HEADLANDS SCHOOL

SINCE 1965

Offensive Weapons Policy

Written By	Headteacher
Creation date	February 2016
Adopted by Governors	Autumn 2016
Reviewed By	Assistant Headteacher - Behaviour
Review Date	Autumn 2026
Next Review Date	Autumn 2027

Headlands School
Offensive Weapons Policy

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 offense to carry a folding pocket knife. However, in the interests of the safety and security of all Headlands School students 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 purpose in the school context.

Staff Involvement where a weapon is suspected:
If a student/person is brandishing a weapon or knife in an aggressive manner, every attempt should be made to evacuate other students and staff from that area. Under no circumstances should a member of staff confront the offending student/person nor in any way put him or her at risk. The police should be called as a matter of urgency.

If a student/person is suspected of having a weapon or blade in their possession, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (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 student or person suspected of possessing an offensive weapon in the presence of other students. Preferably two or more members of staff should divert the student or person to a place where no other students are present. Alternatively, other students should be removed from the area.

Where there is reasonable belief that a student may be carrying an offensive weapon or blade, it might be appropriate for a student or person, 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 student/person 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 permanent exclusion from our school.

Where the student/person declines to co-operate, the police should always be contacted and advice sought. Where the student/person suspected of carrying a weapon is not on roll at Headlands School or the incident takes place outside of 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 into school, the item should be immediately taken to a member of the Senior Leadership Team 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 student/person. 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.

(N.B: Weapons such as flick knives, knuckle-dusters etc. that are per se offensive should NOT be returned under any circumstances).

Arrest on school premises:
Where the seriousness of the offensive weapon is such that the police are involved, every effort is made to contact the student's parents. It may be necessary for a member of SLT to act in loco parentis if the police interview a student. Whenever possible the police should only interview off the school premises, preferably in the presence of a parent or, failing that, a member of SLT acting in loco parentis.

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