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Teenager arrested for tripping up and spitting at officer

An officer from the Violence Suppression Unit (VSU) was tripped up and spat at after he arrested a man for obstructing police and assaulting an emergency worker.

At 14:10hrs on Wednesday, 5 August, officers from the VSU were on patrol in West Hampstead following a rise in mobile phone thefts in the area.

The two officers, who were in plain clothes and riding bicycles, tried to approach three males on cycles who were behaving suspiciously. The officers explained to them they were detained for a search but the suspect and rode away.

The officers chased after them, and one officer was in collision with the suspect after he seemingly slowed down to cause the collision, the officer fell off his cycle and sustained a fractured wrist.

Shortly after, the suspect was detained and arrested on suspicion of obstructing police and assaulting an emergency worker in relation to the collision.

While the suspect, a 17-year-old, was being transported to custody, he deliberately tripped up the second officer and then spat in his face. He was further arrested for assaulting an emergency worker.

A second male, also aged 17, was part of a hostile group nearby and threatened violence towards the officer immediately after the first arrest was made. He verbally abused officers using homophobic and derogatory and inappropriate language. He was arrested for obstruction and public order offences.

Both 17-year-olds were released on bail while the investigation continues.

Detective Inspector Eliot Porritt, said: “These officers were simply out doing their job, trying to prevent crime in an area known for phone thefts when they were subject to this disgusting and vile behaviour.

“No person should be assaulted whilst at work. We will not tolerate such actions and foul language against officers who are on duty working to tackle violence and protect the public from being victims of crime.

“We will work with our detectives, our partner agencies and the Crown Prosecution Service to ensure those responsible are brought to justice.”

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