



Offensive Weapons Policy

Approved at SLT: 30 April 2019

Contents:

[Statement of intent](#)

1. [Legal framework](#)
2. [Definitions](#)
3. [Roles and responsibilities](#)
4. [Offensive weapons list](#)
5. [Reporting procedure](#)
6. [Investigation procedure](#)
7. [Management of pupils](#)
8. [Reintegration](#)
9. [Safeguarding](#)
10. [Monitoring and review](#)

Statement of intent

Moor Park High School & Sixth Form recognises the increasing number of school-aged children who are found carrying offensive weapons and acknowledges our duty to ensure that pupils are safe and that they understand the repercussions of carrying weapons.

Through this policy, we aim to:

- Outline the weapons that are legally considered offensive, and the weapons that the school has placed a strict ban on.
- Establish clear and accurate reporting procedures that can be easily followed by pupils and staff.
- Outline a procedure for investigating any reports, which will be followed accurately and consistently.
- Provide staff with unambiguous management guidelines to follow if a pupil is found to be carrying a weapon.
- Establish how the school will support and reintegrate pupils following an incident, wherever possible.
- Outline the school's methods for ensuring pupils are kept safe from harm.

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Prevention of Crime Act 1953
 - Offensive Weapons Act 1996
 - Criminal Justice Act 1988
 - European Convention of Human Rights 1953
 - Education Act 1996
 - Education and Inspections Act 2006
 - Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012
 - Crossbows Acts 1987
 - Firearms Act 1968

- 1.2. This policy has due regard to all relevant guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
 - DfE (2018) 'Searching, screening and confiscation'
 - Home Office (2012) 'Knives and offensive weapons information'
 - DfE (2018) 'Keeping children safe in education'

- 1.3. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:
 - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
 - Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
 - Reasonable Force Policy
 - Behavioural Policy
 - Exclusion Policy
 - School Security Policy
 - Lockdown and Evacuation Policy

2. Definitions

- 2.1. It is illegal to:
 - Sell a knife of any kind to anyone under the age of 18.
 - Buy a knife under the age of 18.
 - Carry a knife in public without good reason, e.g. use at work – unless it has a folding blade with a cutting edge three inches long or less, e.g. a Swiss army knife.
 - Carry, buy or sell a banned knife, e.g. a butterfly knife.
 - Use any knife or other object in a threatening way (including any illegal knife).
 - Possess a firearm without a licence.

- 2.2. For the purpose of this policy, an **offensive weapon** is defined as an article that is made, adapted or intended to cause injury to another person, including mental and physical injury.
- 2.3. For the purpose of this policy, **made, adapted or intended** is defined as articles that:
- Have been designed to cause harm to another person, e.g. a butterfly knife (made).
 - Have been altered to cause harm to another person, e.g. a piece of wood with nails in it (adapted).
 - Are being carried with the express purpose to cause harm to another person but are not necessarily an obviously dangerous item, e.g. a cricket bat could be used for sport or to cause injury (intended).
- 2.4. For the purpose of this policy, **produced** is defined as when a person uses, or threatens someone with, an offensive weapon.
- 2.5. For the purpose of this policy, **not produced** is defined as when a person has an offensive weapon on their person, but it is not used, including not used to threaten someone.

3. Roles and responsibilities

- 3.1. The **governing body** is responsible for:
- Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and conducting reviews following any offensive weapon incidents.
 - Reviewing this policy on a **biennial** basis.
 - Ensuring appropriate training has been arranged for staff regarding managing offensive weapon incidents in schools.
- 3.2. The **headteacher** is responsible for:
- Implementing this policy and ensuring that all pupils are clear on the procedure that will be followed if a report is made that someone is in possession of an offensive weapon.
 - Ensuring all staff have read and understood the stipulations of this policy.
 - Investigating any reports of offensive weapons in liaison with the lead **DSL**.
- 3.3. The Lead DSL is responsible for:
- Monitoring the anonymous offensive weapons reporting form and processing any reports that are made.
 - Investigating any reports of offensive weapons in liaison with the headteacher.
 - Sharing information via assemblies, tutor time programme and bulletins to remind pupils and staff how to file anonymous offensive weapons reports.
- 3.4. All staff are responsible for:
- Reading and understanding the stipulations in this policy.

- Taking part, where appropriate, in any offensive weapons training that is organised through the school.
- Making offensive weapons reports, if they have any suspicions about any member of the school community.

3.5. Pupils are responsible for:

- Adhering to the provisions of this policy in terms of not having prohibited items on their person.
- Reporting to a member of staff if they are aware or concerned about someone carrying a weapon
- Using the SHARP system to complete an anonymous offensive weapons report if they have any suspicions that someone is carrying an offensive weapon, in accordance with section five of this policy.

