

Knife Crime Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
01/10/2019	01/10/2021	Mr Gwyn Hood	Mr Paul Mokwenye

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011
- Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012
- School Behaviour (Determination and Publicising of Measures in Academies) Regulations 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Safeguarding Children and Young people in Education from Knife Crime (Ofsted)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (DfE 2018)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children (DfE 2018)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (DfE)
- Use of Reasonable Force – advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (DfE)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools – advice for head teachers and school staff (DfE)
- Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)

We acknowledge that knife crime is an increasing safeguarding risk to children both at school and in their local communities. We realise that schools alone cannot solve knife crime but we do have a role to play in helping to prevent knife crime becoming part of children's lives.

We are aware that knife crime is a term commonly used to refer to street based knife assaults and knife carrying. In this policy, 'when we refer to knife crime we are referring both to the use of knives against children either to threaten or to wound them and to instances when children may have been carrying or using knives for a range of purposes.'

The law clearly states that:

- it is illegal to carry a knife to use as a weapon or even in self-defence;
- carrying a knife may result in being arrested, going to court and receiving a criminal record and a possible custodial sentence;
- the police have the authority to search anyone who they suspect of carrying a knife;

Our Lady and St Joseph

- it is a criminal offence to have a knife or other weapon on school premises;
- a pupil may be detained or arrested if they are found to be possession of a knife or other weapon;
- appropriate school personnel may search a young who they suspect of carrying a knife.

We understand that 'knife crime has a huge impact on children and the communities in which they live, and not just in London but nationally'. We acknowledge that knife crime is a societal problem and no single agency, including schools, can solve knife crime on its own.

We believe schools have a role to play in stopping knife crime becoming part of children's lives by identifying, supporting, helping and protecting children on the school site and to teach them about the dangers of knives and related dangers. But in order to overcome this problem and to protect children all support agencies, parents/carers and social media need to work together.

We work hard to ensure children are safe from knife crime at school but we realise that the most dangerous time for children is when they leave the schools premises.

We recognise our responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and will take all reasonably practicable steps to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions (on the school premises and during school-sponsored activities), equipment and systems of work for all our pupils, school personnel and visitors to the school.

We believe it is essential that risks to the health and safety of our pupils, staff, buildings, school grounds, visitors and school events must be controlled through regular risk assessments as we wish to provide a safe, secure and healthy school environment.

We believe that in order to prevent children getting involved with knives is to:

- identify, support, help and protect children on the school site;
- to teach children about the dangers of knives and related dangers from an early age;
- review our PSHE curriculum and to see how this reflects local safeguarding issues and trends especially knife crime;
- introduce anti-knife crime sessions into the PSHE curriculum and anti-knife crime workshops for parents
- engage with parents and highlight ways that they can talk to their children about all safeguarding issues;
- work with and have close links with parents, the police, the local authority, health, youth services, welfare services, housing services and the local community.

We understand that 'Headteachers and school personnel authorised by them have the statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item'.

We are aware that the powers to search as stated in the Education Act 1996 are compatible with Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights and we will exercise those powers lawfully in the context of this policy.

Our Lady and St Joseph

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We all have a responsibility to ensure equality permeates in to all aspects of school life and that everyone is treated equally irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We want everyone connected with this school to feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

We acknowledge the findings of the Race Disparity Audit that clearly shows how people of different ethnicities are treated across the public services of health, education, employment and the criminal justice system.

The educational section of the audit that covers: differences by region; attainment and economic disadvantage; exclusions and abuse; and destinations, has a significant importance for the strategic planning of this school.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Aims

- To ensure children are safe from knife crime at school.
- To provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions (on the school premises and during school-sponsored activities), equipment and systems of work for all our pupils, school personnel and visitors to the school.
- To have in place school personnel authorised to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may be in possession of a prohibited item.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has:

- appointed trained school personnel (male and female) authorised to undertake searches for prohibited items;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;

Our Lady and St Joseph

- responsibility for ensuring full compliance with all statutory responsibilities;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- the responsibility of involving the School Council in:
 - ☐ determining this policy with the Governing Body;
 - ☐ discussing improvements to this policy during the school year;
 - ☐ organising surveys to gauge the thoughts of all pupils;
 - ☐ reviewing the effectiveness of this policy with the Governing Body
- nominated a link governor to:
 - ☐ visit the school regularly;
 - ☐ work closely with the Headteacher and the coordinator;
 - ☐ ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
 - ☐ ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
 - ☐ attend training related to this policy;
 - ☐ report to the Governing Body every term;
 - ☐ annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- work in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- ensure risk assessments are:
 - ☐ in place and cover all aspects of this policy;
 - ☐ accurate and suitable;
 - ☐ reviewed annually;
 - ☐ easily available for all school personnel.
- identify, support, help and protect children on the school site from knife crime;
- ensure children are taught about the dangers of knives and related dangers from an early age;
- be aware that the law states that only authorised school personnel can search for knives or weapons;
- work closely with the link governor and coordinator;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;

Our Lady and St Joseph

- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:
 - ☐ monitoring learning and teaching through observing lessons
 - ☐ monitoring planning and assessment
 - ☐ speaking with pupils, school personnel, parents and governors
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by speaking with pupils, school personnel, parents and governors;
- annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

