

Gangs and organised crime



Safeguarding

Pupils need to feel safe discussing the issues covered within the lesson without concern that these discussions will be shared by teachers or pupils. However, it is vital to make it clear that if you become concerned by something they disclose, then you will need to follow the school's safeguarding policy and inform someone else. If you are aware of students who have had particularly adverse experiences in relation to this topic we would advise speaking to the student in advance of the lesson to ensure they are happy to participate. Please feel free to adapt lesson activities to suit the needs of your students.

How to use this lesson plan

This lesson plan contains more activities than you need for an average 45 minutes -1 hour lesson. This is deliberate so that you can choose the activities that best suit the needs or abilities of your students. There are 3 x 10 minute activities (Take 10), 2 x 20 minute activities (Take 20), and 1 x 30 minute activity (Take 30). The lesson also has a 'challenge' task that can be used as an extension activity or for more able groups. The check boxes by each activity in the plan can be used to mark which activities you are teaching. If you choose to use all the activities we would advise splitting them across two separate lessons. Ensure that you start every lesson with the Ground Rules (Rules of Engagement) to create a safe and supportive learning environment. This is the first slide of the PowerPoint presentation that accompanies the lesson plan. When you have chosen the activities to teach you can cut the irrelevant slides from the PowerPoint and add in your own slides as desired. The final slide signposts pupils to additional support and we advise you add your own local signposting to this slide e.g. school counsellor or local services. The PowerPoint that accompanies this lesson plan is fully editable and this lesson PDF also has an editable space (at the end of the plan) for you to write notes or add your own activities if desired.

Learning intentions

I can evaluate the risks and consequences of being involved in gangs and organised crime.

I know how to access support if I am concerned about gang culture and wish to exit safely.

Resources you will need

PowerPoint slides
Paper
Pens
Take 30 activity worksheets (see end of lesson plan)

List of PowerPoint slides

Slide 1: Rules of Engagement (Ground Rules)
Slides 2-9: Take 10 activity 1 "Is it a crime? Would you report it?"
Slides 10-12: Take 10 activity 2 Criminal activity and gangs
Slides 13-14: Take 10 activity 3 Risks of gang membership
Slides 15-24: Take 20 activity 1 How gangs recruit
Slides 25-29: Take 20 activity 2 Leaving a gang safely
Slides 30-32: Take 30 activity Tackling organised crime
Slide 33: Challenge activity Music and gang culture
Slide 34: It's a wrap summary slide
Slide 35: Signposting
(please also add your own local information to this slide)

Curriculum references

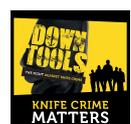
PSHE Association
H14, H17, R19, R24

Skills

I have confidence
I have social intelligence
I am self-regulated
I am self-aware
I am logical
I can reason
I can infer

Values

I am brave
I am honest
I have self-respect
I am law-abiding
I am responsible



Lesson Introduction

Introduce the context of the lesson by explaining the focus of this lesson is on gangs and organised crime and the risks associated with these. Show **PowerPoint Slide 1** and explain the Ground Rules (Rules of Engagement) to the students. Ask if they would like any additional rules added to the list before continuing. Make a note of any additional rules on the class whiteboard as a reminder.

Take 10 Activity choices (10 minutes each)

Is it a crime?

There are a range of ways you could run this activity using **PowerPoint Slides 2-9**. For example if there's space the students could stand up place themselves on a line (1-5) depending on how they felt about each question. Alternatively each question could be discussed in pairs or groups with each writing down their choice.

Feedback discussion can go in a number of directions. All the slides are about illegal activity but are there some that students would feel more or less inclined to report? Why is this? What are the potential consequences of not reporting crimes for individuals and/or communities?

This is a 10 minute activity but could be easily expanded to 20 minutes if you have more time available.

What is organised crime?

