

Offensive Weapons Policy

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Weapons and Knives Policy

Rationale

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 pocket knife. However, in the interests of the safety and security of all Bristnall Hall Academy pupils and staff, **the carrying of weapons and knives of any shape or size is STRICTLY FORBIDDEN on the school premises.** By weapon we take to mean any article that could be used to injure someone and serves no other purpose in the school context.

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 her 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.

As a general rule, the police should be called to deal with any incident believed to involve an offensive weapon.

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.

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. This must be in the presence of another member of staff. If there remains a concern that the pupil may have hidden a weapon on his/her person or somewhere on the premises, then further advice should be sought from the police. The carrying of an offensive weapon places the student at risk of a permanent exclusion from our school.

Where the pupil declines to co-operate, the police should always be contacted and advice sought. Where the person suspected of carrying a weapon is not a registered Bristnall Hall Academy pupil, or the incident takes place outside the school premises, the police must always be contacted as a matter of urgency.

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 and:

- a) Arrange without delay to surrender it to the police (if the weapon contravenes the Offensive Weapons Act 1996)
- b) Arrange for it to be taken away by the parent/guardian of the pupil. This would then be dealt with as a matter of school discipline and a record should be made that the item has been returned to the parent/guardian.

(NB: Weapons such as flick knives, knuckle-dusters etc that are per se offensive should NOT be returned under any 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 ensure the item is kept in a secure place and only returned at the end of the academy day.