

## **Young People's Safety Summit, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023 – summary report**

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### **1. Background**

1.1 At the request of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children's Partnership, the first Young People's Safety Summit aimed at the Primary School Phase was held at Jo Richardson Community School on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The Summit acts as a vehicle to explore contextual safeguarding with young people. All primary schools, plus members of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership, were invited to have representation at the Summit.

1.2 Young people were asked to identify, discuss and record safe and unsafe spaces within school and community domains, with reasons also being recorded. They also explored a contextual safeguarding scenario centred around their peer group. This was based around a secondary aged scenario designed by the University of Bedfordshire as part of the borough's participation in the University's Contextual Safeguarding pilot. For the school and community domains, maps of their schools and of the wider borough were used to facilitate discussion and record young people's views. For the school domain, teachers and adults other than teachers stepped away from the tables to ensure that young people felt free to express their views.

1.3 A presentation from the Future Youth Zone helped signpost young people to local positive activity provision, alongside a presentation on Summer holiday programmes such as Schools Out, Get Active and the Holiday Activity and Food Programme. Young people were rewarded with goodie bags for their attendance, which included the offer a free session at the Youth Zone.

1.4 The Summit concluded with all young people recording one action they will take as a result of the session, one action they would like other organisations to take.

### **2. Attendance**

2.1 43 young people attended, drawn from the following schools:

Dorothy Barley Junior

Gascoigne Primary

Goresbrook

Grafton Primary

Hunters Hall Primary

James Cambell Primary

John Perry Primary

Manor Junior

Marsh Green Primary

Riverside

St Joseph's Catholic Primary (Dagenham)

Sydney Russell

Valance Primary

Three additional schools had confirmed their attendance but unfortunately withdrew just before the event largely due issues related to the national teachers' strike which was planned for the following day. As well as teacher representatives, the following professionals attended and played an active part in the Summit:

Kate Byrne – NEL Integrated Care Board

Ben Forbes – Community Safety Operations Manager.

As the Local Authority's OFSTED ILACS was under way during the summit, a number of professionals were also unable to attend on the day.

### **3. Outcomes**

#### **Peer/ friendship group**

3.1 To touch on aspects of contextual safeguarding, a peer/ friendship group activity was delivered, based on the secondary summit activity designed by the University of Bedfordshire as part of their contextual safeguarding pilot programme with Barking and Dagenham. The activity set out a hypothetical scenario centred around a character who is a friend. The name Riley was deliberately chosen to allow the scenario to apply to a female or male character. The scenario was as follows:

*You are friends with Riley and have grown up together in the same area. You have noticed they have started to hang around with a much older group and staying out late. Sometimes they miss school and you rarely see them in the holidays.*

*You are worried about your friend as you think the older group could get them into trouble or something bad could happen. Riley is still friendly when you see them and reassures you that you are still friends. But it has been a few months now and you want to help your friend as you know members of this older group have got into trouble with the police.*

*What would you do and what would you want adults to do?*

3.2 Groups of young people were then asked to respond to a number of questions related to how they would respond. The questions and responses are set out in Appendix 1.

3.3 The responses show that young people would overwhelmingly take action in speaking to an adult to support Riley as they are concerned for their welfare. This is strikingly different from Secondary Safety Summit responses, where many young people are reticent to talk to any adults for fear of being seen as a 'snitch'. Many young people also said they would talk to Riley directly. However, it's interesting to note that even at this age, one young person responded that they wouldn't tell an adult 'so it keeps me out of trouble and it doesn't get me involved so I am safe'.

3.4 The adults that young people would tell are generally restricted to teachers and parents, with one young person suggesting 'I wouldn't tell anyone in school as it is none of their business but I would tell a trusted teacher'. When asked about what can be done to support young people in scenarios like this to keep them safer, young people did suggest roles that support young people's mental health, such as a mental health advisor or therapist. This demonstrates a good level of awareness at such a young age, but also perhaps an appreciation that the risk of serious youth violence is public health issue. Trusted adults/ mentors were also seen as significant.

## **Community**

3.5 Scans of the young people's views of safe and unsafe spaces in the community by school, are given in Appendix 2. The most commonly identified areas deemed unsafe by young people across schools (i.e. over a third) were:

Dagenham Heathway

Becontree Heath (including around Morrisons)

Dagenham East

Barking Town Centre

3.6 There was a general consensus that school was a safe space. A number of responses referred to spaces being safe during the day but not at night. These included Mayesbrook and Pondfield Park. Young people saw some other outdoor spaces as being safe, including Ripple Nature Reserve, Creekmouth, and Valence Park. Interestingly some young people identified Marks Gate as a safe area. This is in direct contrast to secondary aged pupils who were perhaps responding to recent incidences of serious youth violence which younger pupils will not have known about.

3.7 Young people reported feeling safer in areas where they knew there was CCTV. Areas of high congestion, such as the A13, were raised as areas of concern. As with the secondary summit, many young people were able to identify very specific streets and locations where they felt unsafe due to issues of drug dealing and gang violence. It is important to look into these further. Dagenham Heathway and Barking Town Centre being cited as amongst the most common areas young

people feel unsafe mirrors the secondary summit, with Dagenham Heathway featuring particularly strongly in both (a change over time). However, Becontree Heath did not feature significantly in the secondary summit and is significant to note.

## **Schools**

3.8 As with the consultation around safe and unsafe spaces in the community, maps were provided to young people in their school groups to enable them to discuss and visually identify specific safe and unsafe spaces in schools. Maps were also provided to teachers and pupils and teachers were asked to identify safe and unsafe spaces. Adults were asked to leave the tables when pupils did this so that young people could speak freely. This also enabled teachers to measure their own perceptions of where the unsafe spaces in school might be against those identified by their pupils.

3.9 Young people's responses regarding their own schools have been captured in the same format as the community responses. However, as this information is sensitive to each school, it is not included here as part of the wider report. Instead, each participating school will receive their feedback for review, follow up and action. In general, young people reported that their schools were generally safe, with surrounding streets often being identified as less safe.

## **4. Young People's pledges**

4.1 All young people were asked to record one action they will take, and one action they think other organisations should take to make Barking and Dagenham safer. The collated pledges are given in Appendix 3.

4.2 A wide range of actions were cited by young people. Many young people pledged to attend the youth zone as a safe space, as well as encouraging others to go and promoting the offer back in school. Others pledged to be safer and more aware out on the street, and being careful about where they go. One young person stated they would 'never trust people older than me who I don't know'. Many responses referred to being more caring and helping friends with their problems, which was positive to see.

4.3 For wider organisations, young people spoke about more police on the streets (and 'patrols' which doesn't necessarily mean police) and more CCTV. However, there were some responses which are not usually reflected in secondary safety summit pledges. These include references to road safety, street drinkers and how cleaner and tidier streets support overall feelings of safety.

## **5. Conclusion**

5.1 The Primary Safety Summit has again provided an important insight into the young people's specific views and perceptions of safety across a variety of domains.

It also provides a glimpse into their lived experience. Although this was the first such summit for this age group, some interesting comparisons could be made with the Secondary Safety Summits around how views of safety change but also stay the same with age.

5.2 The community activity provides us with very valuable specific intel on where young people feel least safe and why. It is striking the level of detail that some young people can provide regarding specific areas where they do not feel safe due to issues of drug dealing, gangs etc. Dagenham Heathway remains a priority area for both primary and secondary aged young people, but it is interesting to note how prominent Becontree Heath is in the primary age responses.

5.3 Finally, the peer/ friendship activity demonstrated that young people of this age are keen to report issues within peer groups to trusted adults, something we know seems to be eroded away during secondary school. There is work to do here. This work, as well as the CSP and Safeguarding Children's Partnership will be closely informed by the outcomes of the Safety Summit.

## **6. Next steps**

6.1 This report is to be shared with Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Adolescent Safety Strategic Group, CSP leads, the Police and relevant Member Portfolio Holder meetings. It is also to be shared with schools, with the additional school by school feedback provided. As well as discussion and action at Strategic level, it is hoped (and imperative) that individual agencies, including schools, follow up on the intelligence that the summit has provided.

6.2 The third Secondary Safety Summit will be held within a year of the Primary Safety Summit taking place.

## **7. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Riley – What Would You Do? Scenario responses

Appendix 2 – Community maps collated

Appendix 3 – Young People's pledges

**Appendix 1 - Young People Safety Summit – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Riley Scenario – What would you do?**

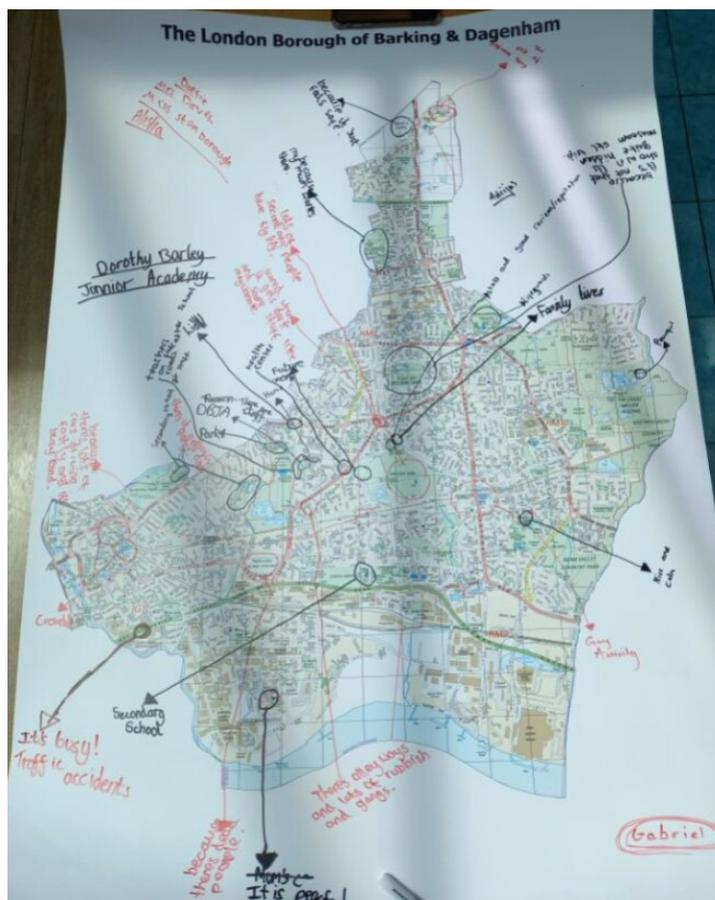
<b>1a. Would you tell an adult that you are worried about Riley?</b>	<b>1b. Which adult or professional would you tell?</b>	<b>1c. If you don't tell an adult, what are your reasons, why not?</b>
Yes, because if those older people have been with the police, they could seriously hurt your friend	To help riley you could talk to an adult, sibling or family. You could also have a conversation with them and convince riley to stop	Try to make plans to see if he has changed
Yes as I would be worried about him doing illegal things	I would talk to riley mum/dad about it. I would say that their son's friend has been involved with the police (teachers)	Try to understand that maybe nothing is going on and you are just overthinking it
Yes as I am very concerned for riley and hope that he doesn't get in trouble with the police like older kids	I would go to his parents and tell them that he's acting differently and has been hanging out with children that are older and more troublesome.	Look out for a change in rileys behaviour
Yes, I would be worried because him and the group have been missing school and the group riley hangs out with have got into trouble with the police	I would talk to the teachers, rileys parents and my own parents	I would ask riley if they were safe and try talk to him first and try to empathize and understand why he is hanging out with them
Yes as I would be worried they are peer pressuring him, as the group has been in trouble with the police before riley could get in trouble with them	I would tell rileys parents if they don't know , I would ask my parents for advice, I would ask rileys parents if they know he's missing school	I would talk to him and say I'd like to know why you've decided to hang out with people who get in trouble
Yes, you should be worried because they might get in trouble or something bad could happen to them	I would tell a trusted adult to tell him the consequences of his behaviour	I would talk to him and say I am concerned that you are hanging with the wrong people
Yes, as I know that the older people have got told of by the police	Tell a safeguarding member	I would tell him that the older group are bad influences and if he was to carry on I would tell his mum
Yes, as he could be badly influenced, forced to be friends with the older kids, forced to do things rileys isn't willing to do	Police, rileys parents, teachers, mentor ChildLine, your parents, rileys friends	I wouldn't tell anyone in school as it is none of their business but I would tell a trusted teacher
Address the concerns and be confident	Talk to an adult about the issue. Also talk to a parent so they can advise and encourage riley and keep him occupied	I wouldn't tell an adult, so it keeps me out of trouble, and it doesn't get me involved and so I'm safe
I would tell a trusted adult about rileys situation, also speak to a teacher or parents	Trusted teacher, Trusted Adult	
I would make sure that I talk to his parents and explain the situation and tell the parents to keep track of him, so he avoids danger		

**Appendix 1 - Young People Safety Summit – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023**  
**Riley Scenario – What would you do?**

<b>2. Do you think social services should get involved?</b>	<b>Why?</b>	<b>Why not?</b>
Yes	I would want an adult to investigate more on what is going on as it may be dangerous for a child to get involved	
It depends	I think it depends as it could really cause further problems, but it can help him.	If he had other friends, then it may be better to talk to them also if the police were to get involved it can get worse as he could be involved with illegal activity
<b>3. Who would you like to support Riley?</b>		
His Family, Teachers		
Mental support workers		
A trusted adult telling him about the consequences of his actions		
Talk to an adult teacher 'riley is missing school can you help him?'		
Tell safeguarding member		
I would tell an adult, talk to them privately to see what's going on		
Talk to an adult about the issue. Also talk to a parent so they can advise and encourage riley and keep him occupied		
Staff members		
<b>4. Do you think the older group need support?</b>		
I would tell the police if they are doing bad stuff or tell a trusting adult		
<b>5. What do you think young people like those in the scenario need to be kept safer?</b>		
A trusted adult		
ChildLine mentor		
A trusted adult		
A trusted Friend		
Mental health advisor		
Therapist		

## Appendix 2 - Safe/Unsafe spaces in the community

### Dorothy Barley Primary School



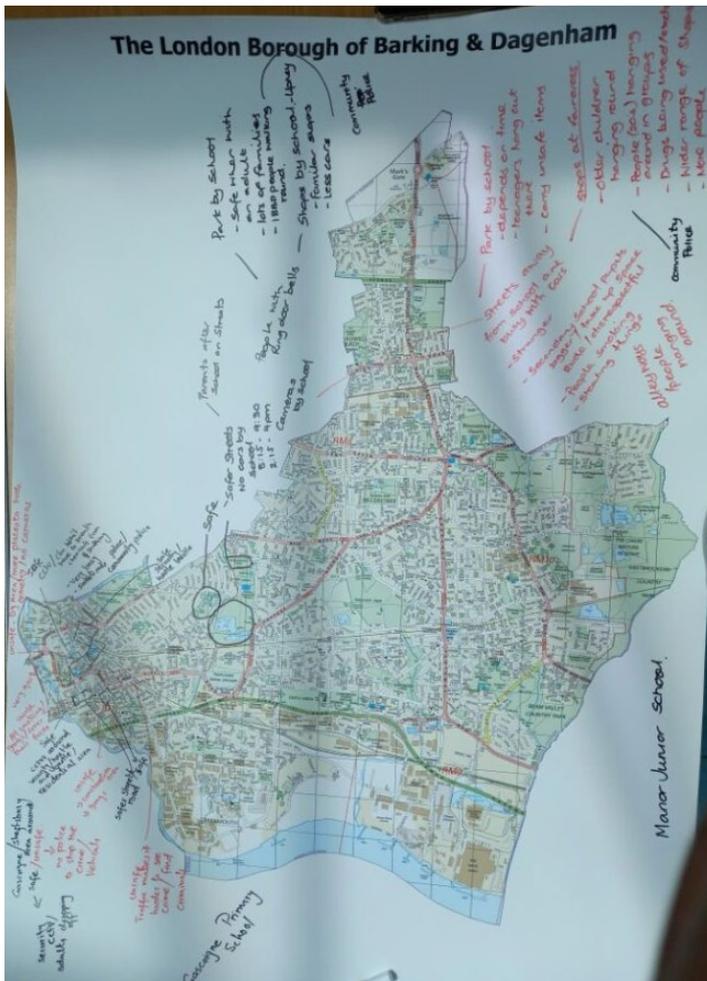
#### Good

- Feels safe in marks gate
- Valance Park is quite hidden so not many people go there
- Family works in Chadwell heath
- Becontree leisure centre has a good reputation good staff
- It's nice and calm in Grays
- Future youth zone on Potter's Avenue
- Maysbrook park is nice
- Primary school on Longbridge Road has staff outside
- Peaceful primary school in Creekmouth
- Peaceful in the Eastbrookend cemetery
- Health centre on Cornworthy Road

#### Bad

- Gang activity in Heathway
- A13 has a lot of traffic accidents very busy
- Lambley road has alleyways that have a lot of rubbish and gangs
- Becontree has a lot of cars driving and it's a busy road
- Lots of secondary people have fights in Parsloes Park
- Scared when it gets dark on wood lane
- Scared when it gets dark in Maysbrook

## Gascoigne Primary School/Manor Junior School



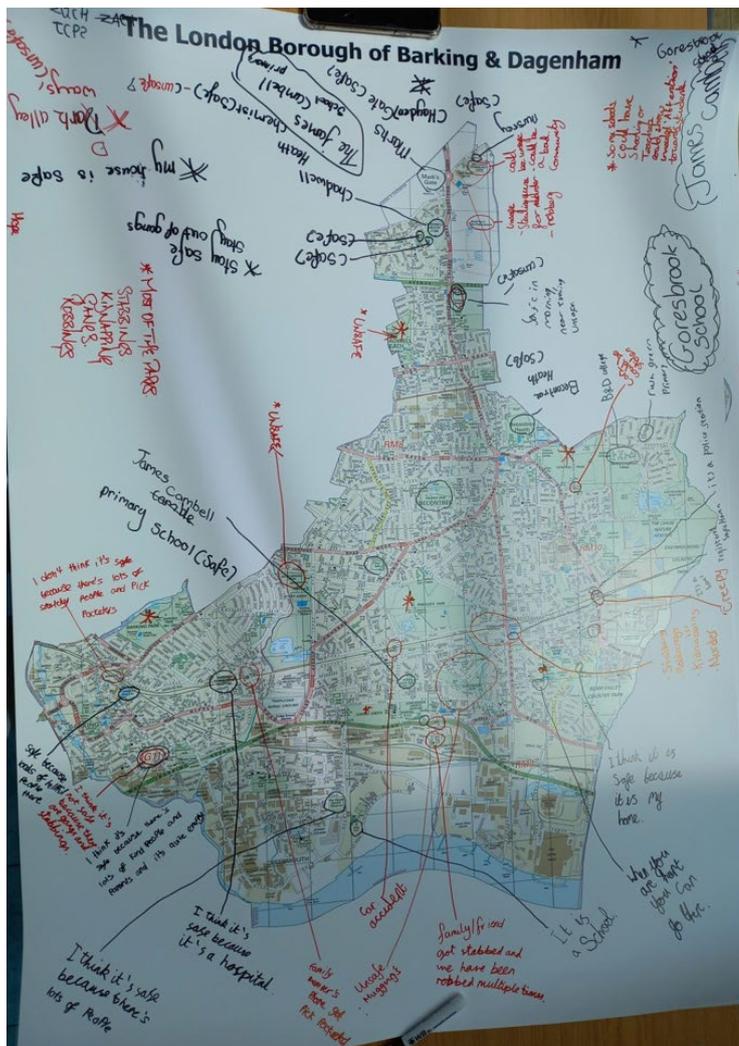
### Safe

- Gascoigne/Shafsbury area is safe, there is a lot of security, CCTV and adults dropping off
- Town Hall in barking is safe as there is CCTV, there is also community police/police in the area
- Barking train station area is safe as there is a lot of CCTV
- Mayesbrook park and the primary/secondary school around it is safe. No cars by school 8:15-9:30am, 2:15-4pm
- Park by the school is safe when with an adult, lots of families and LBBB people walking around
- Shops by school – Upney, Familiar shops, Less Cars

### Unsafe

- Streets away from school is very busy with cars
- Secondary school pupils are sometimes rude/disrespectful and take up the space of places
- Park by schools have teenagers hanging around/Carry unsafe items
- Alleyways have people hanging around
- Shops at Faircross have older children hanging around.
- People (20s) hanging around in groups
- Drugs being used near the shops at Faircross
- More people at Faircross
- Ripple Road has a lot of traffic/Harder to see crime and find criminal
- Barking Cemetery has no cameras
- Barking cemetery is unsafe as it is a big area
- River Roding barking is unsafe as there are gangs smoking and hiding their faces
- The cover dales are unsafe as there is construction work and gangs

## Goresbrook Primary School/James Cambell Primary School



### Safe

- James Cambell primary school is safe
- The ripple nature reserve is safe as there is a lot of people there
- Barking Community Hospital, I think is safe
- Vicarage field is safe as there is a lot of helpful people there
- Chadwell heath chemist is safe
- The schools next to Chadwell heath chemist is safe
- Marks Gate is safe
- Becontree heath is safe
- Nursery next to Wellgate farm is safe
- Medical centre next to Dagenham Park school is safe as you can go there when you are hurt

### Unsafe

- Wellgate community farm could be unsafe as it could be a bad community
- Central Park nursery could have cars stolen around it
- Chadwell heath is quite unsafe
- Barking train station isn't safe as there is many sketchy people and pickpockets
- Dagenham Heathway has many stabbings, robberies, kidnappings, murder
- Dagenham East is creepy
- Mayesbrook park is unsafe
- Goresbrook park is unsafe and there are muggings
- Scrattons farm eco park – my family friend was stabbed and has been robbed multiple times





## John Perry Primary School/Marsh Green Primary School



### Safe

- The chase natural reserve is safer than most parks
- Becontree is safe overall (security)
- Gray's Community Hospital have doctor & nurses that will take care of you when you need help
- The police station is safe as there is police officers willing to help
- The ripple reserve nature is calming and relaxing
- The A13 has just a lot of cars and not many cars

### Unsafe

- Dagenham Heathway have very poor social behaviour
- Wood lane has people around in gangs
- On Rainham road people on buses drink a lot of beer when school is over
- Becontree is unsafe and has overall a poor social behaviour
- Barking is violent and normally quite loud
- Barking has loads of people smoking and drinking
- Norton road has rude people
- Charles road has sketchy gangs
- Beam valley country park had fires and a lot of crime happening. Used vapes are on the floor
- People hang in gangs in the superstore near Becontree





### **Appendix 3 – Young People’s Pledges**

One action you will take

- Help more people that I am worried about or think they are unsafe
- Tell a friend about today
- Plan an assembly
- We had to write about scenarios and how we would help
- Tell my classmates about our safety
- Safety map for children at school to use
- Going to the future zone
- I've learnt to be caring
- I've learnt that I should always be nice and kind
- Stay safe
- Tell more people about today and inform the school council
- Be safe in everywhere
- Stand up for what is wrong
- I have learnt about rock climbing
- I will go future zone
- Consider the youth zone
- I would encourage more people to go to future youth zone
- People that attend future is really cool and I would like to go there
- Talk to trusted adults
- I would try to go to future youth zone
- If I ever see inappropriate thing I will stay out of it and then tell an adult
- Voice your opinions and consider other perspectives
- Help my classmates with problems
- Make posters to put around school for everyone
- I will ask my mum to bring me to future youth zone
- I will go to the future zone
- Look out for people be more cautions
- Think about how others might feel
- Learning how to keep myself safe
- Tell an adult if something doesn't feel right
- Voicing opinions more
- I'll ask people who are sad if they want to talk
- Tell schools and friends to spread the message
- I will inform my class about today
- I would like more security for children who walk alone
- I'll go to future if I'm allowed. 'Chance is very low because of my parents but I'd like to go'
- Promoting future zone with our community
- I'm going to show to be safe around school and the streets
- I will attend future youth zone this summer
- One thing I will take as a result is to never trust people older than me who I don't know
- Tell a trusted adult if you are concerned about something
- Be more careful about where I go
- Advertise Safety Awareness about attacks and robberies at public places

- Be more aware of your friends
- Be aware of what are you are in

### **One action organisations should take**

- Involve community police more
- More platforms to share concerns
- Put more police on the road so people will feel safer and illegal gangs will be caught
- More police in the streets
- More guardians in various places
- Safer roads less traffic
- Do this again next year
- Make places look more lively
- Guard the Heathway with police to reduce crimes and attacks
- Advertise Safety awareness about attacks and robberies at public places
- More teachers in playground
- This is for staff. Encourage youngers
- Add more CCTV in public areas
- More adults in the playground
- I think it would be better to add more security in places
- More CCTV
- One thing I want you to do is to make sure no cars enter a school area (school streets)
- All schools should have a security guard
- I want more police in more places
- More patrols, more visuals, security
- I want you to let the police come to our schools to talk to us
- I think adults have done enough for us – but I would like them to give more security and check on us more
- Talk to the community council about how they could try make the public safe for everyone
- Talk to the community council about making schools more safer for everyone
- Add more CCTV and have people patrol around school to make children safer
- More security
- More police on streets
- I would like more security for children
- If you feel unsafe/sad you should be able to go to future without paying
- To make sure that people are not drinking on the streets (they should drink indoors)
- Add more security around the school
- Police to patrol the area of the unsafe places
- Try to clean up the area to make it look better and safer
- Lollie pop Ladies as they're going
- More emergency services stations (Police, firefighters)
- More CCTV cameras
- Maybe inform the community that some older students have big play fights and make sure no innocents get dragged in
- Have more teaching in schools and more police
- One thing the police showed is to try not falsely accuse people
- More cameras. More controlled parking

- Police to patrol the dangerous areas
- Make sure parents know where their children are at all times
- Having trucks go past our school at later time
- More police patrol
- More CCTV around schools