

OFFENSIVE WEAPONS POLICY

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Policy Document SP-15

RISE LEARNING ZONE

OFFENSIVE WEAPONS POLICY

1. Statement for Students: (to be displayed prominently)

It is illegal to carry knives or guns, including imitation guns.

At school, it is the right of all young people to learn in an atmosphere free from fear and violence.

We have a duty and responsibility to protect all learners, staff and visitors and to expect that learners will not be carrying weapons.

If we suspect you are carrying a knife, we will ask to carry out a voluntary search. If you refuse, you will be sent home.

If you are found in possession of a knife or offensive weapon, the police and your parents will be contacted.

2. Offensive Weapons Policy

Statement

It is illegal to carry knives or other offensive weapons on and around School premises. RISE recognises that the presence of weapons, or items that could potentially be offensive weapons in the school would not only create unacceptable risks of bullying, injury or death, but also create a climate that undermines our educational purposes.

What is an offensive weapon?

An offensive weapon is any object that has been made, adapted, or intended to cause injury.

This covers:

- Weapons built for the sole purpose of hurting people, like a knife or gun,

- Something adapted to cause injury, like a sharpened snooker cue,
- An object not designed to hurt anyone, but you're carrying it round intending to cause injury, like nail scissors.

In defining what counts as a weapon, your intention (whether you meant to hurt someone) could be taken into account - depending on what you're carrying.

Dealing with an Incident Involving Offensive Weapons:

If a member of staff is informed by a parent or pupil, or if a member of staff sees or suspects that a pupil may have in their possession an illegal, dangerous, or offensive weapon, the most senior member of staff present must be informed immediately.

A search may be conducted following Department for Education guidelines. If in doubt regarding safety, the Police should be contacted immediately.

If a pupil is found to be in possession of such a weapon the Police will be called immediately, the weapon confiscated and the Police will conduct investigations as appropriate.

School responses to incidents involving the possession or use of offensive weapons may include any or all of the following, as appropriate:

- Permanent removal from provision
- Fixed term exclusion
- Informing police and/or other external agencies
- Letter to, or discussion with, parent/carer

Searching Guidelines:

Senior staff should always be called to assess and manage any situation where an offensive weapon is suspected:

Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student might have in their possession an offensive weapon, knife or blade, an authorised member of staff

should conduct a search of that student or his/her possessions with or without the student's consent,

In making that decision, a risk assessment approach should be adopted and it should be noted that such immediate preventive action could either prevent a potentially dangerous situation escalating or could, conversely, inflame the situation,

Such a search may only be carried out where the member of staff and student are on school premises or are elsewhere and the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the student.

A member of staff carrying out a search:

May not require a student to remove any clothing other than outer clothing, i.e..any item of clothing not being worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment being worn as underwear

Must be of the same sex as the student

May carry out the search only in the presence of another member of staff who is also of the same sex as the student

A student's possessions (including any goods over which he/she appears to have control) may not be searched except in his/her presence and another member of staff,

If in the course of a search, the member of staff finds anything he/she suspects of falling within the knives and offensive weapon category or any other thing he/she suspects is evidence in relation to an offence, they may seize and retain it. The police and parents/carers should be called.

On completion of a search – the voluntary search log should be completed (stored in shared network space, and an incident form completed as normal.

If request for a search or screening is refused, we reserve the right to make arrangements to send a student home, with reference to the following statement from the Department for Education guidelines:

“Health and safety legislation requires a school to be managed in a way which does not expose pupils or staff to risks to their health and safety and this would include making reasonable rules as a condition of admittance.”

(Department for Education Advice - Screening, searching and confiscation)