



**Sandwell Police**  
**West Bromwich Police Station**  
**Moor Street,**  
**West Bromwich**  
**B70 7AQ**

Tel: 101  
Date: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019

Dear parents/carers,

## **County Lines**

It is likely you will have heard the term 'County Lines' in the news recently. This is a real and growing form of criminal activity that exists nationally and regionally across the West Midlands. To explain, it is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs from urban areas into rural areas. The leaders of these gangs are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults, often without them realising it, to move (and store) drugs and money. They use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

There may be signs of a change in a young person's behaviour such as:

- Returning home late, staying out all night, or going missing;
- Being found in areas away from home;
- Increasing drug use, or being found to have large amounts of drugs on them;
- Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going;
- Unexplained absences the Academy;
- Unexplained money, phone(s), clothes, or jewellery;
- Increasingly disruptive or aggressive behaviour;
- Using sexual, drug-related, or violent language that you wouldn't expect them to know;
- Coming home with injuries or looking particularly dishevelled;
- Having hotel cards or keys to unknown places.

The Academy and local police are working together to spot signs of exploitation and ensure young people are safe. We're keen that parents/carers are aware, and are able to offer support.

I would ask that you be aware of County Lines and if you have any concerns about a young person or have any information regarding County Lines to contact West Midlands Police on 101. There are some links below that you may find useful for more information.

With kind regards,

Sandwell Partnership Team

[www.fearless.org/professionals/resources/gangs](http://www.fearless.org/professionals/resources/gangs)  
[www.youandco.org.uk/crime-info/violent-crime-facts/gangs-and-street-violence](http://www.youandco.org.uk/crime-info/violent-crime-facts/gangs-and-street-violence)  
[www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-is-county-lines](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-is-county-lines)  
[www.spurgeons.org](http://www.spurgeons.org)