3.6. Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring their children understand the repercussions of carrying an offensive item in a public place, including a school.
- Informing the school if they are concerned about their child's behaviour or safety, in line with the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.
- Understanding the repercussions of carrying an offensive weapon themselves.

4. Offensive weapons list

4.1. The following items are banned by law, regardless of their intended use:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Flick knives | • Knuckle-dusters |
| • Butterfly knives | • Hand-claws |
| • Disguised knives | • Foot-claws |
| • Belt buckle knives | • Blowpipes or guns |
| • Push daggers | • Hollow kubotan |
| • Gravity knives | • Shuriken |
| • 'Airport' or stealth knives | • Telescopic truncheons |
| • Sword-sticks | • Kusari-gama |
| • Samurai swords | • Kyoketsu shoge |
| • Straight, side handled or fiction-lock truncheons – also known as a baton | • Kusari |
| • A sword with a curved blade of 50 centimetres or over in length | |

4.2. As outlined in the Crossbows Act 1987, crossbows are prohibited under the age of 18.

4.3. Firearms are also considered prohibited items. Firearms include, but are not limited to the following:

- Starting pistols
- Air guns
- Any type of replica or toy gun

- 4.4. The police will be contacted immediately if any pupil is found to be in possession of any of the above items. The school will support the police in any investigations as far as possible, e.g. providing information. The police's decision regarding the pupil will be final.
- 4.5. The maximum penalty for carrying an offensive weapon is four years imprisonment, a fine or both.
- 4.6. In addition to the above, the school also considers the following items to be prohibited:
- Fireworks
 - Laser pens
 - Alcohol
 - Tobacco
 - Electronic cigarettes
 - Aerosols
 - Hairstyling devices
 - Solvent based products
 - Intoxicating substances
 - Paintball guns
 - Tasers
 - Lighters and matches
 - Mobile phones & MP3 players
- 4.7. Any pupil found to be in possession of a banned item may be immediately excluded from the school, in accordance with the school's **Exclusion Policy**.
- 4.8. The school will regularly use tutor time and the assembly rota to remind pupils about what will happen if they are suspected to be carrying an offensive weapon, and the serious repercussions that pupils could face for carrying any of the items mentioned above.

5. Reporting procedure

- 5.1. The school will implement and monitor an anonymous reporting procedure that is available to pupils, staff and the wider community.
- 5.2. The anonymous email reporting procedure which is available via: **sharp@moorpark.mp**
- 5.3. The Lead DSL will monitor any reports made via the anonymous reporting form.
- 5.4. The lead DSL will use staff briefings, meetings, tutor time and the assembly rota to remind pupils and staff how they can make anonymous reports.
- 5.5. Upon receiving a report, the Lead DSL and headteacher will be responsible for informing the chair of governors and investigating the report.
- 5.6. If a report is made regarding a parent, the **Lead DSL** will call the police immediately – **the school will not investigate this report**; however:
- The parent may be banned from the school premises until the police investigation has been completed.

- Social services may be informed of the investigation.
- 5.7. If a report is made regarding a staff member, the DSL, headteacher and chair of governors will use their professional judgement to determine whether to:
- Hold a meeting with the staff member to investigate the allegation; or
 - Call the police.
- 5.8. If a member of the public is on the school site with a weapon, the school's Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy will be followed.

6. Investigation procedure

- 6.1. When a report of a pupil who may be carrying an offensive weapon is made, the member of SLT and DSL will promptly risk assess the situation, determining:
- Where the pupil can be located.
 - What risks their surroundings are likely to pose, e.g. a confined space such as the changing rooms resulting in close proximity to other pupils.
 - Where the pupil is likely to be carrying the offensive weapon, e.g. on their person or in their bag.
- 6.2. The School maintains a log of staff who have received offensive weapons and searching, screening and confiscation training.
- 6.3. Once the pupil has been located and the member of SLT and DSL have risk assessed the situation, they will escort the pupil to a safe location, e.g. the Admin corridor, Deputy Heads Offices or Headteachers Office.
- 6.4. At this point the concern will be discussed with the pupil in a calm non-confrontational manner. This can be led by the member of SLT or DSL.
- 6.5. The pupil will be asked to empty their bag, and they will search their outer clothing, in line with the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.
- 6.6. The parents of the pupil will be informed of the search and the reasons behind it (where appropriate, e.g. maintaining confidentiality by not informing parents of who raised the report).

7. Management of pupils

- 7.1. If no weapon has been found after the pupil's bag and outer clothing has been searched, a metal detector wand will be used to search the pupil.
- 7.2. If still no weapon has been found, the pupil will be thanked for their co-operation and sent back to class.
- 7.3. If a weapon is discovered during the search of a pupil, the DSL will refer to the matter to the Headteacher.

