CITY ACADEMY

Ladywood, Birmingham, B15 2EF
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Headteacher: Rebecca Bakewell
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Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

HAPPY, SAFE HALLOWEEN/BONFIRE NIGHT – REMINDER FROM WEST MIDLANDS POLICE

With the darker nights fast approaching, it is important that students are reminded what we, as a school community, expect of them in terms of behaviour.

Parents/carers and students should already be aware that as part of our safeguarding arrangements, the school has a two-way information sharing agreement in place with West Midlands Police, and we are active members of the local Police & Schools Panel. This joint approach helps us to intervene early to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour involving our students and provide support and up-to-date safety messages.

In partnership with the police, we would also like to remind our students about the following: -

- **Anti-social behaviour:** Halloween can be a scary time for people who don't like surprises or callers at their door. Think about how your actions and behaviour affect others; elderly and vulnerable people may be frightened by 'trick or treat' – only approach houses that have been decorated for the occasion, as they are potentially inviting callers to the door.

- **Fireworks/Flares**: Young people are particularly at risk when it comes to fireworks. It is illegal for anyone under 18 to buy or carry these in public. Violating this law can lead to a criminal record and severe penalties, including a prison sentence. They can also cause serious injuries, including amputated hands, permanent scars, and blindness; be distressing to others, including pets and those with sensory sensitivities - It is important to be considerate of others and avoid causing harm.

- **Personal Safety:**
    - Be aware of your surroundings, take care of friends and family members and keep valuables (such as smartphones/watches/headphones) out of public view whenever possible.
    - For apple devices parents/carers can active 'Find My' which includes Activation Lock – A feature that is designed to prevent anyone else from using your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch, if it's ever lost or stolen. Activation Lock turns on automatically when you turn on 'Find My' on your device – more details on this feature are available here: Activation Lock for iPhone and iPad - Apple Support - Google have ' Find my Device' & android manufacturers also offer similar location apps (Samsung have 'Find' for example) these can be found on the Google 'Play store'.
    - Don't drink alcohol, take illegal drugs or unknown substances; they can have a big impact on your health and safety, behaviour, and your ability to do well at school and enjoy other interests and activities. They can also be addictive and have unpredictable side effects and could even have fatal consequences - Information is available at www.talktofrank.com

- **Social Media:** Don't allow your use of social media to put you at risk of grooming, exploitation, or regret in future. Use social media positively and avoid being negative about anyone online as comments/actions may be traced back to you and you will be held accountable.

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- **Weapons in public places:** Carrying a knife or other weapon will get you a criminal record which can have life-long effects on travel and job prospects. Those who carry knives are also much more likely to be injured by them. Don't take BB Guns, Gel Blasters/Guns, or any other real looking toy guns into public spaces as these can cause alarm to the public - which could receive a Police Firearms response.

- **Off-road bikes:** These can only be ridden on private land with the landowner's permission. Don't risk your life and future prospects by illegally riding these on the road.

- **E-Scooters:** In the UK, you must be at least 18 years old and hold a provisional or full driving licence to ride a hire e- scooter. A privately owned e-scooter can only be used in a private place with the landowner's permission; they are illegal to use on a road or in a public place.

- **Remember the company you keep:** If your friend breaks the law, your association with that person may have legal consequences for you, which could be very serious – even if you weren't the one directly responsible.

If a student is in a position where they need help, they should talk to an adult they trust. Crimes can be reported directly to the police via 101; alternatively, you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via www.crimestoppers-uk.org. **If a crime is taking place or a life is in danger, call 999 immediately.**

Yours faithfully,

Rebecca Bakewell
Headteacher
City Academy

Tom Joyce
Chief Superintendent
Birmingham Local Policing Area
West Midlands Police