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## **REPORT TO LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP ON CONCERNS RE CRIME IN THE CROFT STREET AREA, (BIRCHILLS).**

### **Why is the school concerned about crime in the area?**

- ❖ The school building is at the physical heart of the community, it is often the first (and only) 'port of call' for parents with concerns of any nature: e.g. evidence of drug taking in the local area; trouble between residents involving police etc.
- ❖ The school serves a very tight knit community, both geographically and emotionally, many residents are related and therefore have emotional involvement with each other. Problems can become wide reaching.
- ❖ The school obviously has a duty of care for pupils and staff, the first priority is safety and well being.
- ❖ The aims of the school state that we help each pupil to achieve their best, and that the stakeholders are all part of the team.

### **What evidence is there of crime and how is it affecting our pupils and families?**

- ❖ Parents often report anecdotal instances to staff, including finding syringes on the streets.
- ❖ There have been 2 fatalities in the last year, both were young men (past pupils) who lost their lives tragically. These deaths have had a profound effect on some of pupils and, some of whom were related to the young men.
- ❖ Other young men were convicted of the crimes, these are also related to our pupils, we are very concerned about the poor role models this presents to our pupils.
- ❖ There have been problems with families in conflict, with police and social services involvement, again this brings distress to our community and to the pupils.

### **What is the school doing about it?**

- ❖ The school is committed to good pastoral care for all stakeholders, we try to support parents especially, if they are experiencing difficulties.
- ❖ Through our role as 'pastoral carers' we often hear anecdotal stories re crime, we listen and support appropriately.
- ❖ We teach good citizenship via the curriculum and via our school ethos, which is caring and supportive.
- ❖ Staff attend formal meetings and liaise with outside agencies as necessary, e.g. police and social services.
- ❖ As head teacher I liaise with other stakeholder e.g. the mosque & Surestart, to try to address the issues jointly, as we have the same issues and targets.
- ❖ The local 'beat bobby' is now becoming involved with the school, presenting a calm and supportive image to pupils.

### **What would we like to happen next?**

- ❖ The school would like all stakeholders and influential groups to acknowledge the issues and work together to provide solutions.
- ❖ As head teacher I would like more informed involvement from the local mosques, from parents and from the police.
- ❖ At times it has felt like a 'siege mentality' in the school when there have been incidents in the area, although we always try to provide a safe, calm atmosphere in school. I am concerned that other schools do not have to deal with these issues yet we are held to account for standards the same as any other school. I need acknowledgement from the appropriate authorities that there are particular challenges in this area.

Elaine Perrins, head teacher, Croft Community Primary School. October 2004.