- 7.4. The Headteacher will use **the Offensive Weapons Decision tree** and their professional judgement to make a decision on the outcomes of the incident,
- 7.5. The school will keep a record of all searches that have been conducted, which will be logged on CPOMMS in line with the **Confidentiality Policy**.
- 7.6. The school understands the negative effect that exclusion can have on pupils and will do everything within its power to support, protect and help pupils; however, will follow the procedures within the **Exclusion Policy** where necessary.
- 7.7. If a weapon of any description is produced and used to threaten, physically or mentally, or harm another person, the school will call the police immediately.
- 7.8. While waiting for the police to arrive, staff will understand and adhere to the following procedure:
 - The Lockdown and Evacuation Policy will be invoked.
 - Staff will ensure their own and pupils' safety.
 - Staff will do all they can to contain the pupil, e.g. in a classroom; however, staff will not risk their own safety.
 - Staff will try to calm the pupil down.
 - Staff will ensure they keep a safe distance between themselves and the pupil and they will try to keep items in between themselves and the pupil, e.g. desks.
 - Staff will never put themselves at risk.
- 7.9. If a pupil has produced a weapon, the school's **Reasonable Force Policy** will be void and staff will wait for the police to arrive.
- 7.10. If someone is attacked with an offensive weapon, the emergency services (police and ambulance) will be called immediately and the school will cooperate with the police's decision, e.g. regarding punishments.
- 7.11. Following any incident where a weapon has been produced, this policy will be reviewed by the Lead DSL and headteacher.
- 7.12. The school's **Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy** will be adhered to at all times.

8. Reintegration

- 8.1. While the school never condones carrying a weapon, we understand that there are many reasons as to why a pupil may feel the need to carry a weapon, e.g. they are being bullied.
- 8.2. If a pupil who has been found to be in possession of a weapon remains at the school, the **Safeguarding Board** will be responsible for supporting and monitoring the pupil.

- 8.3. The **Safeguarding Board** will establish the pupil's reasons for carrying a weapon and will put appropriate support systems in place.
- 8.4. A nominated DSL will hold weekly meetings with the pupil to monitor their safety and wellbeing until the Safeguarding Board is satisfied with the pupil's wellbeing.
- 8.5. Carrying a weapon can be an indicator of a safeguarding concern, e.g. county lines exploitation or neglect, and the DSL team will investigate any concerns and make a referral to the appropriate body, e.g. the police, if appropriate.
- 8.6. Other pupils will not be informed that the pupil was suspected of carrying a weapon.
- 8.7. The pupil's parents will, if appropriate, be involved in the reintegration plan, e.g. attending the weekly meetings with the nominated DSL.
- 8.8. The school will offer counselling services to the pupil, if appropriate.

9. Safeguarding

- 9.1. In line with 'Keeping children safe in education', the school has a duty to protect pupils from harm.
- 9.2. The school will conduct regular surveys to establish whether pupils feel safe, how pupils could be made to feel safer and to ensure pupils understand the school's reporting procedures.
- 9.3. The school will use PSHE, assemblies and tutor-time and workshops in which pupils will learn about what it means legally to carry or threaten someone with a weapon.
- 9.4. The school will invite local law enforcement officers into the school to give assemblies on the dangers of carrying an offensive weapon.
- 9.5. The school uses **hand-held metal detector wands** to identify pupils who are carrying weapons.
- 9.6. All pupils and parents will be made aware of the school's reporting procedures and the school's commitment to protecting the school community – parents will receive a **letter annually**.
- 9.7. The school implements a **Health & Safety Policy**, which outlines the safety precautions that the school will take to keep pupils and the school community safe from harm.
- 9.8. The school's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** will be adhered to by all staff, parents and pupils.
- 9.9. The school will ensure raising awareness on the dangers of offensive weapons is part of the **PSHE** curriculum.
- 9.10. Pupils will have read and understood the school's **Behavioural Policy**.

- 9.11. All staff participate, where appropriate, in annual offensive weapons training, including de-escalation techniques, invacuation, lockdown and evacuation procedures, and searching, screening and confiscation procedures.
- 9.12. The school understands that certain pupils are likely to be more at risk than others in terms of carrying a knife.
- 9.13. Staff will be aware that the following characterises may make a pupil more susceptible to carrying an offensive weapon:
- Disadvantaged backgrounds.
 - Pupils with SEND, e.g. they are more susceptible to county lines or gang exploitation.
 - Pupils from difficult family situations.
 - Severely bullied pupils.
- 9.14. If any member of the public, a parent or a staff member produces a weapon on the school premises, the school's Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy will be followed.

10. Monitoring and review

- 10.1. The headteacher, governing board and DSL will review this policy on a biennial basis.
- 10.2. The next scheduled review date for this policy is March 2021.

Any changes made to this policy will be immediately communicated to all employees, pupils and parents.

