

25th March 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

As some of you may already know, over the weekend a former Highlands student was attacked and injured in the local area. The victim was taken to hospital, but the injuries are not thought to be life threatening. I am sure you will join with us in wishing him a full and speedy recovery. There have also been robberies and muggings in the local community.

We want our students to be safe, so I am writing to you today to let you know about the advice we will be giving to students. We would like you to reinforce this advice when you speak to your children.

- 1) **Keep valuables hidden** – students should avoid using their phones or headphones when walking to and from school.
- 2) **Awareness** – hoods, headphones and mobiles are a distraction to students and can make them unaware of their surroundings.
- 3) **Safety in numbers** – we would ask, where possible, that students do not travel home on their own and avoid isolated places.

Acts of violent crime against Highlands students are very rare, but it is important that we do everything we can to reassure students and keep them safe. We will be making sure school staff are visible outside school at the end of each school day and are working with the police, local authority and community groups to keep children as safe as possible when coming to and from school.

Please turn over for further guidance about keeping safe from the Metropolitan Police.

Yours sincerely

Vincent McInerney
Headteacher

Staying Safe – Guidance from the Metropolitan Police

Street crime is often opportunistic, so making yourself less of a target, moving with purpose and being aware of your surroundings will go a long way to keeping you safe.

Be prepared

Plan your route in advance. Carry a charged mobile phone and some cash, and tell someone where you're going.

Hide it

Keep your valuables including your mobile phone, other devices and jewellery, hidden. Remember, out of sight, out of mind. For more information, visit the Metropolitan Police webpage on protecting yourself from street robbery.

Trust your instincts

Try to avoid walking alone at night in places such as parks and side streets or any unfamiliar environment. If you do have to walk, stick to busy places where is a lot of activity, CCTV and good lighting.

Safety in numbers

Try to travel with people you know and, where possible, stick to routes and forms of transport that others are using and avoid shortcuts in lonely places.

Responding to a violent situation

Knowing how to respond to a violent situation requires split-second decision making and presence of mind – not always easy. However, we've compiled a list of things you should do in the highly unlikely event that you find yourself in a violent situation.

It's important to never lose sight of the fact that your personal safety is the most important thing. Your belongings can be replaced but you can't. So, when responding to a violent situation, please try to remember the following:

- trust your instincts and if you think a situation is getting worse, try not to get involved
- look for a way to leave
- if you're in a building with security personnel, tell them immediately about what is happening
- put distance between yourself and the other person
- if you are able to, call 999
- if you're unable to call the police during the incident, then call as soon as you can