

GANGS & EXPLOTATION POLICY

BRAMHALL HIGH SCHOOL

AUTHOR: J KENNEDY
REVIEW DATE: MARCH 2026
APPROVED DATE: MARCH 2026
NEXT REVIEW DATE: MARCH 2028

1. GANGS AND EXPLOITATION

Regular pupil voice activities inform us that Bramhall High School pupils feel safe; however, we recognise, it only takes a small amount of abusive or violent behaviour to impact a school environment in a negative way.

Bramhall High Schools fosters a secure and inclusive school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying. The purpose of this policy is to promote consistency of approach and to help create a climate in which all types of abusive behaviour are regarded as unacceptable.

The school has a comprehensive Personal Development programme that aims to educate pupils about ways to prevent bullying, anti-social behaviour, criminal behaviour, substance misuse and how to keep safe outside of school and in later life.

In addition, we pro-actively prohibit the existence of 'gangs' on school property or at any activity associated with, or under the general guidance of, the school's authority.

For the purposes of this policy, 'gang' refers to two or more individuals who associate with each other primarily for disruptive, criminal, and/or other activities prohibited by law and/or school policies, rules and expectations.
Bramhall High School supports the Safer Stockport Partnership (SSP) by demonstrating commitment to promoting Stockport as a safe place in which to live and thrive.

SAFER STOCKPORT PARTNERSHIP AIMS TO ENSURE:

- Early identification, support and where necessary challenge of young people involved in or at risk of offending.
- Help for young people to deal with situations that may put them at risk of becoming victims of crime, bullying or intimidation, and to provide support to those who do.
- Focused enforcement to demonstrate that those that do offend cannot do so without facing consequences.
- More positive relations between young people, police and the wider community.
- Effective approaches to issues beyond the school site that negatively impact on pupil safety and behaviour.

AT BRAMHALL, NO PUPIL SHALL:

- Wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewellery, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other thing which is evidence of membership or affiliation with any gang.
- Draw gang graffiti or distribute gang-related literature.
- Use any speech or act in furtherance of gang activity.
- Act within a collective and behave in a manner that contravenes school policies, rules and expectations.
- Solicit others for membership in any gang.
- Request any person to pay 'protection' or otherwise act to extort any person.
- Incite other persons to act with physical violence upon any other person.
- Participate in any activity that could be interpreted as relating to gangs or gang activity.
- Commit any other illegal act or other violation of school policies, rules and expectations.

2. PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS

Any pupil who violates this policy is subject to the sanctions detailed in the school's Behaviour Policy. In addition, any gang-related paraphernalia or materials will be confiscated and may be shared with police.

3. BULLYING PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

Bullying behaviour has a negative impact on the school climate and can lead to more serious behaviours that affect the health, safety, and welfare of pupils and staff.

Whilst there is no legal definition of bullying, it is understood to mean the use of coercion to obtain control over another person or to be habitually cruel to another person. Bullying can occur through written, verbal or electronically transmitted expression or by means of a physical act or gesture. Bullying is not tolerated in or outside school, on public transport providing services to/from school or at school-sanctioned activities and events.

A pupil who engages in any act of bullying will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action such as suspension, expulsion and likely referral to external agencies including Youth Offending Service and police. The severity and pattern of the bullying behaviour will be considered when disciplinary decisions are made. See Bramhall High School's Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, safeguarding Policy and other related policies on the school website.

Staff who observe or become aware of bullying shall take appropriate steps to intervene and/or report such behaviour to the Senior Lead for Behaviour. Parents and pupils who become aware of bullying are encouraged to report it to their child's Head of Year.

4. APPENDIX A

This document can help parents/carers and those working with young people, to recognise the signs and find support if they feel a young person is, or could become, involved with gangs.

EXPLOITATION

Children and young people can be exploited by criminal gangs. They may be pressured into committing offences such as:

- drug dealing
- stealing
- carrying weapons or drugs

They might be at risk of – or in fear of – violence. They may be forced to travel away from their home and 'work' for the gang. They might not realise they are victims, at times it might seem they are choosing the lifestyle, but this is exploitation.

HOW IT BEGINS – GROOMING

Young people are enticed initially by the offer of free drugs or cash, or even just friendship and acceptance into a circle. This can develop into the promise of more money or rewards if they do something in return – for example, taking a parcel or packet to a specific address, selling small amounts of cannabis/other drugs to friends or holding weapons.

Young people can be approached anywhere such as:

- their local park;
- outside shops;
- outside school;
- at youth clubs;
- in communal flats.

Girls can be enticed into gang affiliation just as much as boys.

WHAT FOLLOWS - the promise of trust and respect through acts such as:

- an increase in the amount of money entrusted;
- larger amounts of drugs being given on a promise of a cash return – with the chance to make extra money for themselves;
- being asked to go into a different area for a few days or weeks, to a flat to sell drugs;
- being asked to hold a weapon;
- being asked commit violent or sexual acts on others as punishment or revenge.

INCREASING DANGER

Young people can be targeted by their own associates or by other gangs and are at risk of serious violence, robbery, sexual violence, intimidation and debt-bondage (where they are robbed for cash or drugs and have to work for free to repay the debt; which can be a substantial sum of money). Their families may also be threatened.

With an ever-increasing number of young people involved, and a higher earning potential through the ranks, there is a desire among gang members to sustain their place or move to the top end of the chain.

Increasingly, young people can be persuaded or encouraged to out-perform their peers. This could result in them being more open and suggestible to taking greater risks, involving more danger and behaviour of more serious concern – criminal or otherwise.

