



School Security – Offensive Weapons: Guidelines for Staff

If a member of staff has reason to believe that a pupil is carrying an offensive weapon they should send for SLT immediately who will deal with the situation.

In any situation where there is felt to be a serious risk to safety of pupils or staff (eg a pupil using a weapon in a threatening manner) the police should be called immediately and SLT sent for to give further assistance

Offensive Weapons

It is an offence to carry an offensive weapon or knife on school premises in a public place unless a person has good reason or lawful authority to do so.

Definition

“Any article made or adapted for causing injury or intended by the person having it with him for such use by him” (any article which could be used dangerously).

As a school we would include items such as any knives (including pocket knives), sling shots, bb guns/imitation firearms etc.

Staff Involvement where a weapon is suspected

As a general rule the police should be called to deal with any incident believed to involve an offensive weapon. There may, however, be isolated exceptions where, in the judgement of the staff the circumstances are innocent, and there is no suggestion of the use of the article as a weapon when the matter can be dealt with on a disciplinary basis. In these cases a member of SLT will ask the pupil to hand over the weapon if they feel that this does not pose a risk to themselves or others and they feel comfortable to do so. The member of SLT will secure it and arrange to surrender it to the police without delay or arrange for it to be taken away by the parent/guardian of the pupil if this is a reasonable course of action. If there is any doubt, staff should call for SLT support and ask for the police to be contacted, making it clear if an emergency response is required. Staff should give their assessment of the seriousness of the incident to help the police make their own judgement on the nature of the response required.

Where possible, staff should not confront a pupil or person suspected of possessing a weapon in the presence of other pupils. Preferably two or more members of staff should divert the pupil or person to a place where no other pupils are present.

Immediate preventative action could sometimes nip in the bud a potentially dangerous situation, or it could precipitate it. SLT will decide upon the course of action, according to the individual case.

Where there is a reasonable belief that a pupil might be carrying an offensive weapon or blade, it is appropriate for the Discipline Officer or a member of SLT to search a pupil. Wherever possible this will be done with the pupil's consent.

Teachers now have the power to search pupils for knives and offensive weapons without consent as part of the government's drive to ensure schools continue to be safe and secure places to learn. The power comes alongside the ability for the schools to screen pupils for violent weapons using devices such as arches and 'wand' metal detectors.

Whenever possible, the Discipline Officer will conduct the search. In addition, members of SLT, the Behaviour team, Heads of Year are authorised by the Headteacher to search pupils for knives and offensive weapons.

Where there is felt to be any risk to safety, the police should be called.

A search should never take place where there is any risk to staff or pupils. In those circumstances the police should be called.

- Two members of staff must always be present at a search, one of whom will have received appropriate training, on how to conduct a search and the appropriate extent of a search
- The search must be undertaken by a staff member who is the same sex as the pupil*
- Where possible, it should take place out of public view in a designated office space, not in a classroom.

*(The only exception to this would be if there is a risk of serious harm to a person if we do not conduct the search immediately)

Where the person suspected of carrying a weapon is not a registered pupil at the school and is an intruder on site, or where an incident involving a pupil takes place outside the school premises, the police should always undertake any search and be called in any event.

In relation to any firearms/imitation firearms recovered/seized – great care must be taken, as it would not be established until a later time as to whether the weapon contained any live ammunition. The police must be called in all cases of seizures re: the above to make the weapon safe.

Where the police have been involved in dealing with an incident in school, parents of the pupil will be informed as soon, as is reasonably practicable. However, the priority in such cases will be to ensure the safety of pupils and staff.

This policy is one of the school's pastoral policies and should not be read in isolation from the whole school Behaviour Management Policy.

Adopted by the Board of Governors and recorded in the Minutes of the meeting held on:	06/11/2014
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Headteacher	