



Striving for Excellence

Cirencester Kingshill School

Head: Christine S. Oates

WEAPONS AND KNIVES POLICY

It is an arrestable offence for any person to carry an offensive weapon or knife on any school premises. It is not an offence to carry a folding pocketknife. However, in the interests of the safety and security of all Kingshill pupils and staff, **the carrying of offensive weapons and knives of any shape or size is STRICTLY FORBIDDEN on the school premises.** An offensive weapon can be defined as any article made or adapted to injure a person or any article intended for such use.

Head teachers, and staff they authorise, now have the power to search pupils without consent where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil has a knife or other weapon (Section 550AA, Education Act 1996: inserted by Section 45, Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006). However, at Kingshill, we regard this power to be the duty of the police who would be called in the event of a pupil's refusal to cooperate.

Staff Involvement where a weapon is suspected:

If a pupil is brandishing a weapon or knife in an aggressive manner, every attempt should be made to evacuate other pupils and staff from that area. Under no circumstances should a member of staff confront the offending pupil nor in any way put him or herself at risk. The police should be called as a matter of urgency.

If a pupil is suspected of having a weapon or blade in their possession, a member of the SLT should be alerted immediately.

Where possible, staff should not confront a pupil or person suspected of possessing an offensive 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. Alternatively other pupils should be removed from the area.

Where there is reasonable belief that a pupil may be carrying an offensive weapon or blade, it might be appropriate for a pupil, who is calm and relaxed and who has agreed to co-operate, to empty his or her own pockets / bag. A pupil may also be asked to remove outer clothing such as a coat, jacket or pullover, but they should not be asked to remove outer wear – e.g. trousers, skirt, socks, tights etc. If a pupil offers to remove any of these the offer should be declined. Any of the above must be in the presence of another member of staff (at least one of the members of staff must be of the same sex as the pupil).

If there remains reasonable suspicion that the pupil may have hidden a weapon on his / her person or somewhere on the premises, or if the pupil refuses to cooperate, the pupil should be isolated from other pupils and then further advice should be sought from the police.

Where the person suspected of carrying a weapon is not a registered Kingshill pupil, or the incident takes place outside the school premises, the police must always be contacted as a matter of urgency.

If, in the judgement of the most senior member of staff available, the circumstances would appear to be innocent and there is no evidence of the use of the article as a weapon, the matter can be dealt with on a disciplinary basis. If there is any doubt, then the police should be called.

Weapons or knives confiscated by school:

If a member of staff takes possession of a knife or other weapon brought to school, the item should be immediately taken to a member of the SLT who will secure it in a locked cupboard.

When school staff find and seize a knife or other weapon which they suspect is illegal, a senior member of staff should promptly inform the police. Since staff must pass the seized weapon to the police, they should ask if the police are willing to collect it from the school. The police, when they learn of the alleged offence, might also wish to come to the school to question the pupil from whom the knife was seized. If this is the case, the pupil should be isolated away from other pupils until the police arrive.

Records

If a pupil is found in possession of a knife or other weapon on school premises they are committing an offence. Therefore, it is possible that the pupil will be arrested by the police, and staff members involved will become witnesses in any prosecution. Consequently, it is essential that accurate records are kept.

Where a weapon has been confiscated this should be recorded on an accident/incident form as a near miss and reported through on the SHE Enterprise Database in the normal way. The standard form and incident reporting procedure can be found at:

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=14941>

Informing parents

As a matter of course, parents should be contacted if their child has been found in possession of a weapon or if they have been asked to allow their property to be searched. In exceptional circumstances, it may not be appropriate to notify parents e.g. if evidence of an offence is found which may also involve the parent. We would be guided by the police in such circumstances.

Arrests on school premises:

Unless the circumstances make it unavoidable, it is preferable for police officers to avoid making arrests on school premises. If it proves necessary, it should be done with the co-operation of the school and as discreetly as possible.

NB: If an item that could be construed as a weapon is required for a particular lesson, then this must be with prior consultation and agreement with the subject teacher. The subject teacher should be given the item at the start of the day, ensure it is kept in a secure place and only returned at 3.10pm. If there are any concerns about the item, parents should be asked to collect it.

THIS POLICY SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN, ANTI-BULLYING POLICY, BEHAVIOUR POLICY, CHILD PROTECTION POLICY, CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER POLICY, EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY POLICY, E-SAFETY POLICY, EXCLUSION POLICY, SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY.

Reviewed by C Patrick _____ January 2011 _____ (Date)

Adopted by Governors _____ (Date)

Review date _____ January 2012 _____