BEHAVIOURS

The behaviour of young people can change when they become involved with a gang:

BEHAVIOUR AT HOME MAY INCLUDE:

- withdrawing from family;
- breaking family rules and pushing boundaries;
- secretive behaviour;
- aggression;
- unexplained injuries;
- loss of interest in hobbies and normal routines;
- new friends;
- increase in incoming phone calls;
- being picked up in unknown cars or taxis;
- absconding from home, going 'missing';
- unaccounted for cash, new clothing or a new phone;
- unaccounted for money coming in or going out of their bank account;
- knives going missing from the kitchen;
- carrying or concealing weapons;
- carrying or concealing drugs.

BEHAVIOUR AT SCHOOL MAY INCLUDE:

- withdrawing from school;
- breaking school rules;
- loss of interest in studies;
- no longer attending school clubs;
- a breakdown of friendships;

- aggression;
- unexplained injuries;
- pushing boundaries;
- lack of respect;
- truanting or long-term absences;
- expensive items out of the norm;
- being dropped off at school in unknown cars or taxis;
- being approached outside of school by unknown people.

KNOW THE SIGNS

In general, signs can include:

- persistently missing from school or home, being found out of the area;
- unexplained money, clothes or mobile phones;
- excessive receipt of phone calls and texts;
- relationships with controlling or older individuals;
- leaving home or care without explanation;
- suspicion of self-harm, physical assaults or unexplained injuries;
- significant changes in emotional wellbeing;
- significant decline in school performance.

COUNTY LINES (DRUG TRAFFICKING)

'County lines' is a term used when gangs transport dugs from one area to another; young people are the primary targets to work for 'lines'. Gangs often use violence to drive out local dealers and exploit children and vulnerable people to sell drugs.

The 'line' relates to the main phone number that sends and receives orders for drugs. Drug lines will have their own identifiable name.

The line will send orders to 'runners' who will be in the local area where the drugs are sold. The 'line' will not be in the local area usually. It will be operated by an 'elder' or 'owner' elsewhere.

Heroin, cocaine and crack cocaine are the most common drugs being ordered and supplied. The runners are needed to transport the drugs and collect payment.

Young people will rarely say that they are running a “county line” or “country line”. They are more likely to say they are "running a line", "running", "trapping", "going country" or "cunch" or "going O.T.", which stands for 'over there', 'out there' or 'outta town'.

'Cuckooing' is a term that is used to mean taking over the property of a vulnerable person or an abandoned building – sometimes referred to as a 'bando' or a 'spot'. The property is used as a base from which to supply drugs. This can be known as a 'trap house'.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE CONCERNED

The National Crime Agency provides lots of useful information and advice, including signs to look out for, what you should do, and how the law will respond. Go to National Crime Agency: County lines.

You can get more useful information by downloading the 'County Lines Parents Leaflet' from SMART Training and Consultancy, who work with organisations to improve actions that help young people.

GANG STRUCTURE

There are different roles and levels of authority within gangs. These roles include:

- **Teenies** – generally those under the age of 10 – below the age of criminal responsibility – who are used to carry drugs and weapons, or move parcels between older members
- **Runners, Shotters** – generally aged between 12 and 15-ish, those who move drugs between older members, sell drugs in the streets, arrange street deals, stay in 'trap' houses where drugs are sold or made
- **Youngers** – generally aged under 18, they have some level of authority over teenies and shotters, are street dealers of class A or B drugs, can set up trap houses, recruit teenies, runners and shotters, report directly to elders

- **Links, Baby Mama, Bae, Wifey** – girls used by members as girlfriends, used for sex, exploited, they will carry or hide weapons, drugs and money for members of any age
- **Elders** – generally aged over 18, they are in charge of running street operations and trap houses, deal in larger amounts of class A and B drugs, facilitate purchase of firearms and other weapons, have authority over street dealers and youngers, respected
- **Faces, Olders** – those at the top or higher end of the chain, limited contact with street level operations, not often seen or known by street level members

STREET NAMES

Street names are generally used and often, other members will not know each other's real names. This creates a reputation – a 'rep' – as names can be chosen because they represent a threat or talent, but they are also used so gang members can't be identified.

SLANG, BRANDS AND SYMBOLS

Gangs have their own 'language' of slang terms. Some common terms include:

Slang	Meaning
Air	ignore something, not worth talking about
Allow it	stop it
Bait	easy to get caught
Bare	lots of
Beef	trouble
Burner	cheap phone, pay as you go
Ends	home area
Fam	family
Food	drugs

Slang	Meaning
Hen	Hennessy – alcoholic drink
Merk	murder or kill
Nitty	derogatory name for female
On fleek	perfect
Ps	money – paper money or notes
Pagan	person who moves between gangs, or has no affiliation
Shank	stabbed, a knife
Shook	nervous, scared
Sket	derogatory name for female
Slipping	being in the wrong area, not being prepared for something
Strap	gun
Whip	car

If you hear a word you don't understand, you should make a note of it and either Google it or look it up on www.urbandictionary.com. It may seem like another language but it's important you know what young people are saying.

BRANDS

What might look plain or inexpensive could actually cost a lot of money. You may question how a young person could afford these items worth hundreds, or even thousands, of pounds.

TATTOOS

The legal age for a tattoo in the UK is 18 years old. Even if a young person has the consent of parents/carers, it's still illegal to get a tattoo in the UK if you are under 18. Older gang members may have tattoos.

Several symbols are common in gang tattoos. These may include:

- rosary beads with a cross on the hand;
- a heart with £ or $ on the hand;
- family, loyalty, respect wording;
- postcodes, letters, numbers;
- 'Money over Bitches' – MOB;
- wads, rolls of cash, dollars, paper money;
- 'Soldier', 'Souljah';
- Nicknames and street names;
- RIP tattoos.