

# Offensive Weapons Policy

*Related documents: Curriculum Policy, What We Do & How We Do It Policy*

Published: January 2020

## OUR VISION

Our vision is to provide pupils with the confidence, skills and ambition to achieve a successful and productive life. We aim to ensure they leave the school with a 'new day, new opportunity' ethos and are capable of becoming positive members of their communities. To do this, we have 3 principles that underpin our policies, practices and everything we do:

Everyone can learn, achieve and has the potential to be successful

Positive relationships are key to success and are underpinned by mutual trust, respect and caring for one another

We have high expectations in everything we do

<b>Policy owner</b>	WhiteTrees School	<b>Last review</b>	September 2025
<b>Date Created</b>	January 2020	<b>Next review</b>	September 2026

## Introduction

It is illegal to carry knives or other offensive weapons on and around school premises.

The Governing Body at White Trees Independent School recognises that the presence of weapons in the school would not only create unacceptable risks of bullying, injury or death, but also create a climate that undermines the educational purposes of the school. Accordingly, it is the school's policy to forbid the possession, custody and use of weapons by unauthorised persons in, on or around the school premises and school activities. No pupil or other person shall bring a weapon into the school zone, nor carry or keep any weapon within the perimeter of the school site or while attending or participating in any school activities. These rules apply at all times except where a weapon is issued to a pupil by the school or required by the school for the purpose of teaching a curriculum activity. Misuse of such items will be dealt with as though possession was not authorised.

For the purpose of this policy a "weapon" is any firearm of any description, including starting pistols, air guns and any type of replica or toy gun. Knife, including all variations of bladed objects including pocket knives, craft knives, scissors etc. Explosive, including fireworks, aerosol spray, lighter, matches. Laser pen or other object, even if manufactured for a non-violent purpose that has a potentially violent use, if, in the circumstances, the purpose of keeping or carrying the object is for use, or threat of use, as a weapon.

Any pupil found to be in breach of this policy shall be subject to action under the schools Behaviour Management Policy. This could mean a fixed period or permanent exclusion from school. In some circumstances the police might also be contacted.

## Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

The Deputy Heads at each site along with the Executive Headteacher and Governing Body have a statutory responsibility for school behaviour, discipline and safety. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. The policy along with other school policies is available for inspection by all stakeholders, relevant agencies and other authorised persons. The Governing Body will review the policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

The school's curriculum will ensure that pupils are all aware of the risks/consequences of carrying offensive weapons, also inviting the Police to come in on a regular basis to conduct presentations to the pupils addressing this issue. (Please see the curriculum policy)

The below outlines the circumstances under which Whitetrees Independent Staff may search a student, the procedures to be followed, and the rights of students. It is intended to safeguard the welfare of all students, staff, and the wider school community.

## **When a Student May Be Searched**

A student may be searched if a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that the student is in possession of a prohibited or banned item. We will not search all students and only when a concern has been reported.

Prohibited items include:

- Weapons (e.g. knives, firearms)
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen property
- Tobacco or vaping products
- Pornographic images
- Fireworks
- Any item that has been, or is likely to be, used to cause harm or commit an offence
- Any item banned by the school rules and clearly communicated to students and parents

## **Student Cooperation**

- Staff should always attempt to gain the student's cooperation before carrying out a search. We understand that this may unsettle the students we work with and will always do our utmost to ensure they are listened to and safe.
- If a student refuses to cooperate, and there is a risk of serious harm to the student or others then we will immediately contact the Police.
- Under no circumstances is a student required to remove any clothing other than outer garments

## **Who Can Carry Out a Search**

- Searches must be carried out by a member of staff of the same sex as the student, wherever possible.
- A second member of staff must act as a witness, also of the same sex if reasonably practicable.
- If there is a risk of serious harm and an urgent search is required, these conditions may be waived.

## Extent of the Search

- Searches are limited to a student's outer clothing and possessions (Outer clothing includes: coats, blazers, jumpers, shoes, hats)
- A student must not be required to remove any clothing other than outer garments.
- Searches may include the student's bag, with or without the student's consent.

## Parental Notification

- While parental consent is not required, parents will be informed of any search that results in the discovery of prohibited items.
- Where appropriate, disciplinary action will follow in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

## Confidentiality and Record-Keeping

- All searches will be conducted discreetly and respectfully.
- A record of the search will be kept, including:
  - o The reason for the search
  - o The names of those present
  - o The outcome of the search
  - o Any follow-up actions

This will be stored on CPOMS.

## Legal Basis

This policy is in line with the powers granted to schools under the Education Act 2011 and applies to all students enrolled at the school.

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By	
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Head Teacher Sig/Date	

