

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re. Preventing street robbery and what to do if it happens

We're working with schools and communities to help keep young people safe on their way to and from school. As well as targeting and arresting criminals our officers often conduct high visibility patrols to provide a presence along key school routes and an opportunity for young people to engage or flag any concerns.

Advice to help young people stay safe from robbery

By sharing crime prevention advice with your child you can help prevent them from becoming a victim of robbery:

- Be aware of your surroundings when out.
- Try to avoid using your mobile phone in public or having valuables on display.
- Smartphones in particular are attractive to thieves – a more basic mobile phone will enable you to stay in touch but be less of a target. Make a note of the phone's 15 digit IMEI number, this will help police recover it if it's ever stolen. Identify the IMEI number by dialling *#06#.
- Earphones can make you more vulnerable as you are less aware of your surroundings.
- Having conversations with young people about the safest route home, avoiding shortcuts, is a good idea.
- Don't confront a thief – it's not worth risking your own safety for possessions that can be replaced.

What to do when a robbery happens

If a robbery happens then calling 999 on a friend or trusted adult's phone gives police the best chance to provide an immediate response. It also gives us the best opportunity to catch the suspects, recover stolen items, and most importantly ensure they are safe.

If they have returned home, they can still report online www.met.police.uk or call 101.

Give information anonymously to Fearless

Fearless provides non-judgemental advice about crimes that affect young people. They also provide a safe place for young people to give information about crime 100% anonymously.

If your child has witnessed a robbery, or knows of any information and they do not wish to speak to the police, they can speak to Fearless 100 % anonymously at www.fearless.org.

Get support after a crime

Although following crime prevention advice can help reduce the chances of being robbed, it may still happen. It can be a frightening experience which can leave young people feeling worried and scared afterwards.

If your child has experienced a crime, Victim Support are an independent charity with a specialist team who help young people cope with the impact and effects of crime, including advice and support for witnesses who may attend court.

They can speak to trained staff any time of day 08 08 16 89 111 or via the live chat function on their website. www.victimsupport.org.uk/children-and-young-people

Safer School Team – Hounslow