



Weapons Policy

It is paramount that the school remains a safe learning and working environment for students and staff, by all parties working actively to achieve this we can ensure that our students leave Cavendish responsible young adults.

1. Screening pupils

Aim:

The aim is to prevent or deter the bringing of offensive knives and other weapons and also drugs, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen property into school.

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure the safety of students, staff and visitors whilst on the school premises and all reasonable steps taken to achieve this.

General principles

SMT has delegated the power to organise screening of pupils to the head, in accordance with the government guidance - *Screening and Searching Pupils for Weapons: Guidance for School Staff*.

Before any screening is carried out the head must inform all parents that the school conducts screening as part of the behaviour policy. Parents will also be informed that co-operation with this by parents and pupils, is required by the school. It is, therefore, a school rule.

On entry to the school each student and any bags they are carrying, are searched and a hand held metal detector is used. This takes place on entry into the building in the morning and can take place periodically though out the school day if the Head or SMT member deems it necessary.

SMT have agreed that pupils can be screened without their consent and without any suspicion that they are carrying knives or illegal weapons and that a hand-held metal detector will be used as detailed above.

If a student is suspected of possessing a weapon, they will be asked to turn out their pockets and bags. Failure to comply will necessitate a detailed

search of persons / belongs. This will be carried out under supervision by an SMT member. In all cases the search must be carried out by the same sex as the student. However, we note that this may not always be possible if this is the case then this must be supervised and in clear view of the CCTV cameras. At no time should a staff member carry out a detailed search without another staff member being present. Staff are asked to use their discretion and read any given situation with caution, if in any doubt they must alert a member of SMT. Staff members must at all times give due regard for the students and their health and safety.

The head is empowered to call in external security experts to carry out the searching, but a senior member of staff must be present throughout.

If a suspicious object is detected the member of staff in attendance will ask the pupil to hand the item over. If the pupil refuses, the head will be called, who will determine whether the pupil will be searched with or without his/her consent, or what alternative action will be taken.

It is the duty of every student to report anyone whom they suspect or know to be carrying a weapon(s). If a student advises a member of staff that they suspect that a student is carrying a weapon they must treat the information in the strictest confidence. The schools safeguarding procedures are to be followed. In all cases the Head Teacher or a SMT member must be informed.

Students are made aware that their prompt actions

- May prevent a fellow student getting into serious trouble.
- May prevent a fellow student, staff member or visitor from being injured.
- May prevent them becoming involved in criminal activity.

2. Searching pupils

Aim:

To discover whether pupils have knives and/or other offensive weapons and/or drugs, alcohol, illegal drugs and/or stolen property in their possession following reasonable suspicion that they may have hidden one or more items on their person or in their belongings.

Searching for weapons

The head is empowered to authorise any member of staff to search pupils for knives, other offensive weapons, banned substances and stolen property, if there is reasonable suspicion that they have these in their possession.

Before exercising this power the head and all directed staff must have undertaken appropriate training in search techniques, conflict management and calming strategies.

The person carrying out the search must be the same sex as the pupil and the search must be carried out in the presence of another adult also the same sex as the pupil. The search must be conducted in a private place.

The pupil must not be required to remove any clothing other than outer clothing and if the pupil's possessions are searched this must also be done in the presence of another adult. The person carrying out the search is able to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for exercising that power.

If force has to be used this must be recorded in the Incident Book and signed by the second member of staff as a witness.

Other searches

The member of staff wishing to search the pupil or his/her possessions, must call another member of staff to be present throughout the search – even if this is only a search of the pupil's bag. The second member of staff must be of the same sex as the pupil.

Results of searches

If a search reveals any 'offensive weapons' or knives, or 'evidence in relation to an offence', or alcohol, or illegal drugs or stolen property, the member of staff must inform the head.

- The head will report the finding of any weapon to the police.
- The head will determine the action to be taken where there is evidence relating to any other student is found.
- If evidence of illegal drugs is found, the head will determine what action to take under the school's drug policy.
- If tobacco or alcohol items are found in pupils' possession they must be confiscated by the member of staff and taken to the school office where the confiscation and treatment of the items will be recorded.

Recording of detailed searches

A record of all searches will be kept by the head. Each entry must be signed and also witnessed by the second member of staff present at a search.

Confiscated Items

- Knives and other offensive weapons will be handed to the police.
- Tobacco and alcohol items will be confiscated and will only be handed over to parents / carers.



- Other items will normally be returned to the pupil at the end of the school day. The head is empowered to retain any item until a parent collects it. Such action must be recorded.

Confiscated items, which have not been collected after six months, will be disposed of under the direction of the head.

Responsibilities

- The head is responsible for determining whether screening pupils will be organised.
- The head will ensure that this policy on screening, searching and confiscation of possessions is brought to the notice of parents.
- The head is also responsible for informing staff, and pupils of the policy, and how the policy will be put into action.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored through reports to SMT.

The policy will be reviewed annual or earlier if appropriate legislation dictates.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the following:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Exclusion
- Health and Safety
- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour Management
- Complaints
- Disability Equality
- Equal Opportunities
- Staff Code of Conduct (Safeguarding)
- Physical Restraint

Cavendish School

Sara Craggs
Head Teacher

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