

**Principal: Mr D McGilloway**

Broadoak Academy, Windwhistle Road,  
Weston-super-Mare BS23 4NP Tel: 01934 422 000  
Email: [enquiries@broadoakacademy.clf.uk](mailto:enquiries@broadoakacademy.clf.uk)  
[www.broadoakacademy.clf.uk](http://www.broadoakacademy.clf.uk)



Dear Parent/ Carer,

We have been asked to send the following attendance initiative on behalf of Avon and Somerset Police.

*'Dear Parent/Carer,*

*We are writing to inform you about a Community Safeguarding and Engagement initiative that we, Avon and Somerset Police, are going to be involved with over the next few months, in partnership with secondary school age children in North Somerset. This initiative is focused on supporting children in our community who may not be attending school regularly.*

*Research has shown that regular school attendance is key to helping children reach their full potential, but we do recognise that school can be a very different experience for every child. Some students may struggle with attendance for a variety of reasons, and in some cases, this can expose them to, or make them more vulnerable, to exploitation or harm outside of the school environment, such as criminal exploitation, county lines, or serious youth violence.*

*To help safeguard and support our young people, officers and staff from Avon and Somerset Police will be working closely with schools across Weston-super-Mare. Their role will be to positively engage with students, parents, and carers both in the community and, where appropriate, at home. This might include:*

- Speaking with children in the community during school hours to check on their wellbeing.*
- Visiting homes where there are concerns about a child's welfare and speaking to the child but only when a parent or carer is present.*



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*Maximising students'  
abilities, ambitions  
and academic potential*

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*This initiative is about listening, supporting, and safeguarding and our goal is to help ensure that every child feels safe, supported, and are safeguarded against risk. We strongly encourage that all parents, carers, and children engage in this initiative.*

*If you have any concerns about your child's attendance or wellbeing, please don't hesitate to contact us directly or speak to your child's school.*

*Thank you for your support.*

*Kind Regards,*

*Avon and Somerset Police'*

## **FAQs**

### **What is this initiative about?**

This is a joint effort between Avon and Somerset Police and local schools to support children who may not be attending school regularly. The aim is to understand the reasons why a child might not be in school and to offer help where it's needed.

### **Why are the police involved?**

The police have a safeguarding role in the community. They are supporting schools by helping identify and engage with young people who may be vulnerable to harm or exploitation when not in school. This is not about criminalising children or families – it is about protection and support.

### **What will happen during a visit or engagement?**

Officers and staff will talk with the young person and their parent or guardian to understand the situation. This may involve discussing reasons for absence



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and exploring what support could be put in place to help re-engage them with education.

**What if my child is off school for a legitimate reason?**

The initiative is focussed on safeguarding children where there are repeated or unexplained absences, especially if there are existing welfare concerns. If your child is unwell or has an authorised reason for absence, this initiative will not apply to you.

**How can I get help if I'm worried about my child?**

If you have concerns about your child's attendance or welfare, please speak to the school safeguarding team. You can also contact Avon and Somerset Police directly by calling 101.



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