Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for your support with the West Midlands Police Sandwell Schools Knife Arch Initiative yesterday. As you are aware, the knife arch was placed in our school, for one day only, as part of the programme designed to raise awareness regarding knife crime. Due to the time taken, it was not possible for every student to walk through the arch and so students were randomly asked to join a queue. There was no profiling or selecting of students and although we had planned for every student go through the arch, it was not possible on the day, following police advice. This should not take away from the fact that this project is an awareness raising initiative.

Can I also please bring up the subject of parking at the academy? At the Year 9 parents’ evening this week, I was approached by a PCSO with a complaint from a local resident who could not access Davey Road in a wheelchair because vehicles had been parked half on the road and half on the pavement. I would ask all parents and carers to park cars with due respect for pedestrians and other cars at all times.

Furthermore, I am also worried for the safety of our students given the current traffic issues in Dudley Street, both before and after school. It seems that many parents are:

- parking across dropped curbs, thus preventing residents from accessing their drives
- not stopping the car by a curb, but in mid-traffic, in order to let children out before school
- parking on the other side of the road and beckoning their child across, even though there are crossings further up
- double parking and thus holding up traffic
- performing U-turns without due regard for other road users
- having too many children in their car without sufficient seatbelts.

Following a complaint from a local resident, I have asked for police presence at drop off and pick up times. This morning, they noticed some of the issues above and spoke with drivers. They have also told me that if parents park by the side of the road for a short period of time to drop of a child, there is no issue. However, it is an offence to park by a dropped curb for a prolonged period.

To the very many parents who drive with care and ensure that their child arrives safely to school, I say thank you very much. If this isn’t the case, can I ask that we all please respect road safety in order to make sure all children are safe?

Thank you again for your support.

Mr A Price
Principal