Show **PowerPoint Slide 10** and ask students to work in small groups to list the type of criminal activities associated with organised criminal gangs. Take some feedback and then show **PowerPoint Slide 11**. Check student suggestions against the list. Explain that the PowerPoint shows the main areas identified by the Crown Prosecution Service as being common to organised gang crime. Ask if anyone knows what is meant by "acquisitive crime".

Show **PowerPoint Slide 12** that defines this type of criminal gang activity.

Ask students if they think that all gangs are involved in criminal activity.

Explain that there is no hard and fast definition of a gang and it can range from a group of individuals who dress and speak in a similar way from a specific geographical location but may have no involvement in crime, through to highly organised international criminal hierarchies that oversee multiple gangs.

Risks of gang membership - diamond 9

Show students the list on **PowerPoint Slide 13**. Working in pairs or small groups ask students to pick what they feel are the 9 most common risks from the slide and arrange them in order as a diamond 9. **PowerPoint Slide 14** shows the template that can be copied. Give some time for the task and then take feedback on the top choices of risk. Which didn't make it onto the diamond 9. Was there consensus between groups?

Take 20 Activity choices (20 minutes each)

How gangs recruit

Begin this activity by showing **PowerPoint Slide 15** and task students with answering the questions in the 4 boxes. This can be done in pairs or small groups. When students have made a note of their answers take them through **PowerPoint Slides 16 to 19** that provide suggested answers to the questions. Take some comments and additions.

Show **PowerPoint Slide 20** and give students a few minutes to discuss and make a notes of their answers. Go through **PowerPoint Slides 21 and 22** and again take comments. Show **PowerPoint Slide 23** and task the students with suggesting some strategies to help young people resist gang recruitment. Take feedback and then show **PowerPoint Slide 24**. This is advice recommended by one of the UK's leading academics on gang culture (Craig Pinkney, University of Birmingham).

NOTE: Craig Pinkney (and others) have made short videos for teachers on many different aspects of gang culture, knife crime etc. You can find out more on the London Grid for Learning website. <https://www.lgfl.net/default.aspx>



Leaving a gang safely

Take the group through the short case study on **PowerPoint Slides 25 and 26**. Show **PowerPoint Slide 27** and task the students with working through the questions in small groups or pairs. Take some feedback of suggestions. Explain that one of the key aims in supporting young people disassociate from gangs is de-escalating the risk - from high, to medium to low. Practical advice includes avoiding areas where the gang will be, joining other activities, changing routes, clothes, style of speech. Coming off social media, changing phone number, avoiding travelling alone. This can de-escalate the gang's interest to the extent that over time the ex-member is forgotten about. However, in more serious cases it is important to involve support services and the police.

Show **PowerPoint Slide 28** - transition in the first part and ask the group to suggest the 3 ways members leave a gang. Show the rest of the slide. Explain that this is more serious gang membership involving a hierarchy and serious crime.

Show **PowerPoint Slide 29** - can the group think of any other positive or negative life-changing experiences?

Conclude this task by re-iterating that in some circumstances leaving a gang can be more dangerous than being part of the gang, so it is always better not to be part of a gang in the first place. However there are plenty of people who have successfully managed to leave a violent gang. Charities like Gangline run by ex-gang members offer free and confidential advice and support. There is a way out that's more positive!

Take 30 Activity (30 minutes)

Operation Venetic. How the National Crime Agency broke into the secretive world of organised crime.

This activity gives students an opportunity to look at a NCA operation that came to public attention in July 2020. The information sheets (see end of lesson plan) sets out information and questions for up to 6 different groups (including a group of 2 that co-ordinate the activity called Heads of Operation). **PowerPoint Slides 30 and 31** introduce the task.

The 6 groups can be combined to fewer if you wish. The sheets give instructions to each group. If students have access to the internet you can task them with investigating further via the NCA website. Give time for groups to assimilate the information and then take feedback via the co-ordinating group. By the end of this task the class should have a good overall understanding of the operation.

Show **PowerPoint Slide 32**. Encourage students to think about the skills sets of high level criminals. Who do they think is "winning" the organised crime war? Police or criminals?

