



# St Benedict's Catholic School

*The Catholic Secondary School for West Suffolk*

4 November 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are writing to you collectively as the Head teachers and Principals of the schools and colleges in and around Bury St Edmunds about the rapidly growing issue of County Lines in this area. County Lines involves young people in drug activity with links to gang and knife crime. As a group we have been working closely together with the police, the local education authority and other agencies. We have also sought advice from other parts of the country which have had to tackle this issue earlier than has been necessary in Suffolk.

Our aim is to help protect the young people in Bury from the increasing risks they face and to take a common approach to this problem. 'Prevention is always better than cure' and we intend to ensure that families have the information that they need to understand the current position and how best to support young people. We recognise that it can be difficult to accept that areas like Bury are affected by these issues and that acceptance is key to beginning to tackle the problem. We have therefore arranged a meeting at West Suffolk College at 6.30pm on 11<sup>th</sup> November in Leonards House for all parents with children in our schools and colleges where there will be a presentation and opportunities for questions.

Our group is also looking at how to ensure that we take a firm, consistent line in situations where drug activity is brought into our schools and colleges whilst also ensuring that those involved receive appropriate support and guidance to help them. We will shortly be writing to you again on this aspect of our work.

We very much hope to see you on the 11<sup>th</sup> November. In the meantime, if you have any concerns, please contact your child's school/college in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Shaw  
Vice Principal – Quality and Student Experience at West Suffolk College  
On behalf of the Heads and Principals

