

*DRAFT LETTER FOR SCHOOLS & EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS TO CONSIDER USING IF AN INCIDENT AFFECTS THEIR PREMISES*

Dear Student, Parent or Carer

May 2016

Following a number of hoax bomb calls to schools across the UK this letter provides an update to students, their parents and carers.

Each call has caused significant disruption to school life, upset to school staff and concern to pupils, their parents and carers.

The police treat calls threatening bomb attacks very seriously and are committed to working with schools to ensure the safety of all students and to minimise disruption to their learning. The following action will be taken:

- Every bomb threat will be assessed. Highly experienced officers review intelligence and work with counter-terrorism experts, who have an in depth knowledge of incidents of this nature, to assess whether a threat is real or not. So far, there has been no credible threat posed to student safety and all the calls have been malicious designed to cause fear and disruption.
- Police are conducting a major criminal investigation. Making a hoax bomb threat is a serious crime punishable by up to seven years imprisonment. Police forces across the country are working together to find those responsible and a number of arrests have already been made.
- Police have refreshed guidance with the Department for Education to share with leaders of schools, other education establishments, and authorities. This guidance also signposts to advice on wider security reviews and supports existing safeguarding plans. Public guidance on how you, schools and the council can prepare for emergencies can be found at: [www.gov.uk/local-planning-emergency-major-incident](http://www.gov.uk/local-planning-emergency-major-incident);

There is a real threat from terrorism and it is important that we are alert but not alarmed. Schools remain some of the safest and most secure public spaces; the wellbeing of students is the top priority of staff.

To help us we ask the following of you:-

- If the school makes a decision to temporarily suspend lessons while safety checks are carried out, do not attend to remove your child unless asked to do so. Schools will keep you informed and always arrange care for students unable to return home or whose parents/carers are unable to collect them. Do not phone the emergency services to ask for updates on your child as it delays genuine people in need from getting help.
- Consider speaking to your child about the consequences of making hoax calls.
- If you have any information about those responsible for the security alerts call police on 101 (999 in an emergency) or the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.