

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
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To: Director of Education
Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, Plymouth and Torbay

Dear Colleague

I am writing to you as Chair of the Devon and Cornwall Police/Education Liaison Group (PELG) to advise you of some changes in the methods by which the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary will deliver its services to school communities.

Members of the group, which include representatives of the Local Education Authorities, Head Teachers and Governors Associations, have carefully considered the outcomes set out in the Government Green Paper – 'Every Child Matters' and the need to make available integrated services to all young people with specialist support to those with additional needs.

The group has also taken into account the implications of the National Policing Plan and National Intelligence Model on both the Police service and our partners in this field.

A clear need has been identified to ensure our efforts are focused where they can have the greatest impact in achieving the Green Paper outcomes for young people in the future.

Feedback from schools and other partners has shown that a more flexible approach, tailored to local evidence-based need, would be preferable to our established 'one size fits all' Schools Programme.

In order to provide such a targeted, needs-led service for the future, the constabulary will introduce new working practices from 1 September 2004.

Our existing Youth Affairs Officers, to be known in the future as Youth Intervention Officers, will continue to work closely with you and our other partners in young people's services. In essence they will help co-ordinate and support the specialists' intervention required by young people with additional needs. This will include adoption of problem solving approaches to specific emerging problems. The elements of the Schools Programme will remain available for classroom delivery by these officers where a benefit is clearly identified.

So what of the universal service referred to in the Green Paper? The Constabulary has invested heavily in Neighbourhood Policing – ensuring that local communities are at the heart of our interests. For this reason, the role of your local Neighbourhood Beat Manager will become increasingly important.

In the future, the Neighbourhood Beat Managers will be your first point of contact for any non-urgent matters (any incident where you need immediate help will continue to be responded to by a patrol officer). They will seek to maintain regular contact with you and your staff to provide a familiar and readily accessible face. This will also provide opportunities to build closer relationships with young people themselves, deterring bullying and anti social behaviour, and building confidence and trust. These officers will maintain close contact with the Youth Intervention Officers, ensuring that emerging issues can be quickly addressed.

Local police commanders will be responsible for the implementation and development of this service in collaboration with headteachers and other partners.

The members of the PELG will closely monitor progress and work with you and the constabulary to resolve any emerging challenges.

As a long established partnership, we regard these changes as an exciting opportunity to build a new service for the future, which has the potential to impact positively on the futures of all young people and indeed on wider communities throughout Devon and Cornwall.

I look forward to your continued support in this valuable partnership.

Yours sincerely

(sgd) Tony Melville

Assistant Chief Constable
(Territorial Policing & Partnership)