

25 March 2025

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Dear Caroline,

Thank you for your letter, and for raising this important issue on behalf of the Assembly. I am replying as I lead on this issue for the Metropolitan Police Service.

Knife crime has a devastating impact on victims, their families and communities, and I want to take this opportunity to assure you the Met is committed to taking knives off the streets, saving lives and bringing those responsible for knife crime to justice.

The Met dedicates considerable resources to combatting knife crime and serious violence. Our approach focuses on enforcement, education and engagement across our local policing, specialist crime and public protection teams. In line with *A New Met for London* – our mission to deliver more trust, less crime and higher standards – we are also working more closely than ever before with communities, as well as public, private and charitable organisations.

All of our 12 Basic Command Units (BCUs) have their own bespoke community crime fighting plans, informed by engagement with communities, to tackle knife crime in their neighbourhoods, focusing on preparation, prevention, protection and pursuing perpetrators.

This activity includes:

- Multi-agency responses for children at risk as victims or offenders;
- Education and engagement;
- Working with partners to reduce access to knives; and
- Targeted action in violence hotspots against known offenders.

In addition, our teams also undertake specific operations. For example, in November 2024 we carried out intensive action across London focused on knife crime and robbery. During the week-long period of activity, we took part in 400 community events, seized 115 knives and made 375 arrests.

We also know reducing knife crime depends on working with community partners and other agencies, for example, through public awareness campaigns and diversion programmes. As set out in *A New Met for London*, we are determined to maximise our community engagement.

Some recent examples of this include:

- We know that robbery is a key driver of knife-enabled crime in London. Working closely with MOPAC and the London Violence Reduction Unit, we are delivering a **Robbery Improvement Plan**. The VRU offers a variety of funding and resources to all 32 London Boroughs, which is used by local Community Safety Partnerships to implement programs that seek to address local violence issues and priorities, including initiatives supporting offenders of violent crime.
- We are also working with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to launch the **Child First Robbery Initiative**, which is aimed at knife-enabled robberies committed by individuals under 18. This initiative aims to speed up charging decisions from the current standard of 28 days to 10 days with the support of specialised officers.
- The drivers of knife and serious violent crime are complex, including (but not limited to): organised crime, criminal exploitation, fear of violence, socio-economic deprivation and adverse childhood experiences. In 2024, we launched the **Disrupting County Lines Policing Strategy**. This aims to proactively safeguard children, better prepare communities and relentlessly pursue offences. This strategy runs in parallel to our Children's Strategy.

Through our activity, I am pleased to say we have seen positive results so far this year (FY 2024/25), including:

- A reduction in knife-enabled homicides;
- A reduction in teenage and child homicides;
- A reduction in the number of victims aged under 25 who were injured with knives; and
- An increase in the number of positive outcomes for stop and searches for knives weapons.

Of course, we recognise the devastating impact of knife crime on every victim, their families and the wider community. That is why we are determined to tackle knife crime and the harm it causes.

Thank you for the opportunity to set out all the Met is doing to tackle knife crime, save lives and make London's streets safer. I know that we will continue to work together, and with the Mayor's office, to reduce the scourge of knife crime on London's streets, and reduce the harm caused to so many lives.

Yours sincerely,



Hayley Sewart
**Commander – Frontline Policing
Metropolitan Police Service**