

Neighbourhood policing: the experience of young people

Key information

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Introduction

The **London Assembly Police and Crime Committee** is investigating young Londoners' experience of neighbourhood policing.

Investigation aims and objectives (Terms of Reference)

This investigation will focus on how the Met is engaging young people in setting neighbourhood policing priorities. The Committee will examine:

- How the Met keeps young people safe in their communities, through its neighbourhood policing teams
- What the Met is doing to engage with young people and build their confidence and trust in policing
- How the Met intervenes and tackles recidivism in children who engage in criminal behaviour
- How the Met's operation in schools may be affected by cuts to Safer Schools Officers
- How the Met's 'child first approach' is manifesting in its neighbourhood work

Key issues

Neighbourhood policing covers many areas of policing, from preventing crime and anti-social behaviour to solving local problems, to building relationships with communities and strengthening trust and confidence in the Met.

As part of its Safer Streets mission, the Government has said it will “restore the link [between police and] communities,” with residents able to have their say on the police’s priorities for their area. As part of its plan for reform, A New Met for London, the Met has committed to ensuring there are at least two Dedicated Ward Officers and one Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) in every ward.

A significant part of the Met’s neighbourhood policing work is liaising with young people, and ensuring that young people feel safe in their local communities. In its Children’s Strategy, the Met says it will take a ‘child first approach’ to policing, and strengthen links between neighbourhood teams and education settings. However, the dedicated role of Safer Schools Officers (SSOs) — which provided direct links between schools and the Met — has been absorbed into a broader role: Designated Ward Officer – Children and Young People. Instead of having specific officers based in schools, their responsibilities are now spread across the wider Safer Neighbourhood Team. This means fewer officers are directly tasked with school-related work. A group of London headteachers has raised concerns that this change could leave vulnerable students at greater risk of exploitation.

Key questions

1. How are the Met’s neighbourhood policing teams engaging with young Londoners, including through Police Cadets, and how does this differ across London?
2. How is the Met ensuring that its Children’s Strategy and Child First approach is integrated into its neighbourhood policing work?
3. What are the views of young Londoners on how the Met engages with them?
4. How has the Met’s response to Child Exploitation and missing children been adapted since the HMICFRS review in 2024?
5. How service reductions have affected policing in schools?

Survey

The London Assembly **Police and Crime Committee** is seeking the views of people who work closely with young people to understand how the Met police is engaging with them, ensuring they are safe, and building trust.

[Fill in the survey here](#)

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