



WOODSIDE SCHOOL

Procedure for managing incidents involving knives and other dangerous weapons

Independent School Standards: paragraphs 7, 16 and 34.

There are many possible variables to a weapons-related incident. This procedure details considerations to assist in the dynamic risk assessment required to manage an incident safely and appropriately.

Last external review	September 2024
Next external review	September 2025
Latest update	September 2024

CONTEXT

- Knife crime is a serious concern, with ever-increasing numbers of knife-related offences being reported. London is the highest-volume knife crime locality in England.
- Given these facts, and our families' specific needs, backgrounds and contexts, we know that our pupils are vulnerable to both being victims and perpetrators of knife crime.

GENERAL PREVENTION AND DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT

- We always do our best to reduce risk. On their initial arrival to all our schools, pupils must hand in all their personal belongings, including mobile phones.
- Pupils of secondary age (11-16) are scanned with magnetic wands. Our oldest pupils (those aged 14-16) are also scanned when they leave the school premises at the end of the day.
- Primary-aged pupils are only routinely scanned if their risk assessment indicates this is necessary.
- Searches of our school boundary are also conducted if we believe or hear that an offensive weapon has been concealed in or around the site's premises.
- Our PSHCE curriculum includes explicit teaching about how to keep safe and the consequences of anti-social behaviour, gang membership and gang- related activity, including knife crime.

CONSEQUENCES OF PUPILS BRINGING WEAPONS INTO SCHOOL

- Where safe to do, any dangerous item such as a knife will always be immediately confiscated and stored securely until collected by the police. The family and all relevant professionals, including the police, will always be informed as quickly as possible.
- Bringing a knife or other dangerous weapon into school, especially with intent to use it, is an exceptionally rare event. The usual sanction applied is immediate permanent exclusion. Please see the schools' behaviour policy.

PROCEDURE

IF A PUPIL IS SUSPECTED OF HAVING A KNIFE OR AN OFFENSIVE WEAPON ON THEIR PERSON

Considerations/dynamic risk assessment

Who is suspected? Are they unpredictable? Violent? Approachable? Is the pupil calm? Contained? Nervous? Location? Are you in school? What support is available? Who is at risk? What is the risk of challenging the individual? Will it exacerbate the situation?

Communication

Immediately share any suspicion with another member of staff. As soon as possible, notify a school leader.

Possible actions

An attempt should be made to isolate the pupil, to reduce the risk to those around him/her. This may be achieved by taking the pupil to another location or removing peers to another location. If, after a **dynamic risk assessment**, it is believed safe to approach the pupil and ask them if they are concealing a knife - do so. Knowledge of the individual pupil will be vital in making this decision. If the pupil is known to be violent or volatile, **contact the police**. If available, leaders will make this decision. If not, **staff are empowered to ring the police if required**.

- > **Dynamically assess situation**
- > **Minimise risk to self and others**
- > **Communicate & escalate the problem**
- > **Contact the police if required**

IF A PUPIL IS KNOWN TO BE IN POSSESSION OF A KNIFE

Considerations/dynamic risk assessment

Is anyone at **immediate** risk? Are you at risk? Can they (anyone identified as an immediate risk) be removed from the situation? Do they (the person with the knife) know you know? Will revealing that you know they have a knife, reduce or increase the risk?

Communication

Share information with a colleague. As soon as possible after this point notify a school leader. If in a position to do so, **call the police or ask a colleague/leader to call the police.**

Possible actions

An attempt should be made to isolate the pupil, to reduce the risk to those around him/her. This may be achieved by taking the pupil to another location or removing peers to another location. If the individual is calm and unaware that it is known they have a knife, it may be better to carry on as normal and not agitate them. This would only be possible if you have managed to escalate the problem and you know that police are going to be contacted.

If, after a **dynamic risk assessment**, it is believed safe to do so, approach the pupil and ask them to give you the knife. **Knowledge of the individual pupils will be vital in making this decision.** If you do ask for and receive the knife, the police will need notifying immediately after the incident.

- > **Dynamically assess situation**
- > **Minimise risk to self and others**
- > **Communicate & escalate**
- > **Contact the police**

IF A PUPIL IS THREATENING OTHERS WITH A KNIFE

Considerations/dynamic risk assessment

Who is at immediate risk? Are you at risk? Can you diffuse the situation verbally? Is it safe to physically intervene? What kind of knife is it? Who is wielding it? Can you or those at risk escape the immediate vicinity of the threat? Is wider support available? Can you get immediate help?

Communication

All at risk to be notified and advised. They may be unaware. The police are to be notified immediately/as soon as possible.

Possible actions

Safety of everyone is of paramount importance. Try and remove those at greatest risk from situation i.e. if someone specific is being targeted. Attempt to verbally diffuse if safe to do so. Only attempt a physical intervention if lives are endangered and as a last resort. If the situation is diffused, the police are to be contacted post incident.

- > Dynamically assess situation**
- > Minimise risk to self and others**
- > Try and obtain support**
- > Contact the police**