



5 November 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

### **Community Knife Amnesty Bins**

You will be aware that Olly Stephens, a young 13-year-old local boy, lost his life in January of this year due to knife crime. Many people have been tremendously affected by this tragic murder.

Knife crime is a real and growing concern to many in our community, and one we know is a sensitive subject to address. As a community we need to be aware that this is a real danger; that some people do carry knives and many of the young people caught carrying a knife report the reason for this is 'fear for their own safety'.

The community knife amnesty bins are a collaborative initiative by Thames Valley Police and the Council and are an excellent way to help get knives off our streets.

Last week, community knife amnesty bins were installed at six locations across Reading to help tackle knife crime. The bins will offer members of the public the opportunity to do the right thing by safely and anonymously disposing of knives and bladed articles.

The amnesty bins will be in the following locations:

- Waitrose Car Park, Caversham;
- Cintra Park;
- Coley Park Community Centre;
- Kensington Park;
- Orts Road;
- Tilehurst Triangle.

The secure amnesty bins, which will be bolted to walls and concrete flooring, have a letter box design to allow knife deposits whilst stopping people reaching inside the bins. They will be closely monitored with contents carefully disposed of regularly. Reading Borough Council will be managing this as part of its drive to make communities safer and take a stand against anti-social behaviour. The Anti-Social Behaviour Team also recently launched the 'Reportable App' which allows residents to report anti-social behaviour problems more easily.

Superintendent Dave Turton, Local Police Area Commander for Reading, said: "Knife crime remains a key priority for both Thames Valley Police and Reading Borough Council and this is just one example of the work that we are doing together to prevent and reduce this type of crime. "By making these amnesty bins more accessible to the public, we can remove more dangerous knives off our streets."

Councillor Adele Barnett-Ward, Lead Member for Neighbourhoods and Communities, said: "Sadly, our community has seen first-hand the devastation caused by knife crime. We will never forget the lives we have lost and we need to work together to prevent more tragic losses. If you or someone you know carries a knife, please use the amnesty bins to hand it in. Save a life: dump the knife."



The Thames Valley Police email below, shares a link to the Council's [knife crime web page](#). The link includes a [moving video](#) from Olly's parents and shares their poignant views on knives, knife crime and how it has affected their lives forever.

We appreciate your continued support in making our community, and school community, a safe place to live and learn.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'CB' followed by a long horizontal line that ends in a small loop.

**Miss C Burns**  
Senior Assistant Headteacher