



# Offensive Weapons Policy

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## Document Control

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## 1 Policy Statement

It is a priority that Worthing High School provides a safe and secure environment for all members of its community. To that end, any violent or potentially violent incident involving an offensive weapon will be viewed with the utmost seriousness and dealt with thoroughly and rapidly.

## 2 Definition

When creating an offensive weapons policy the school has used two principle sources as reference points.

- The Prevention of Crime Act 1953; and
- a crime prevention handbook "Teens Against Crime".

Under the 1953 Act the term 'offensive weapon' is defined as:

"any article made or adapted for use to cause injury to the person, or intended by the person having it with him for such use".

The law states that the person is not allowed to carry an offensive weapon even for self-protection. An item that imitates an offensive weapon will be deemed to be an offensive weapon including bladed items.

For the purposes of this policy the premises of Worthing High School are deemed to be the School, the Glynn Owen Centre (including the 3G pitch and netball courts) and any area in use during a school activity or trip.

## 3 Key Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1 The Head of School will:

- ensure the implementation of all aspects of this policy
- facilitate contact between parents/carers and support agencies as required
- manage media links related to any incidents relating the use of an offensive weapon
- ensure that any incident involving an offensive weapon is fully investigated by an appropriate member of staff
- refer incidents involving an offensive weapon to the Police or external agencies whenever appropriate

### 3.2 The Senior Leadership Team will:

- support the Head of School and investigate further all incidents involving an offensive weapon as required

### 3.3 All staff will:

Follow the attached guidelines relating to:

- dealing with the situation involving an offensive weapon
- completing follow up actions required after an incident involving an offensive weapon



### **3.4 Governors will:**

- Agree and review the offensive weapons policy and associated guidelines on a biennial basis

## **4 Offensive Weapons – Student Information and Education**

The school's policy statement in this area is underpinned by the following:

- the code of conduct and behaviour and rewards policy
- Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) Curriculum
- assemblies
- support from external agencies, for example, the Police and Police School Community Officers

## **5 Guidelines for Staff**

### **5.1 Dealing with an incident involving an offensive weapon**

An offensive weapon can be any article that is, or could be used, to harm another person. The priority for staff who encounter an incident involving an offensive weapon must be to take all reasonable actions to secure their own safety. The safety of others, whilst crucial, does not supersede a person's own well-being. Consequently the following actions should be taken whenever possible. It is recognised, however, that as with any violent or potentially violent situation a degree of personal and professional judgement will always be required:

- always seek assistance, if possible, when an incident involving an offensive weapon is encountered
- if your personal safety is not at immediate risk, try and de-escalate the situation by using the following techniques:
  - request all by-standers to vacate the area
  - keep a clear distance between yourself and the person (s) with the weapon - speak quietly and calmly
  - do not feel obliged in any way to remove the weapon from the carrier - restraint of the weapon carrier can and should be considered but only as a last resort. Restraint should be carried out by at least two people who have training although this may not always be appropriate or indeed possible.
  - use First Call to gain support from other colleagues
  - allow the weapon carrier to leave the area if they so desire
- a search for an offensive weapon should be carried out by two members of staff whenever possible.

### **5.2 Completing follow-up actions required after an incident involving an offensive weapon**

Any incident involving an offensive weapon should be referred immediately to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

A full range of witness statements should be gathered. After initial investigations have been completed a decision will be made by the Head of School with regard to further actions. This may include a referral of the incident to the Police who from this point onward will take full responsibility for further



investigations. Any subsequent sanctions put in place by the school may be informed by this work but not exclusively.

The offensive weapon should, wherever possible be moved to a secure place and passed to the Police if necessary.

## **6 Guidelines On Actions And Sanctions Following Student Involvement With An Offensive Weapon**

### **6.1 Possession of an Offensive Weapon**

All incidents will be considered on a case by case basis and the school reserves the right to administer a sanction that is deemed appropriate. This may include:

- Suspension – 5 days or Recommendation for permanent exclusion

### **6.2 Possession Of An Offensive Weapon With A Serious Intent To Use It**

Recommendation for permanent exclusion

### **6.3 Aiding And Abetting The Use Of/Or The Possession Of An Offensive Weapon**

All incidents will be considered on a case by case basis and the school reserves the right to administer a sanction that is deemed appropriate. This may include:

- Suspension of at least 1 day or more or recommendation for permanent exclusion

### **6.4 Use Of An Offensive Weapon Against A Person On The School Premises**

Recommendation for permanent exclusion

ANY REPEAT OFFENCES INVOLVING THE USE OF OR POSSESSION OF AN OFFENSIVE WEAPON WILL RESULT IN CONSIDERATION OF A RECOMMENDATION FOR PERMANENT EXCLUSION.