

Whitley Abbey Primary School



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Banned Items Policy

Reviewed Autumn 2021

Next review Autumn 2024

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This policy has been drawn up in accordance with:

- DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation (Jan, 2018)
- DfE Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (Jan, 2016)
- DfE Guidance on Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England (Sept 2017).

This is the approved policy of Whitley Abbey Primary School.

All stakeholders will recognise that there is a broad range of items which if, brought into a school setting or, in the possession of a young person, could compromise the health and safety of the individual pupil, other members of the school community, including students, staff or visitors to the school. The Governing Body of Whitley Abbey Primary School has a duty under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requiring them to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Prohibited Items (DfE Screening Searching Confiscation Advice - Key points)

The 2018 DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice is the foundation for this policy and it identifies prohibited items as:

- knives or weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil).

Head Teachers and authorised staff (SLT and learning mentors) can also search for any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.

For the purpose of this policy the definition of 'Knife' in this document includes any bladed article including - craft knife, Stanley knife, Swiss Army knife, fishing knife, razors, kitchen knives etc. or any bladed item.

The term 'weapon' refers to any gun, including air rifles, BB gun, toy guns, pellet guns, crossbow, tasers, blow pipes, knuckledusters or any similar item and includes any item made for the purpose of assault or defence.

The above is not an exhaustive list and could include other bladed items or weapons not specified above.

The policy is not constrained by the criminal definition of an offensive weapon but refers to any item which could cause harm, injury or distress to the holder or others, or which could be used to threaten, alarm, distress or intimidate others. For details of the response to, and management of, any incident involving any type of Drug/ Alcohol/ tobacco/E-Cigarettes please refer to the schools own Drugs Policy.

Unauthorised Items

In addition to the prohibited items identified above and detailed in the DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice, there are a number of other items which could cause harm, distress or injury to pupils or persons.

Whitley Abbey Primary School's Governing Body considers that the following items are inappropriate and should not be brought into school:

- Chains
- Catapults
- Lighters, matches
- Tools (scissors, screwdriver, hammer, nails, etc.)
- Pepper sprays and gas canisters
- Any item fashioned to cause injury i.e. a sharpened stick, shard of glass
- Laser pens
- Dangerous chemicals (acids, hair dyes, bleaches, nail varnish remover etc.)
- Aerosol (including deodorant and hair spray)
- E-cigarettes
- Stink bombs
- Solvents
- Chewing gum
- Energy drinks
- Super Glue
- Needles (syringes if required for medical grounds should be kept in accordance with the pupils own care plan and the schools own drugs/medical policy)
- Offensive material - pornographic, racist, homophobic, extremist material (in any medium)
- Rope, cable ties

This is not an exhaustive list and the Headteacher may consider other items as inappropriate if they believe that the possession of the item is to cause harm, distress or injury to another.

Incidents Outside of School

Whitley Abbey Primary School's Governing Body consider that the above items are inappropriate and possession of such items in school, on the journey to and from school, on a school trip or any extra curriculum activity - on or off the school premises - is unacceptable. The response to any pupil found with or believed to have possession of such items will be managed in accordance with this policy.

Publication and Awareness

This Policy will be actively promoted to parents, staff and students of Whitley Abbey Primary School by the use of:

- PHSE
- School Website
- Assemblies
- Individual pupil plans
- Annual reminder to Parents of the policy in the school newsletter
- Induction processes for new admissions and with particular regard to midyear admissions.

The school maintains a robust and comprehensive risk management of all legitimate items held for the purpose of pupils' education e.g. craft knives/ scissors/ kitchen equipment/ science equipment/ chemicals/ tools etc. as required for the school's own teaching facilities. This includes classroom arrangements for maintaining a safe learning environment and for monitoring and checking items. All dangerous chemicals and equipment held in school will be stored in accordance with the COSHH guidelines including those for educational purpose and for the routine maintenance and cleaning of the school premises.

