

Press release: New anti-knife crime school lessons ahead of summer

The Home Office has been working with the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Association and teachers to create new and improved school curriculum materials on knife crime ahead of the summer holidays.

Today (5 June 2019) 20,000 PSHE teachers were sent new lesson plans that will further equip them to challenge myths and communicate to their pupils the realities of carrying a knife.

Aimed at children aged between 11 and 16 years old, the hour-long lessons have been created in partnership with the PSHE Association and developed based on feedback from teachers.

Lesson plans feature real-life case studies of young people from the latest #knifefree campaign along with new content on the importance of having good role models.

Victoria Atkins, Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability said:

Early intervention is a key part of our Serious Violence Strategy and it's vital that we give young people the tools and resilience to keep themselves safe over the summer holidays.

I'm pleased that our current lessons on knife crime have proved successful and that we are able to strengthen them even further, and I'd like to thank every teacher who has taken the time to deliver them.

The lessons explore how role models can influence young people's attitudes, decisions and behaviour in positive ways and signpost young people towards support services and the #knifefree website. They also include the true story of Dean, a teenager who was arrested for carrying a knife but managed to turn his life around through meeting James, a worker at a local support centre.

The new lesson plans are a welcome addition to the current PSHE syllabus after a series of lessons on knife possession were introduced last year.

Jonathan Baggaley, PSHE Association Chief Executive said:

We are pleased to build on the popular #knifefree PSHE teaching resources we produced with the Home Office last year.

These new materials are designed to challenge inaccurate perceptions about knife crime, help young people develop the confidence to resist pressure to carry knives, and to recognise

positive role models. We encourage all schools to download and deliver these free materials.

Current lessons on knife crime that were developed by the Home Office and the PSHE Association have been downloaded over 14,000 times since they were introduced in July last year.

This action follows a recent relaunch of the #knifefree campaign, which aims to discourage teenagers from carrying knives through sharing real-life stories.

In addition to the government's ongoing engagement with schools and youth organisations, the Home Office has appointed the charitable foundation Impetus to manage its £200 million Youth Endowment Fund to help prevent young people being drawn into a life of crime and violence.

The Home Office also has a £22 million Early Intervention Youth Fund which is already supporting 29 projects in England and Wales.