

OFFICIAL

31 March 2021

To all parents / carers of young
people at secondary schools
in South Ayrshire.



South Ayrshire Area Command
Ayr Police Office
1 King Street
Ayr
KA8 0BU

Dear Parent / Carer

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN SOUTH AYRSHIRE

After very careful consideration, I have taken the unusual step of asking South Ayrshire Council to allow me the opportunity to write to you regarding instances of anti-social behaviour by groups of young people in many areas of South Ayrshire over the last few months.

Whilst I am writing to parents / carers of all pupils at schools in South Ayrshire, I am well aware that the vast majority of pupils behave to a very high standard in the local community and many are not involved in incidents that are causing concern. I am aware too, that some of the young people involved may not stay in South Ayrshire as I know that some young people are travelling from North and East Ayrshire to South Ayrshire to meet up with others.

This letter sets out my clear commitment as Area Commander for South Ayrshire to deal with the issues currently being experienced, and to work with parents / carers, schools, campus officers, the local community and partners to ensure that all young people and the community are appropriately supported.

Disappointingly, in recent weeks young people have been found congregating in parks, golf courses, beaches and school grounds. Many of the young people are in possession of and/or under the influence of alcohol. This puts young people at clear risk. We have reports of young people fighting, damaging property, creating a noise nuisance, fire setting, urinating in public and leaving empty bottles/cans and other litter at the locations above. Last weekend a police vehicle was damaged by young people and this has had to be removed from service until repairs can be carried out.

When young people gather in large numbers, the public are rightly concerned and much of the behaviour reported to police over the last few weeks is entirely unacceptable and in many cases amounts to criminality.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Police patrols have focused on particular areas of concern over the last few weeks and these will continue in the weeks to come.

The last many months have been a difficult time for everyone, not least young people. All of us have had to make sacrifices during the lockdown and I know that young people have not had the opportunity to do many of the things they enjoy with their wider peer group.

I recognise the benefits that being outdoors brings, but this must be done safely, in line with current Covid guidelines and with minimal impact on the wider community. As you may know, current Covid guidance advises that 12 -17 year olds can meet up outdoors in groups of up to four people at a time and are not subject to a two household limit.

Can I please seek your support to talk with young people about the concerns of anti-social behaviour and the consequences of getting involved in such activity? The last thing I want to do is criminalise young people, however I am keen that they recognise behaviours that are not in line with community expectations or the values of respect and responsibility.

We will always engage with young people and encourage them to understand the impact their behaviour may have on them and the wider community. Where this proves ineffective then we may resort to enforcement activity, which may include a young person being taken home by the police or to a local police office. This is not a decision taken lightly, but is done to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the young person.

We will continue to promote positive choices for young people and highlight the work we do in the local community via our social media channels and the local press. I hope this goes some way to influence young people and reassure the community.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and I hope we can work together to ensure that young people are aware of what has taken place in recent months and what action local officers are undertaking to address this.

Should you or members of your family have any concerns about the actions of young people in the local community please contact Police Scotland on 101 or 999 in an emergency.

I wish you and your families an enjoyable and safe Easter holiday period.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian J. Anderson', written in a cursive style.

Brian J. Anderson
Chief Inspector
Area Commander

OFFICIAL