Consequences (See also Behaviour Policy)

Whitley Abbey Primary School understands that students can make poor choices and that these choices may from time to time breach the standards of expected behaviour at our school, or a pupil may foolishly or unwittingly bring into school an inappropriate or prohibited item.

When considering the consequences of such an event, the Headteacher or designated member of staff will thoroughly investigate the circumstances and if necessary the Head will exclude the pupil for a fixed term period whilst this process is underway.

When reviewing the appropriate response, the Headteacher will have regard to any likely consequences following from any breach including safeguarding the student involved and the impact on students, members of staff and the wider school community. In their deliberations the Headteacher will review:

- Motivation and intention
- The specific item
- Student's awareness of the health and safety implications of the item in their possession
- The student's own statement
- Any threats or intimidation made referring to or using the item
- Any mitigating circumstance e.g. victim of bullying frequency / repeated breaches / manipulation / duress of the student by others
- Vulnerability of the pupil
- Any SEND the pupil may experience

Responding to an Incident Involving Prohibited or Unauthorised Items

All screening, searching or confiscation will be carried out by designated staff representative of Whitley Abbey Primary School and in accordance with the DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscations Advice 2018.

The item will be confiscated and locked securely in the school office.

A photograph/photocopy of the confiscated item including a scale to illustrate the size will be taken. Pupil will be removed to isolation and given the opportunity to make a statement concerning their reasons for having this item in school.

Parents will be contacted by telephone.

If necessary, a fixed term exclusion will be considered to give opportunity for the incident to be investigated by the Headteacher or a senior member of the school team including taking witness statements from other pupils and staff members.

The Headteacher will consider whether appropriate to inform the Police - for all incidents which involve the possession of a weapon the police will be informed.

In the event that the item has been used to intimidate, threaten or harm others, the police will be informed.

Safeguarding Response to Incident Involving Banned Items

The Headteacher will always consider their safeguarding responsibilities arising from the discovery of a banned item and will make referrals as appropriate.

If the incident is in relation to drugs, the Headteacher will refer to the school's drugs policy.
If the item confiscated constitutes a safeguarding concern, e.g. possession of pornographic material this must be reported in accordance with the school's own safeguarding arrangements.

If the item confiscated constitutes racist or extremist material, schools will make a referral / reporting to appropriate agencies and establish internal interventions and support to address these concerns.

If the item confiscated was held for the purpose of self-harm, the school will make referrals to appropriate support agencies and consider making a safeguarding referral.

If the item confiscated was for the purpose of bravado or perceived self-protection, school will make referrals to appropriate support agencies and establish internal school interventions and support.

Whitley Abbey Primary School will always consider a multiagency approach to addressing wider needs including completing an Early Help Assessment with the family.

We will, where appropriate, make referrals to appropriate external support agencies.

Consequences and Support

Following investigation, the Headteacher will consider an appropriate response which could include one or a combination of:

- Letter home
- Family/school meeting
- School based sanctions
- A period of internal isolation
- Amended timetable
- Restrictions on movement around school site
- Detentions
- Loss of privileges
- Short Fixed Term exclusion
- Changing classes or teaching groups
- Restorative conversation
- Formal restorative conference
- Pastoral Support Plan
- Behaviour contract
- Referral to external support
- Managed Move
- Risk Assessment

Permanent Exclusion

DfE Guidance on Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England 2017 states that: 'Permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort, in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school'.

Before any decision to permanently exclude a student, the Headteacher will:

- Thoroughly investigate the incident and take witness statements etc.
- Refer to the school behaviour policy and others policies as necessary
- Enable the student to make their own statement regarding the incident

- Consult with the LA pupil inclusion team
- Explore a Managed Move or Suspended Permanent Exclusion
- Complete a risk assessment to ascertain the impact of the pupil remaining in the school.

For students with an Educational Health Care Plan/Statement of SEND or for LAC students the Headteacher will also contact the relevant team at Coventry Local Authority SEND office.

Any decision to fixed term or permanently exclude a student will follow the process and procedures as required in the Exclusion from maintained school, academies and pupil referral Units in England 2017.

Autumn 2021

Policy agreed by Governors: