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## The Knife Crime Matters Education Workbook Series, a complete knife crime prevention programme for Years 7 to 11

We are pleased to share our Knife Crime Matters Education Workbook Series, kindly provided to you via sponsorship from Keepmoat. This is a complete, classroom-ready programme designed to help your school talk to young people about knife crime clearly, calmly and with confidence.

The series is made up of five student workbooks, each with a matching teacher guidebook. Together they form a structured programme for secondary pupils in Years 7 to 11, ages 11 to 16, and it is written at a reading age of 11 to 14 so that it is accessible right across the year groups. The approach is deliberately calm and factual rather than graphic or fear-based, and it is victim-centred throughout: young people who are drawn into exploitation are treated as victims to be supported, never blamed.

The five workbooks build on one another, taking pupils on a clear journey from understanding the problem to acting on it:

- **Workbook 1, Understanding Knife Crime:** the facts, the law, and what it means to make safe, informed choices.
- **Workbook 2, Social Media, Influence and Knife Crime:** how online life shapes real choices, and how to think critically about what pupils see and share.
- **Workbook 3, Peer Pressure, Exploitation and County Lines:** recognising pressure, manipulation and exploitation early, and understanding how county lines works.
- **Workbook 4, Communities, Consequences and Victims:** the real, human cost of knife crime and the many people every incident affects, ending on a message of hope.
- **Workbook 5, Positive Choices, Resilience and Staying Safe:** building the skills, confidence and support networks that help young people stay safe and look to their future.

Every workbook is paired with a fully scripted, fifty-minute teacher guidebook. The guides are written so that any member of staff can deliver the lesson with confidence, with no prior knowledge or specialist training required. Each one includes a short briefing, clear timings, word-for-word guidance for what to say, ready-to-use activities with answer keys, and built-in safeguarding guidance to support non-specialist teachers.

For your students, the programme offers a great deal. It gives them the facts and the law in place of myth and rumour; it helps them recognise pressure, manipulation and exploitation before they are caught up in it; and it helps them understand the genuine consequences of knife crime for victims, families and whole communities. Just as importantly, it shows young people where to turn for help, signposting trusted national services including Childline, Fearless and CEOP, and the police on 999

and 101. Because the content is non-graphic and ends on a hopeful, empowering note, it is suitable for whole-class delivery and supports your wider PSHE and safeguarding work.

As the programme covers sensitive subjects, including exploitation and the effects of violence, each teacher guide contains a safeguarding briefing. We recommend that the lessons are introduced in line with your school's safeguarding procedures, and that your designated safeguarding lead is informed before delivery, as the guides advise.

We very much hope the series proves a valuable addition to your provision. We would be glad to answer any questions, talk through how best to roll the programme out across your year groups, or offer any further support you need. Please do get in touch at [info@kcmatters.org](mailto:info@kcmatters.org).

Yours sincerely,

Knife Crime Matters CIC

# Understanding Knife Crime

*Making Safe and Informed Choices*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS OR GROUP \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# Welcome and Ground Rules

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Knife crime is something most young people will never be directly involved in. So why talk about it at all? Because understanding the facts, the pressures and the places to get help keeps everyone safer. Knowledge protects people.

Before we begin, one thing matters more than anything else in this workbook: nobody here is assumed to carry a knife, or to know someone who does. This is about awareness, not judgement.

## Our ground rules

- **Respect different viewpoints.** People can disagree without falling out.
- **No names, no rumours.** We do not discuss real people or real local incidents.
- **You choose what to share.** You will never be asked to talk about personal experiences.
- **It is okay to find this difficult.** You can take a break or speak to a member of staff at any time.
- **Staff have a duty of care.** If anything suggests that you or someone else is at risk, staff must pass it on to keep people safe. That is their job, and it is always done to help, never to punish.

## Before we start

Finish the sentence below in your own words. There are no wrong answers, and you will not be asked to read it aloud.

*“When I hear the term knife crime, I think...”*

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*Keep your answer in mind. You will look back at it at the end of the lesson to see whether anything has changed.*

# Baseline Knowledge Check

Before we learn anything new, let's find out what you already think. Read each statement and tick one box. This is not a test, and nobody will mark it. We will come back to your answers at the end of the lesson.

	Statement	True	False	Not sure
1	Carrying a knife makes you safer.			
2	Most young people in the UK carry knives.			
3	It is illegal to carry a knife in public without a good reason.			
4	You can only get into trouble with the law if you actually use a knife.			
5	Carrying a knife "for protection" is allowed by law.			
6	A criminal record can affect college places and future jobs.			
7	Some people are pressured or tricked into carrying knives for others.			
8	If a friend is carrying a knife, the safest thing is to keep it secret.			
9	The police can search someone they believe is carrying a weapon.			
10	There are people in school who can help if you ever feel unsafe.			

**At the end of the lesson:** return to this page. Would you change any of your answers? Put a small star next to any statement you now see differently.

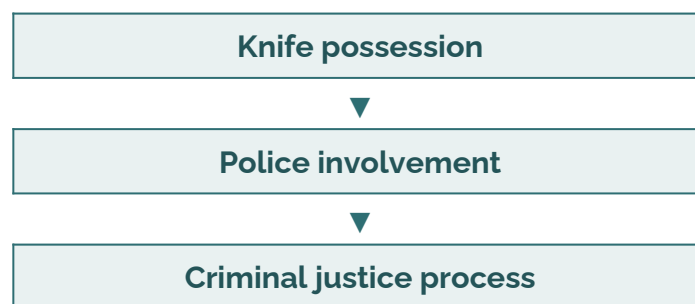
# What Is Knife Crime?

Knife crime means any crime that involves a knife or another blade. That covers much more than the attacks you might see in the news. It includes:

- **Possession:** carrying a knife in a public place without a good reason, even if it never leaves a pocket or bag.
- **Threatening:** using a knife to frighten, intimidate or control another person.
- **Assault:** injuring someone with a knife or blade.
- **Serious violence:** the most serious offences, which can change lives permanently.

Look again at the first category. It does not involve hurting anyone. Simply carrying a knife can be a crime, and the consequences can begin the moment it is found.

## From possession to prosecution



## Activity: Match it

Read each situation. In the right-hand column, write which category it belongs to: possession, threatening, assault or serious violence.

Situation	Category
Someone keeps a kitchen knife in their school bag "just in case".	
During an argument, someone shows a knife to scare another person.	
Someone injures another person with a blade during a fight.	
Someone agrees to look after a knife for an older person they know.	

# Understanding the Law

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You do not need to memorise legislation. You do need to know a handful of facts, because several of them surprise people.

## Five facts about UK knife law

- **1.** It is illegal to carry a knife in a public place without a good reason, such as genuinely needing it for work.
- **2.** "For protection" does not count as a good reason. The law does not accept fear as an excuse for carrying a weapon.
- **3.** The maximum sentence for illegally carrying a knife is four years in prison and an unlimited fine, even if the knife is never used.
- **4.** The same rules apply on school premises.
- **5.** It is illegal for shops to sell knives to anyone under 18.

## A record that follows you

Being arrested, charged and convicted creates a criminal record. That record can affect sixth form and college applications, apprenticeships, jobs and even travel to some countries. A decision made in a few seconds can follow someone for years.

## Activity: What might happen next?

These six events are in the wrong order. Number them 1 to 6 to show how one decision could unfold.

	Interviewed at a police station
	Decides to carry a knife "just in case"
	Stopped and searched by the police
	Future plans affected by a criminal record
	Goes to court
	Arrested

# Why Do Some Young People Carry Knives?

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Most young people never carry a knife. For the small number who do, there is usually a reason behind the choice, and the reason rarely works the way they hope. Understanding these reasons helps us spot pressure early, in ourselves and in others.

**Fear.** *"I need protection."*

Feeling unsafe is a real feeling and it deserves to be taken seriously. But a knife does not remove the danger. It adds to it, as we will see on the next pages.

**Peer pressure.** *"My friends expect it."*

Wanting to fit in is human. The problem is that the group's choice becomes your record the moment you are the one searched.

**Status.** *"It earns respect."*

Fear is not respect. Any "respect" built on a weapon disappears the moment the weapon does.

**Criminal exploitation.** *"Someone asked me to look after it."*

Some people deliberately use young people to carry weapons or other items for them. That is exploitation, not friendship, and it is never the young person's fault.

**Misinformation.** *"Everyone carries one."*

They do not. Believing that everyone does makes carrying feel normal when, in reality, it is rare.

## Reflection

Which of these reasons do you think is most common where you live? What makes you say that?

# Myth vs Reality

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Myths survive because they get repeated, not because they are true. Here are four of the most common.

**Myth:** *"Carrying a knife keeps me safe."*

**Reality:** Carrying increases the danger you are in. It can be used against you, it makes situations escalate, and you face arrest even if it stays in your pocket.

**Myth:** *"Everyone carries one."*

**Reality:** Most young people never carry a knife. The myth only feels true because the rare cases get talked about the most.

**Myth:** *"I'd only ever use it if I really had to."*

**Reality:** In a frightening moment, people act on instinct, not on plans. Carrying a knife makes serious harm more likely, and the law does not accept this excuse.

**Myth:** *"I wouldn't get caught."*

**Reality:** The police can stop and search people they suspect are carrying. One search is all it takes to change a future.

## Activity: Myth or reality?

Read each statement and tick the correct column.

Statement	Myth	Reality
A knife can be taken off you and used against you.		
Carrying a knife makes people respect you.		
You can get a criminal record just for having a knife in your pocket.		
Only people in gangs are affected by knife crime.		
Most young people do not carry knives.		
If you are scared, the law lets you carry a knife.		

**Talk about it:** why do you think these myths keep spreading?

# The Reality of Risk

## The most important fact in this workbook

Carrying a knife usually increases the danger a person is in. It does not reduce it.

Why? Four reasons.

### Escalation

An argument that would have ended in shouting can become something far worse when a blade is present. The knife raises the stakes for everyone, including the person carrying it.

### Accidents

Knives injure people even when nobody intends it. That includes the person carrying the knife.

### Impulsive decisions

People like to believe they would stay calm. In reality, frightened people act on instinct in seconds. A knife turns a bad few seconds into a life-changing event.

### Fear and panic

Other people react to the knife, not to you. They may panic, fight harder, or take the knife and use it. Carrying hands control of the situation to chance.

## Activity: Cause and effect

For each situation, write down what could realistically happen next. Think about more than one possibility.

Situation	What could happen next?
Two people argue. One of them is carrying a knife.	
Someone brings a knife to school in their bag.	
A group finds out that one of them has started carrying.	

# Decision Point: Jordan's Choice

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Read the scenario below. Jordan is not a real person, but the situation is one many young people will recognise.

Jordan is 14. Two weeks ago, an older group started hanging around near the bus stop Jordan uses after school. Nothing has actually happened, but Jordan feels uneasy walking past them and has started dreading the journey home.

On Friday, Jordan mentions it to a friend. The friend shrugs and says: *"Just carry something. You don't have to use it. Even my cousin carries one."*

Jordan does not want trouble. Jordan just wants to get home.

**1. What pressures is Jordan facing?** Think about Jordan's own feelings as well as the friend's words.

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**2. What does the friend's advice get wrong?**

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**3. What real choices does Jordan have?**

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**4. Who could help Jordan, and what could they actually do?**

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# Pressure and Influence

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Pressure rarely arrives as a demand. More often it is quiet and easy to miss. It can come from:

- **Friends**, when “everyone’s doing it” starts to feel like a fact rather than an excuse.
- **Older young people**, who may have their own reasons for wanting someone younger involved.
- **Social media**, where conflict and bravado are performed for an audience and can spill into real life.
- **Reputation**, when someone feels they have to live up to an image, a group or a postcode.

None of these pressures make a person weak. They make a person human. The skill is learning to notice them before they make a decision for you.

## Activity: The pressure thermometer

How strongly could each of these influence a young person's choices? Circle a number from 1 (barely at all) to 5 (very strongly). There are no right answers; this is about your honest view.

Influence	Barely	1	2	3	4	5	Strongly
Close friends	1	2	3	4	5		
Older young people in the area	1	2	3	4	5		
Social media	1	2	3	4	5		
Reputation, image or where you live	1	2	3	4	5		
Wanting to fit in	1	2	3	4	5		
Family expectations	1	2	3	4	5		

**Which influence do you think is hardest to resist? Why?**

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# Impact on Victims

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Behind every news report is a real person whose life changes. This page is not about shocking details. It is about understanding what "impact" really means, because it lasts far longer than the incident itself.

## Physical harm and recovery

Injuries can take weeks or months to heal. Some need operations, physiotherapy or time in hospital, and some never fully heal.

## Emotional impact

Many victims experience anxiety, nightmares or flashbacks. Places connected to the incident, like a street or a bus route, can feel frightening for a long time afterwards.

## Confidence

Everyday things can suddenly feel hard: going to school, going out with friends, trusting new people.

## Relationships

Friends and family are affected too. Victims sometimes pull away from the people closest to them, just when they need them most.

## Activity: An ordinary week

Think about an ordinary week in your own life: school, friendships, travel, hobbies, time online. Choose three parts of an ordinary week and describe how each one might change for someone recovering from a serious incident.

Part of everyday life	How it might change

# Impact on Families and Communities

Drop a stone into water and the ripples spread far beyond the splash. Knife crime works the same way. One incident affects far more people than the person directly harmed.

## One incident. Many ripples.

The person harmed
Family
Friends and classmates
The school
The local community
Emergency services and hospital staff

Parents and siblings live with worry and grief. Friends carry shock and sometimes guilt. Schools support students and staff through the aftermath. Communities can feel less safe in their own streets, and the people who respond, such as paramedics, police officers and hospital staff, carry what they have seen home with them.

## Activity: Community impact map

For each group below, write one way they might be affected when a serious incident happens locally.

Who	How might they be affected?
Family members	
Friends and classmates	
The school	
The local community	

# Safer Alternatives

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If carrying a knife adds danger rather than removing it, what actually works? Four things, and all of them are stronger than a blade.

## Talk to a trusted adult

Naming a problem out loud is the fastest way to shrink it. A teacher, parent, carer or youth worker can act on things you cannot.

## Report concerns, even anonymously

You never have to give your name. Fearless.org, run by the charity Crimestoppers, lets young people pass on information about crime completely anonymously.

## Plan safer journeys

Small changes lower risk: busier routes, travelling with others, adjusting your timing, keeping someone informed of where you are.

## Build a life that builds you up

Clubs, sport, music, youth groups: places where status comes from what you can do, not what you carry.

## Activity: Problem-solving matrix

For each worry, suggest a safer option and name someone who could help.

The worry	A safer option	Who could help
Feeling unsafe travelling home		
Someone pressuring you to carry		
Worrying that a friend is carrying		

# My Support Network

Everyone needs people they can turn to. Knowing exactly who they are, before a problem ever appears, makes asking for help far easier. This page belongs to you. Fill it in honestly, and add to it whenever you like.

**Remember:** telling a trusted adult about a knife is not getting someone into trouble. It is getting them out of danger.

## A trusted adult at school

For example: a teacher, your head of year, or the safeguarding team.

## A trusted adult at home

A parent, carer or another family member you can talk to.

## Someone in my community

For example: a youth worker, a coach, or a faith leader.

## A friend I trust to be sensible

Someone who would back you up in doing the safe thing.

## If I needed help right now

- **999** if anyone is in immediate danger.
- **Childline: 0800 1111** free, confidential and open 24 hours a day.
- **fearless.org** to pass on information about crime without giving your name.

*Keep this page somewhere you can find it.*

# Check Your Knowledge

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Ten questions to see what has stuck. For multiple-choice questions, circle one answer. For the others, write a short answer on the lines.

**1. What does UK law say about carrying a knife in public?**

- a) It is allowed if you feel scared    b) It is illegal without a good reason    c) It is only illegal for adults

**2. What is the maximum prison sentence for illegally carrying a knife?**

- a) Six months    b) One year    c) Four years

**3. True or false: most young people in the UK carry knives.    True / False**

**4. Give two reasons why some young people might feel pressure to carry a knife.**

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**5. Carrying a knife "for protection" usually...**

- a) makes you safer    b) increases the danger you are in    c) makes no difference

**6. Describe one way a criminal record could affect someone's future.**

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**7. A friend tells you they have started carrying a knife. The safest action is to:**

- a) keep it secret    b) tell a trusted adult    c) try to take the knife from them yourself

**8. Name two trusted adults or support services someone could turn to for help.**

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**9. Which of these is a myth?**

- a) A knife can be used against the person carrying it    b) Carrying a knife keeps you safe  
c) You can be arrested just for carrying

**10. Complete the sentence: One thing everyone can do to help keep their community safer is...**

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# Reflection and Personal Commitment

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**First, look back at page 3.** Would you change any of your answers now? Circle one: Yes / No

Which statement changed your mind the most, and why?

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What surprised me most in this lesson was...

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The most important thing I learned was...

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If I were ever worried about a knife, the support available to me includes...

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## My personal commitment

One positive action I will take after this lesson:

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Remember

Most young people never carry a knife.

*By knowing the facts and where to find help, you are part of what keeps it that way.*

### Where to get support

In school, my safeguarding contact is:

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If I am ever worried, the people and services I can turn to are:

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**Childline** 0800 1111 *free, confidential, 24 hours*

**fearless.org** 0800 555 111 *anonymous reporting*

**999** *in an emergency*

### End of Workbook 1 · Understanding Knife Crime

*Next in the series: Workbook 2, Social Media, Influence and Knife Crime*

# Understanding Knife Crime

*A Complete 50-Minute Lesson Plan and Teaching Notes*

For any member of staff. No prior knowledge needed.

*Everything you need to deliver Workbook 1 with confidence.*

# Before You Teach: What You Need to Know

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You do not need any prior knowledge to teach this lesson. Read this section once and you will know more than enough. Everything the pupils need is in the workbook; your job is to guide them through it calmly and confidently.

## What this workbook is

This is the first of five workbooks in the Knife Crime Matters Education Series, written for pupils in Years 7 to 11. Workbook 1 is about awareness and safety, not judgement. It gives young people the facts about knife crime and the law, challenges the myths, and helps each pupil build a network of people they can turn to. The approach is deliberately calm and factual. We do not use shock tactics or graphic stories, because frightening young people does not change behaviour, whereas genuine understanding does.

## The facts you need (all correct for the UK)

- **Knife crime means any offence involving a knife or blade.** That is far wider than the violence shown in the news. It includes simply carrying a knife, threatening someone, injuring someone, and the most serious violence.
- **It is illegal to carry a knife in public without a “good reason”.** A good reason means something genuine, such as needing it for your job, or taking a knife you have just bought straight home. Wanting it “for protection”, or because you feel scared, is not a good reason in law.
- **Carrying a knife can be a crime in itself,** before it is ever used, shown or taken out of a bag.
- **The maximum penalty for illegally carrying a knife is up to four years in prison and an unlimited fine,** even if it is never used.
- **The same rules apply on school premises,** and it is illegal for shops to sell knives to anyone under 18.
- **The police can stop and search** someone if they have reasonable grounds to suspect they are carrying a weapon.
- **Under-18s go through the youth justice system.** Outcomes range from community resolutions and cautions to, for serious or repeat offences, custody. Either way a criminal record can result, which can affect college, apprenticeships, jobs and travel to some countries.

**The single most important fact in the whole lesson:** carrying a knife usually makes a person less safe, not more. It can be taken and used against them, it makes situations escalate, and most carrying is done by a small minority. Most young people never carry a knife.

The exact laws differ slightly between England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, but these principles are the same across the UK.

## Tricky questions you might be asked, and how to answer them

### **“What if someone is threatening me? Can't I carry something to protect myself?”**

*This is the key teaching moment, not a problem. Say: “The law does not accept fear as a reason, and here's why it makes sense: a knife actually makes you less safe, not more. The safe response to feeling threatened is to tell someone who can help.” Then point to the support network on page 14.*

### **“What about a little penknife or a multi-tool?”**

*Keep it simple and safety-focused: “There are narrow exceptions in law for very small folding knives, but the moment you carry one around for protection, you have lost that exception and you are breaking the law. The honest answer is there is no good reason to carry a knife around day to day, and it is never worth the risk.” Do not get drawn into a detailed discussion of what is legal; steer back to safety.*

### **“Do the police stop and search some people unfairly?”**

*Treat this as a real concern, not a derailment: “People's experiences of stop and search do vary, and those feelings are valid. What we are focused on today is your safety and knowing your options.” Do not debate individual cases.*

### **If you do not know an answer,**

*it is completely fine to say “That's a good question, I'll find out and come back to you,” and pass it to your safeguarding lead.*

## **Safeguarding (read this every time)**

*Tell your designated safeguarding lead (DSL) before the lesson; these sessions sometimes prompt a pupil to come forward, occasionally days later. Never promise to keep a disclosure secret. If a pupil tells you something that suggests they or someone else is at risk: stay calm, listen, do not ask leading questions or investigate, write down what they said in their own words as soon as you can, and tell your DSL the same day. Then reassure the pupil they did the right thing.*

# The 50-Minute Lesson, Page by Page

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Hand each pupil a workbook and a pen as they arrive. The timings are a guide. If a discussion is going well, you can borrow time from pages 11 to 13, which are the most compressible. The suggested wording is shown in the shaded boxes; you can read it out or put it in your own words.

## Introduction to the class

0 TO 3 MINUTES · WORKBOOK COVER

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**Teacher note:** Set a calm, respectful tone from the first sentence. Pupils may expect a dramatic "scared straight" talk. This is the opposite.

### SAY

Today we're starting the first of five lessons about knife crime. I want to be clear about something right away: nobody in this room is being accused of anything, and nobody is assumed to carry a knife or know anyone who does. The reason we learn about this is simple. Knowing the facts, understanding the law, and knowing where to get help is what keeps people safe. We'll work through this workbook together, page by page, and there'll be bits for you to fill in as we go. Open it to page 2.

## Page 2 · Welcome and Ground Rules

3 TO 7 MINUTES

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**Teacher note:** The ground rules make the room safe enough for honest discussion and protect any pupil with a personal connection to this topic. Read all five aloud. The fifth one, about duty of care, must be said clearly and warmly.

### SAY

Page 2 sets out our ground rules. First, we respect different viewpoints, we can disagree without falling out. Second, no names and no rumours, we never discuss real people or real local incidents. Third, you choose what to share, you'll never be made to talk about anything personal. Fourth, it's okay to find this difficult, and you can take a break or talk to me any time. And the fifth one I want to be really honest about: if anything you say suggests you or someone else is at risk, I can't keep it a secret, because my job is to keep people safe. That isn't about getting anyone in trouble. It's the opposite.

### SAY

At the bottom of page 2, finish the sentence "When I hear the term knife crime, I think..." in your own words. Nobody will read it but you, and we'll look back at it at the end to see if anything's changed. Take a minute.

## Page 3 · Baseline Knowledge Check

7 TO 11 MINUTES

**Teacher note:** This captures what pupils believe before the lesson. Do not give the answers now; the point is that they compare at the end. Keep it silent and individual. For your reference only, the correct answers are: 1 False, 2 False, 3 True, 4 False, 5 False, 6 True, 7 True, 8 False, 9 True, 10 True. Keep these to yourself for now.

### SAY

Page 3 has ten statements. For each one, tick true, false, or not sure, based on what you think right now. It's not a test, nobody marks it, and there are no wrong answers at this stage. Work on your own and in silence, then close the book when you're done. We'll come back to these at the very end.

## Page 4 · What Is Knife Crime?

11 TO 18 MINUTES

**Teacher note:** The key idea pupils often don't know is that knife crime is far wider than violence, and that carrying alone is an offence. Walk through the four categories and emphasise the first.

### SAY

Turn to page 4. Knife crime means any crime involving a knife or a blade, and it's much wider than the attacks you see in the news. There are four categories. Possession means simply carrying a knife in public without a good reason, even if it never leaves your bag. Threatening means using a knife to frighten someone. Assault means actually injuring someone. And serious violence is the most serious harm, which can change lives permanently.

### SAY

Look again at that first one, possession. Nobody has been hurt. Nothing has been used. And yet just carrying a knife can be a crime, and the consequences can start the moment it's found. A lot of people genuinely don't know that.

### Activity "Match it", answers (pupils work in pairs):

- **Kitchen knife kept in a school bag "just in case"** → Possession
- **Showing a knife to scare someone in an argument** → Threatening
- **Injuring someone with a blade in a fight** → Assault
- **Agreeing to look after a knife for an older person** → Possession (also a warning sign of exploitation, covered in a later workbook)

## Page 5 · Understanding the Law

18 TO 26 MINUTES

**Teacher note:** This is the factual heart of the lesson and the part the briefing above prepares you for. You are not expected to be a legal expert; the five facts on the page are correct and enough. Land facts 2 and 3 hardest, because they surprise people most.

### SAY

Page 5 is about the law. You don't need to memorise anything, but there are five facts worth knowing, and some surprise people. One: it's illegal to carry a knife in public without a good reason, like genuinely needing it for work. Two, and this is a big one: "for protection" does not count as a good reason. The law does not accept being scared as an excuse to carry a weapon. Three: the maximum sentence for illegally carrying a knife is up to four years in prison, even if it's never used. Four: the same rules apply at school. And five: it's illegal for shops to sell knives to anyone under 18.

### SAY

There's one more thing, under the facts. If someone is arrested, charged and convicted, they get a criminal record. That record can affect college and sixth form applications, apprenticeships, jobs, and even travelling to some countries. A decision made in a few seconds can follow someone for years.

### Activity "What might happen next?", correct order:

- Decides to carry a knife "just in case"
- Stopped and searched by the police
- Arrested
- Interviewed at a police station
- Goes to court
- Future plans affected by a criminal record

**Then say:** "Notice how it all starts with one decision at the top, and everything else follows from it."

## Page 6 · Why Do Some Young People Carry Knives?

26 TO 31 MINUTES

**Teacher note:** The aim is understanding, not excusing. Each reason is something pupils can recognise, and naming them helps pupils spot pressure early. Be especially clear on exploitation: an exploited young person is a victim, never to blame.

### SAY

Page 6 asks why some young people carry knives. Remember, most never do. But for the few who do, there's usually a reason, and it rarely works the way they hope. Fear: "I need

protection", except a knife adds to the danger rather than removing it. Peer pressure: "my friends expect it", except the group's choice becomes your criminal record the moment you're the one searched. Status: "it earns respect", except fear isn't respect, and it disappears the moment the weapon does. Exploitation: "someone asked me to look after it", which is people deliberately using a young person, and is never that young person's fault. And misinformation: "everyone carries one", which simply isn't true.

**Teacher note:** The reflection box ("which reason is most common where you live?") can be a quick show of hands or a 30-second talking point. Take one or two volunteers, then move on.

## Pages 7 and 8 · Myth vs Reality, and The Reality of Risk

31 TO 37 MINUTES

**Teacher note:** Page 8 contains the single most important message of the lesson. Build to it, then slow right down and make eye contact when you reach the box at the top of the page.

### SAY

Page 7 tackles four myths. Myths survive because they get repeated, not because they're true. "Carrying keeps me safe", but it increases the danger. "Everyone carries one", but most young people never do. "I'd only use it if I really had to", but in a frightening moment people act on instinct, not plans. And "I wouldn't get caught", but the police can and do stop and search.

### Activity "Myth or reality?", answers:

- **A knife can be taken off you and used against you** → Reality
- **Carrying a knife makes people respect you** → Myth
- **You can get a criminal record just for having a knife in your pocket** → Reality
- **Only people in gangs are affected by knife crime** → Myth
- **Most young people do not carry knives** → Reality
- **If you are scared, the law lets you carry a knife** → Myth

### SAY

Turn to page 8. If you remember one thing from today, make it this, and it's in the box at the top: carrying a knife usually increases the danger a person is in. It does not reduce it.

Here's why. It makes arguments escalate. It causes accidents, including to the person carrying. People act on instinct when they're frightened, turning a bad few seconds into something life-changing. And other people react to the knife, they might panic, fight harder, or take it and use it. Carrying hands control of the situation over to chance.

**Teacher note:** The "Cause and effect" activity has no single right answer. Good answers include the knife being taken and used, an argument turning into a serious injury, being searched and arrested, or the group pressuring others to carry too. Take two answers and move on.

## Page 9 · Decision Point: Jordan's Choice

37 TO 43 MINUTES

**Teacher note:** This is the discussion centrepiece. Read the scenario aloud yourself. Steer pupils towards realistic help-seeking, not heroics, and never towards "just avoid them on your own".

### SAY

Page 9. I'm going to read you a short scenario. Jordan isn't a real person, but the situation is one a lot of young people will recognise. (Read the Jordan box aloud.) Now, in your groups, work through the four questions. There are no perfect answers; I'm interested in your thinking.

**Lead the feedback with these:**

- **Pressures Jordan faces:** genuine fear about the walk home, a friend making carrying sound normal and easy, the "even my cousin carries" line, and not wanting to seem weak.
- **What the friend gets wrong:** "you don't have to use it" ignores that carrying itself is illegal and dangerous, and "everyone carries" is simply the myth from page 7.
- **Jordan's real choices:** tell a trusted adult, change or share the route home, travel with others, talk to family, report the group's behaviour.
- **Who could help, and how:** a parent or carer, a teacher or head of year, the safeguarding team, or the police on 101, and Fearless if Jordan wants to stay anonymous.

**Then say:** "Notice that not one of the safe options is to carry something. The strongest thing Jordan can do is tell someone."

## Page 10 · Pressure and Influence

43 TO 45 MINUTES

**Teacher note:** Quick, reflective, individual. The point is that pressure is usually quiet, not a demand, and noticing it is a skill.

### SAY

Page 10. Pressure rarely arrives as someone ordering you to do something. It's usually quiet. On the thermometer, rate how strongly each thing could influence a young person, one to five, just your honest view. (Give a minute.) Which influence do you think is hardest to resist, and why?

## Pages 11 and 12 · Impact on Victims, Families and Communities

45 TO 47 MINUTES

**Teacher note:** Keep this brief and focused on empathy, not detail. The message is that one incident harms far more people than the person directly involved. This is covered in real depth in Workbook 4, so you can move quickly here.

### SAY

Pages 11 and 12 are about who gets hurt. It's never just one person. A victim can face months of recovery, anxiety, and everyday things becoming hard. And like ripples from a stone dropped in water, one incident spreads outwards, to families, friends, the whole school, the community, and the paramedics and hospital staff who respond. Have a quick look, and fill in one row of the chart on whichever page you're drawn to.

## Pages 13 and 14 · Safer Alternatives and My Support Network

47 TO 49 MINUTES

**Teacher note:** Page 14 is the single most important page the pupils complete. Protect time for it. Every pupil should leave with real, named people to turn to. Walk the room and make sure no page 14 is left blank.

### SAY

Page 13 has four things that genuinely work better than carrying: talking to a trusted adult, reporting concerns anonymously through Fearless, planning safer journeys, and building a life through clubs and sport where respect comes from what you can do, not what you carry.

### SAY

Page 14 is the most important page you'll fill in today, so give it proper attention. Write down real people you could actually go to: a trusted adult at school, one at home, someone in your community, and a sensible friend. Do it properly, because the time to know who you'd turn to is before you ever need them. The box at the bottom has services you can use any time, including Fearless, where you never have to give your name. And remember the line on the page: telling a trusted adult about a knife isn't getting someone into trouble, it's getting them out of danger.

## Pages 15 and 16 · Check Your Knowledge, Reflection and Close

49 TO 50 MINUTES

**Teacher note:** You will likely be out of time for the full quiz, and that is fine: set page 15 as follow-up or homework. Always finish on page 16's positive message, not on fear.

### SAY

Quickly turn back to page 3. Look at what you ticked at the start, and put a small star next to anything you now see differently. Page 15 is a ten-question check; we'll finish that next time or for homework. And on page 16, write down one thing you'll take away and one positive action you'll commit to.

### SAY

The most important message to leave with is the one at the bottom of page 16: most young

*people never carry a knife. By knowing the facts and knowing where to get help, you are part of what keeps it that way. Well done today.*

**Page 15 answer key (for marking):**

- 1 b · 2 c · 3 False · 5 b · 7 b · 9 b
- 4: any two of fear, peer pressure, status, exploitation, misinformation.
- 6: any reasonable answer, such as affecting college, jobs or travel.
- 8: any two trusted adults or services.
- 10: any reasonable answer.

## Two Things to Remember

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### If you fall behind

*Protect three things above all else: the law (page 5), the key message that carrying increases danger (page 8), and the completed support network (page 14). Trim pages 11 to 13, and set the page 15 quiz as homework.*

### If a pupil discloses something

*Stay calm and listen. Do not promise secrecy. Do not ask leading questions or investigate. Write down what was said in the pupil's own words as soon as you can, and tell your designated safeguarding lead the same day. Tell the pupil they did the right thing.*

*Most young people never carry a knife. By giving them the facts and the people to turn to, you are part of what keeps it that way.*