NOTE: It is likely that information on this operation will continue to be updated, so please feel free to update the content accordingly and give students additional information or task them with finding it.

Challenge (a task for more able groups or as an extension activity)

Music and gang culture

Show **PowerPoint Slide 33** (or hand out the information if just using with one or two groups) which contains the following information. Drill music emerged in 2010 in Chicago and its popularity commonly attributed to Chief Keef with the release of his 2012 track "I don't like it". Influenced by rap, hip-hop and grime, the lyrics are often violent and taunting.

Ask the group(s) to discuss the following questions and prepare an answer to feedback to the class as a whole. They may wish to do some additional research online.

Does music reflect your environment or does it shape it?

Has music always been reflective of the society musicians are experiencing or is Drill something darker and more dangerous?

Should it be banned from airplay as it's associated with gang culture? What's the alternative?

It's a wrap (Summary and signposting)

Share **PowerPoint Slides 34 and 35**. We suggest you add your own local signposting to Slide 35.

Down Tools CIC is a community interest company whose mission is to fight against knife crime. Their approach towards this is to educate young people and spread awareness of the dangers of knife crime. Their website is www.downtools.org
The Down Tools programme also includes a free app available to all Android and IOS users. The app consists of a growing library of interactive lifestyle games, news articles, endorsements from actors, musicians, business leaders, stars from the world of sport and most importantly victims of knife crime. It also provides links to mentoring for young people involved in knife crime.



Teacher notes (use this editable space to write notes or add your own learning activities)



Group 1: Head of operations - chief and deputy

You are responsible for coordinating Operation Venetic and have brought it to the current stage of the operation.

The areas you coordinate are:

1. Cyber-security team. This team worked with the French authorities who cracked the encrypted mobile phone software and listened in and recorded the conversations of criminals.
2. Team "Kingpin" this group is responsible for identifying and arresting the top level players in the gang hierarchy.
3. Team "footsoldier" this group is responsible for infiltrating, dispersing or arresting the lower rungs of the hierarchy. The individuals who do the dirty-work of the Kingpins.
4. Asset recovery - this team collects, logs and categorises the money and merchandise recovered as a result of the raids on properties across the UK.
5. Media liaison - this team decides what information will be released to the press and when to have the most impact on the operation and encourage help and information from the public.

Your task:

1. Decide the order in which the teams should update the full group on their team's current position.
2. After the updates, decide on what each group should be doing as they move into Phase 2.
3. Think about briefing the teams on overall objectives (remember the arrests so far are only the tip of the iceberg).

Essentially you are the 'Chairs' for this session, but also have the final responsibility to decide what the next actions for each of your teams will be, having listened to all the feedback and their comments.

Circulate among the teams while they are having their initial conversations to get a sense of what each is discussing.



Group 2: Cyber-security team

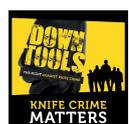
You work closely with the French team who broke the Encrochat encrypted mobile phone service that allowed criminals to openly talk and plan crimes. Over a number of months you have monitored and recorded communications "as if you were sitting in the room with the criminals" including:

- Plans to torture and murder (many were thwarted as a result of operation Venetic)
- Multi-million pound deals involving drugs and fire-arms
- Identified at least two corrupt law enforcement/police officials
- Estimated 10,000 users of Encrochat - £1500 for 6 month contract
- The system was able to self-destruct messages and wipe data via an input code
- Some clues and possible links to Columbian drug cartels
- Dozens of gangs broken out of 4500 estimated to be operating in the UK.

As of early July 2020 the service advised users: "you are advised to power off and physically dispose of your device immediately".

Your task:

- 1) Divide the points above into the "successes" and the "concerns" and brief the wider team.
- 2) Try to provide a profile of the organisation providing the encryption service. What sort of individuals? How long is this type of service likely to be down? Will there be other providers in the market?
- 3) What should your team (Cyber-security) be doing to continue this work.



