

To: Safeguarding Leads and Education Partners

Dear Colleagues,

Over the past 10 days, we have seen a significant increase in incidents of tension, threat, and harm involving young people within Leeds City Centre. West Yorkshire Police are currently responding to a number of serious incidents following altercations between large groups of young people.

Through intelligence gathering and discussions across multiple partnership forums, it has become clear that several of these incidents were pre-planned and arranged during the school day via social media and other online platforms.

As a partnership, we fully recognise that most young people attend the city centre for positive and legitimate reasons — such as socialising, shopping, attending appointments, or accessing opportunities. Every individual has the right to be safe and feel safe when visiting Leeds City Centre. However, in light of recent events, it is important that we make you aware of the current challenges and our collective response.

Immediate Response and Police Powers

**Ongoing Police Action:**

West Yorkshire Police continue to investigate recent incidents and have made several arrests in connection with the disorder.

**Section 34 Dispersal Orders:**

These powers, granted under Section 34 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, allow police officers to disperse individuals or groups from a specific area to prevent crime, disorder, or anti-social behaviour. A dispersal order can last up to 48 hours. Individuals directed to leave the area must not return during that time — failure to comply is a criminal offence and may result in arrest. Dispersal powers have been, and will continue to be, used where necessary. It is essential that young people understand these measures and the consequences of ignoring them.

**Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO):**

A PSPO is currently in place in Leeds City Centre. This civil order, made by the local authority, sets out specific restrictions to tackle anti-social behaviour in public spaces. Breaching a PSPO is a criminal offence: individuals can receive a £100 on-the-spot fine,

and if prosecuted in court, the fine can rise to £1,000. Police officers and local authority colleagues will be proactively engaging with young people to raise awareness of these conditions, and we ask that schools and partners reinforce these messages.

### **Support and Early Intervention**

While enforcement powers are necessary in some cases, our shared aim is to use them only as a last resort. We remain committed to engagement, education, and prevention.

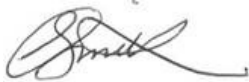
Leeds Youth Service and Leeds Youth Alliance are delivering a range of youth work interventions across the city, available throughout the week. In addition, we can offer targeted workshops within schools and colleges, and one-to-one support where concerns have been identified.

If you would like more information or to discuss how we can support your setting, please contact:

James McCarthy – [james.mccarthy@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:james.mccarthy@leeds.gov.uk)

We ask that you share this information with your networks, staff, and young people. By working together, we can help ensure that Leeds City Centre remains a safe and welcoming place for everyone.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Claire Smith', with a stylized, cursive script.

Claire Smith

Head of Safer Neighbourhoods and ASB

Safer Leeds Partnership