

Suspicious incidents

Dear Parent/carer

Parent/carer guidance on 'Suspicious Incidents'/'Concern for Welfare' around schools

It is not unusual for incidents to occur around Shropshire schools and they may appear to be of a suspicious nature to parents/carers/pupils/students. The majority of these incidents occur either as pupils/students travel to school or, travel home. Most cases are reported to schools by guardians of pupils/students. Schools respond and act on information supplied by parents/carers/pupils/students and in accordance with standard guidance provided by West Mercia Police and Shropshire Council. Fortunately when investigated by the Police, the majority of incidents are a false alarm or innocent. However, if an incident is a concern to the Police, schools are alerted and if appropriate, parents/carers/pupils/students are informed.

Schools don't inform parents/carers/pupils/students of an incident unless they are advised to by the Police. Why?

- Informing parents/carers/pupils/students of an incident when it's potentially a false alarm, causes unnecessary fear and concern.
- Mis-informed communication can effect Police investigations.

How can parents/carers help?

Social media can be extremely useful but can also complicate communications if information is not accurate. In the event of a suspicious incident, parents/carers frequently prioritise Social media as a means of communicating concerns to others. As indicated above, this can cause unnecessary fear and complicate/compromise Police investigations. On such occasions, contacting the Police is often overlooked. In the event of a suspicious incident or concern for welfare, parents/carers can help by alerting the Police as soon as possible. If it is an emergency and requiring urgent Police response, telephone '999' to contact the Police or, if an incident has passed and needs recording with the Police, telephone '101' and ask for 'West Mercia Police'.

Police support

The Police response to each incident will vary and in some situations, investigations may take a little time. The Police will support and advise schools and if appropriate, provide a visual presence.

Kind regards

Ian Bartlett

Crime Prevention Officer

Shropshire