the past two years to roll out an anti-bullying policy across all schools in Aberdeenshire.

Within each school we have comprehensive policies to ensure young people or parents can talk to staff about any issues which may be of concern.

We also work closely with Police Scotland on campaigns to tackle anti-social behaviour and regular visits take place across all schools in the area.

Police Scotland is absolutely clear that taking a knife or any other potential weapon into a school is against the law and anyone caught doing this will face serious consequences.

Anyone with any information regarding incidents of this kind should contact the school in the first instance or in an emergency contact the police.

We have around 38,000 pupils in Aberdeenshire and the majority of our pupils are well-behaved. These incidents are rare and please be assured that when they do occur, action is taken to deal with them swiftly and appropriately.

With your help we can all ensure young people and staff are safe from harm.

Yours sincerely

Maria Walker
Director of Education and Children's Services