

## Joining forces to keep Hampshire's young people safe



*Keeping young people safe: Headteachers and principals from across the New Forest have launched a new initiative to keep their young people safe from the harm of drugs. Called Hampshire Safe, the new scheme has received the support of Hampshire Police.*

Thirteen schools and colleges across the New Forest have joined forces to form a new alliance aimed at keeping their students safe from harm.

The focus of the new partnership, called Hampshire Safe, is to educate and warn their students about the dangers of drugs.

Member schools have developed a drug prevention and substance misuse strategy and will be introducing initiatives and offering safeguarding advice throughout the year.

Speaking on behalf of Hampshire Safe, Principal of Brockenhurst College, Di Roberts CBE, said: "As headteachers and principals we all share a common concern of the dangers that drugs can present to our students.

"Although none of our schools and colleges have a serious problem with drug misuse we are determined to keep it that way.

"Our overriding message is that we will do everything we can to protect our young people.

"Prevention will be the main key to this and we will be educating our young people to the dangers of drugs.

“Deterrents will also be a part of the partnership and we will, from time to time, use specialist dogs to detect any drugs that may have been brought onto our sites.”

Hampshire Safe includes Noadswood School, Ringwood School, New Forest Academy, The Arnewood School, The Burgate School, Totton College, Brockenhurst College, Eaglewood School, Applemore College, Priestlands School, Greenwood School, Testwood School and Hounslow School.

The partnership is launching this new initiative with assemblies across all its schools and colleges and a social media education campaign aimed at students.

Nigel Pressnell, headteacher of The Arnewood School, added: “Our schools and colleges are all based in rural or semi-rural areas but the reality is that even here there are concerns over the access to drugs in our communities.

“As schools and colleges we play an important role alongside parents and the police in educating and preventing our young people from falling victims to drug misuse.

“We believe as a partnership we are even stronger in this fight in safeguarding our students from harm.”

Temporary Inspector from Hampshire Police, Paul Beale, said: “We welcome and support the robust action being taken by New Forest schools and colleges to tackle drug misuse.

“We will continue to work closely with schools to educate students about the dangers of drugs and deal with offences as they occur.”