



RWS/JA

**February 2005**

Dear Parents/Guardians

We write now, using Royal Mail rather than "pupil post", because we have very real concerns about some youngsters' activities during evening times, particularly on Fridays and Saturdays.

From our own observations as well as reports from local residents and the Police, it is quite clear that significant numbers of young people, some of them in large groups, are out and about in Elm Park, Hornchurch and Rainham in the evening, when there are incidents of intimidation, criminal damage and other types of anti social behaviour. These areas are very popular meeting places on Friday and Saturday evenings and activity there is especially worrying from our point of view. There is evidence that individual houses and shops are being targeted and frequently members of the general public have complained of feeling intimidated. This kind of behaviour is clearly unacceptable and we feel strongly that any pupil who indulges in it should not expect to continue to be part of our schools.

We endeavour to make sure our schools are orderly and happy communities in which to work; the attitudes of the vast majority of pupils are a source of enormous pride. They are open, friendly and demonstrate a clear understanding of right and wrong. We know, of course, that only a small minority of our pupils behave in an unacceptable way when they are away from school although even those who are normally sensible can be drawn into situations, which they may later regret. We are also aware that some of the young people involved in wrongdoing are not pupils of our schools.

However, it is our duty to let parents know if we believe their children to be at risk, as a result of their own actions or those of others. As Head Teachers, we constantly ask the question – "what would I do if this were my child/children?"

In these circumstances, taking into account our knowledge of what is going on in the area, the answer that we would wish to be sure that we knew where our children were, whom they were with and what they were doing during evenings out – and perhaps, on occasions, to visit the areas where children are congregating.

Please forgive us if you feel that we are taking our responsibility too far by writing to you in this way. We hope that you will understand why we feel the need to do so. If your son or daughter resents any interest in their evening activities, which this letter prompts, we will be happy to take the blame. As always, if you need support, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

**R.W. Sheffield**  
Principal

**G. Mayoh**  
Headteacher

**Abbs Cross School & Arts College**

**Mrs M. Johnson**  
Headteacher

**The Albany School**

**Ms T. Blight**  
Headteacher

**The Sanders Drapers School**