**Knife crime: Every secondary schoolchild in Coventry to learn of the dangers**

**Teenagers have been involved in at least five stabbings in Coventry in 2019**



Every secondary school pupil in Coventry will be taught about the dangers of knife crime in an attempt to stop youngsters being dragged into a life of violence.

Coventry has already seen a number of stabbings in 2019 - with teenagers involved in at least five of them - and the latest saw a 14-year-old girl attacked with a pair of scissors, police believe.

The fight to stop schoolkids being dragged into criminal gangs and activity has now seen a programme being rolled out to every secondary school in the city.

Fourteen of Coventry's 26 secondary schools have been involved in the Staying Safe programme so far, with the other 12 set to receive a visit from campaigners in the coming weeks and months.

The programme - which delivers say-long sessions to help pupils better understand the consequences of violence - is led by the Positive Youth Foundation, alongside West Midlands Police, Coventry City Council, the Police and Crime Commissioners office and Street Doctors.

Dean Kavanagh, chairman of Positive Youth Foundation, said: “The need for a co-ordinated, joined-up approach to tackling youth violence in Coventry is something partners and schools have been calling for.

“What we can’t afford to do is demonise and label a generation of young people and think that arrest and prosecution is the only answer to this.

"Young people are often the victims in this matter, which is complicated and relates to poverty, exploitation, a lack of opportunity and role models.

“It’s vital to get into schools and other places across the city and engage with our young people, to speak their language and bring about positive changes.

“As a social enterprise, we rely on the support of our funders and have to ensure we are spending the money in the right way to have the best outcome for the city and its young people – and we believe this programme is crucial for Coventry.”