

Wood Green Police Station  
347 High Road  
London  
N22 8JA

Head Teachers  
Enfield & Haringey Schools

11 October 2023

Dear Head Teacher,

I wanted to write to you all and share some key updates regarding the attacks in Israel and escalation of conflict along the border with Gaza in recent days, in which many innocent people have sadly lost their lives. I'm really aware that this has had a very real impact on people in Haringey and Enfield, including our young people.

I also want to offer some reassurance and highlight that there will be an increased police presence in our communities across Haringey and Enfield, as well as other areas in London to reassure and protect all of our communities, but particularly those that have been affected by the situation.

This conflict has a far reaching impact on communities around the world, and we extend our full support to those affected in London. In particular we need to take into account the effect the ongoing conflict could have on school-aged children of Jewish or Muslim faith within London's schools & reassuring young people generally at this time of uncertainty.

Our officers and I are listening and working with communities, including the Jewish and Muslim communities, and partners and charities to ensure people feel safe and protected. We ask that members of the school community report anything concerning and are clear that anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and any other racial and faith-based discrimination will not be tolerated.

Currently, the Joint Tactical Assessment Centre have confirmed there is no increase in the national terrorism threat level, however intelligence is continuously being reviewed.

This is a developing situation and I would ask that you are not to be alarmed, but to remain alert and to report anything suspicious calling the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 or dialling 999 in an emergency.

I have briefed all of our Safer Schools Officers across North Area to continue the Met's commitment to keeping young people safe, improving trust and confidence in the police and deterring them from criminal activity. In order to achieve this, I've asked them to increase their visible patrols at our schools and to regularly engage with Dedicated Safeguarding Leads and Head Teachers in person to capture any community tensions that can be fed back to help our intelligence and information gathering.

I would like to ask for your support to work with our Safer Schools Officers to create 'safe spaces' in collaboration with Dedicated Safeguarding Leads, making themselves routinely available and approachable in their aligned education settings.

A number of demonstrations and protests have taken place or are planned across London. We are in liaison with the organisers and appropriate policing plans are in place that balance the right to lawful protest against any disruption to Londoners, whilst ensuring all communities are supported and reassured. We know people want to make their voices heard. The right to lawful protest is a key element in any democracy, which police in the UK uphold and facilitate, but even if the protest is peaceful and non-violent, this doesn't always mean the actions taken by those protestors are legal. We ask therefore that people continue to work with officers at this challenging time to ensure peace is maintained in our communities. While officers will police the protests primarily to ensure protests are conducted peacefully and lawfully, we will always take positive action if we suspect that a criminal offence has been committed, and will have zero tolerance for any act of hate crime.

There is no current intelligence that suggests sporadic protests are to occur at education establishments, but we will continue to monitor the situation carefully and update you where necessary to ensure you are supported in the event of a demonstration.

We are also aware of concerns being raised about flags and other symbols being displayed in a way that could lead to people feeling threatened. The waving of a particular flag is not, in itself, a specific criminal offence unless it relates to a proscribed organisation; for example, the waving of the Palestinian flag is not an offence.

Officers will, however, always need to consider the wider circumstances and will need to judge whether or not other public order offences may be relevant. We have reminded people that it is a terrorism offence to display flags, banners and images associated with proscribed organisations. Anyone who wears, carries, or displays an item in any way that gives rise to a reasonable suspicion that they are a member or supporter of a proscribed organisation may

commit an offence under Section 13 of the Terrorism Act 2000. Officers will remove such items and robustly and thoroughly investigate such criminal offences.

I hope this provides you with a useful outline of our plans to support the local school community. If you have any feedback or questions please contact me directly.

Anyone with concerns, or who has witnessed any offences, should contact the police and report on [www.met.police.uk](http://www.met.police.uk), on 101, or call 999 in an emergency.

Yours Sincerely,



**Caroline Haines**

Detective Chief Superintendent  
BCU Commander, North Area (Enfield & Haringey)