Group 3: Team Kingpin

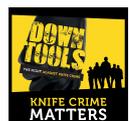
Your team focuses on the most senior players that head up organised crime gangs.

A number of arrests have been made around the country of the middle and high level individuals involved in organised crime. Many of these individuals are widely regarded as successful, professional business men in the communities where they live. Their life-styles speak of business success with lavish properties, including in London, luxury cars and many of the other trappings of wealth including privately educated children, exotic holidays and designer clothing. Many of these high-ranking members of sophisticated organised crime networks have previously been regarded as "untouchable" and it has been a major breakthrough to identify and arrest them.

One concern is that their ability to access expensive legal representation will lead to strong claims that the evidence against them has been gathered illegally.

Your task:

- 1) Divide the information above into "successes" and "concerns" and feedback to the wider team.
- 2) How realistic is it that these people will be able to avoid prosecution and/or prison as a result of expensive legal representation?
- 3) What should Team Kingpin (your team) be doing to continue this work.



Group 4: Team Foot-soldier

Your team has focused on the lower ranks that make up the bulk of the gangs day to day dealings. The majority of the 700+ arrests have been at this level, however, it's likely that there is a further group below this that had no direct dealings with mid-high level criminals. This group are probably young people, mainly teenagers recruited for low-level courier and delivery work, used as they are far-removed from the more important criminals and unlikely to be much of a risk if caught as they know very little about the overall operation of the gang. Can be particularly useful in moving drugs and weapons as less likely to be targeted by local police in stop and search exercises, particularly girls.

A number well-established gang members of a lower rank have handed themselves in to local police as a result of operation Venetic, possibly because their anonymity has been compromised or more senior members have been arrested.

Your task:

- 1) Divide the information above into the "successes" and the "concerns". Feedback to the wider team.
- 2) How realistic is it that very low ranking individuals within gangs are prosecuted?
- 3) What should Team Footsoldier (your team) be doing to continue this work. What should be done about the very young people who have been involved in these gangs and taken part in criminal activities?



Group 5: Asset recovery

You are responsible for coordinating Operation Venetic's asset recovery.

The assets recovered so far include:

£54 million in cash. In one property £5m was seized, one of the biggest ever cash hauls.

Two tonnes of class A drugs

28 million pills of the sedative Etizolam (street valium)

55 luxury cars

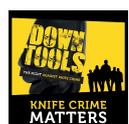
73 luxury watches and a barge.

Extensive range of weapons and ammunition including knives, hand-guns, machine guns and grenades.

One group that has been infiltrated operated across the UK, Europe and the UAE (United Arab Emirates) importing and distributing firearms and supplying drugs to street level gangs across London leading to savage attacks.

Your task:

- 1) Provide the wider group with an overview of the above findings, including what you think have been the most significant in terms of further crime prevention.
- 2) What is your estimate of how much more cash, drugs and firearms are still in circulation across the UK?
- 3) What should your role be going forward with regard to further asset recovery?



Group 6: Media liason

You are responsible for liaising with the media on behalf of the NCA on Operation Venetic.

Recent press releases:

"The infiltration of this command and control communication platform for the UK's criminal marketplace is like having an inside person in every organised crime group in the country. This is the broadest and deepest ever UK operation into serious organised crime". NCA release

"Organised crime groups have used encrypted communications to enable their offending. They have openly discussed plots to murder, launder money, deal drugs and sell fire-arms causing atrocious scenes in our communities. They were brazen and thought they were beyond the reach of the law".

Messages from the criminals intercepted by the NCA and released to the press include:

"This year the police are winning."

"NCA as u know well are sophisticated and relentless."

"If NCA are on us then we have a big problem."

"The police are having a field day."

Your task:

- 1) Give the wider group an overview of the content (above) released to the public.
- 2) Explain why you think different types of messaging is released in the press. What would the NCA hope to achieve by doing this?
- 3) What role do you think the media can do going forward to keep these messages fresh in the minds of the public?