Role of Designated School Personnel

Designated school personnel will:

- undertake appropriate training in search procedures;
- undertake a search without consent if they have sufficient grounds for suspicion that a pupil has in his/her possession a prohibited item or is behaving in a suspicious manner;
- ensure that in any search the designated person and witness will be the same sex as the pupil being searched;
- conduct an immediate search of a pupil without a witness being present if it is considered that serious harm to another person is potentially imminent;
- ensure all searches are witnessed by another member of the school personnel or by another designated person;
- ensure a search does not take place in full view of other pupils but in an appropriate private room with a witness or witnesses present;
- consider studying CCTV footage before deciding whether to conduct a search;
- not request under any circumstance the pupil to remove any 'next to the skin' clothing other than, if need be, their outer clothing such as hats, shoes, boots, gloves or scarves;
- have the authority to search a pupil's desk, locker or bag in the presence of the pupil and a member of the school personnel
- have the authority to search a pupil's desk, locker or bag without the presence of the pupil or witness if it is considered that there is a serious risk of immediate harm to another person;
- confiscate all prohibited items after a search has taken place;
- be reassured that if they have acted lawfully when confiscating a prohibited item that no complaint or other action can be taken against them;
- report to the Headteacher in the first instance and then to the police the following:
 - ☐ illegal drugs and other substances
 - ☐ stolen items
 - ☐ child pornography
 - ☐ **knives or weapons**
 - ☐ weapons or items which are evidence of an offence
 - ☐ any item that could be used to commit an offence or personal injury or damage to property
 - ☐ electronics devices containing inappropriate material

Our Lady and St Joseph

- work closely with the Headteacher and the nominated governor;
- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- annually report to the Headteacher on the success and development of this policy.

Role of the Curriculum Leader

The Curriculum Leader will:

- ensure children are taught about the dangers of knives and related dangers from an early age; e.g Yearly visit to Ben Kinsella Trust Year 5 and local PC Autumn talk to Year 6.
- review our PSHE curriculum and to see how this reflects local safeguarding issues and trends especially knife crime;
- introduce anti-knife crime sessions into the PSHE curriculum and anti-knife crime workshops for parents
- provide a curriculum that provides pupils with the essential knowledge they need to be educated citizens in democratic Britain;
- provide an environment that is fun, stimulating and challenging to all pupils;
- promote an awareness of and respect for a diversity of cultures, values, beliefs and abilities;
- equip children with a range of skills and a desire for lifelong learning;
- ensure appropriate coverage of the curriculum;
- provide support and advice;
- monitor pupil progress;
- ensure sufficient and up to date resources are in place.

Role of School Personnel

School personnel must:

- help to identify, support, help and protect children on the school site from knife crime;
- ensure children are taught about the dangers of knives and related dangers from an early age;
- must be aware that:
 - ☐ they can choose whether they want to be authorised to conduct a search, or not;
 - ☐ they cannot be made to conduct a search;
 - ☐ in order to conduct a search without consent, a member of staff must be authorised to do so;
 - ☐ the Headteacher and authorised school personnel have a specific statutory power to search pupils without consent for specific items and must act within the limits of this specific power.

Role of Pupils

Pupils will be aware that:

Our Lady and St Joseph

- the Headteacher and authorised school personnel have the statutory power to search without consent any pupil for specific items such as knives/weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs or stolen items;
- they face disciplinary sanctions if they are found to be in possession of any prohibited item.

Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy for the benefit of their children;
- be aware that the school does not have to inform them if a search takes place or seek their consent to search their child;
- be informed if their child is found to be in possession of any prohibited item;
- be aware of the sanctions that their child may face if their child is found to be in possession of any prohibited item;
- work in partnership with the school;
- be asked to take part in periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- School Handbook/Prospectus;
- School website;
- Staff Handbook;
- Meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops;
- School events;
- Meetings with school personnel;
- Written communications with home such as weekly newsletters and of end of half term newsletters;
- Annual report to parents;
- Headteacher reports to the Governing Body;
- Information displays in the main school entrance;
- Text messages
- Email
- Social media:
 - ☐ Facebook
 - ☐ Twitter
 - ☐ Virtual pin boards
 - ☐ School blog

Training

All school personnel:

Our Lady and St Joseph

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive training on induction which specifically covers:
 - ☐ All aspects of this policy
 - ☐ Searching techniques and procedures
 - ☐ Pupil behaviour and discipline
 - ☐ School Rules
 - ☐ Pastoral Care
 - ☐ Curriculum
 - ☐ Equal opportunities
 - ☐ Inclusion
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

Linked Policies

- Complaints
- Curriculum
- Pastoral Care
- Pupil Behaviour and Discipline
- School Rules
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation

See Appendices Documents section on Policies for Schools Website

- Frequency of Policy Monitoring
- Monitoring Implementation and Policy Effectiveness Action Plan
- Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Our Lady and St Joseph

- Policy Evaluation
- Policy Approval Form

Headteacher:	Sean Flood	Date:	09/10/2019
Chair of Governing Body:	Derek Vitali	Date:	09/10/2019