



# HOPEBRIGHT

S C H O O L

## Weapons Policy

**Publication Date:** September 2026

**Review Date:** September 2027



## **CONTENTS**

1. Introduction
2. Aims and objectives
3. Legal framework
4. Definition of a weapon
5. Roles and responsibilities
6. Prevention and safeguarding
7. Searching, screening and confiscation
8. Responding to concerns about weapons
9. Responding to incidents involving weapons
10. Recording and reporting incidents
11. Police involvement
12. Support following an incident
13. Behaviour management and sanctions
14. Off-site visits and educational activities
15. Staff training
16. Monitoring and review

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

Hopebright School Bolton is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff to act in the best interests of our pupils at all times.

### **1. Introduction**

Hopebright School Bolton recognises that the possession, use or threatened use of weapons presents a serious risk to the safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, visitors and the wider community.

The school adopts a zero-tolerance approach to weapons being brought onto the school site, into school transport, or to any off-site activity organised by the school.

This policy sets out the school's approach to preventing, identifying and responding to incidents involving weapons, or concerns that a pupil may be carrying or have access to a weapon.

This policy applies to all pupils, staff, agency staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors and any other individual working for, or on behalf of Hopebright School Bolton.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies including:

- Child Protection Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Policy
- Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) Policy
- Safe Working Practice Policy (Code of Conduct)
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Off-Site Visits Policy
- Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Compliments and Complaints Policy

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, exclusion, referral to external agencies and/or police involvement.

### **2. Aims and objectives**

The aims of this policy are to:

- maintain a safe, secure and supportive environment for all pupils, staff and visitors.
- prevent weapons from being brought into school or used in connection with school activities.
- ensure staff understand their responsibilities in identifying and responding to concerns relating to weapons.
- support pupils to understand the dangers and consequences associated with carrying weapons.
- ensure safeguarding concerns are identified and addressed appropriately.
- ensure incidents are managed consistently, proportionately and lawfully.
- work effectively with parents/carers, police and external agencies where appropriate.

### **3. Legal framework**

This policy has been developed in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance including:

- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006
- The Offensive Weapons Act 2019
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010

#### **4. Definition of a weapon**

For the purposes of this policy, a weapon includes any item which could be used to cause injury, threaten, intimidate or harm another person.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- knives or bladed articles
- imitation weapons
- sharp implements
- tools used aggressively
- corrosive substances
- fireworks or explosive materials
- air weapons
- laser devices used dangerously
- any item adapted for use as a weapon
- any object used to threaten or intimidate another person

The school recognises that everyday objects can become weapons depending on how they are used.

#### **5. Roles and responsibilities**

##### **The Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- ensuring this policy is implemented effectively.
- ensuring appropriate safeguarding responses are in place.
- ensuring incidents are investigated and recorded appropriately.
- liaising with police and external agencies where required.
- ensuring staff receive appropriate training and guidance.
- ensuring risk assessments are reviewed following relevant incidents.

##### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL is responsible for:

- responding to safeguarding concerns linked to weapons.
- assessing whether pupils may be at risk of exploitation, violence, gang involvement or criminal activity.
- making referrals to external agencies where appropriate.
- supporting pupils and families following incidents.

#### **Staff**

All staff are responsible for:

- maintaining vigilance regarding potential weapon-related concerns.
- following school procedures and guidance.
- reporting concerns immediately to senior staff.
- recording incidents factually and accurately.
- supporting pupils in line with safeguarding procedures.

#### **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- behave safely and responsibly.
- never bring weapons or prohibited items into school.
- report concerns to a trusted adult.
- follow instructions given by staff in relation to safety.

#### **Parents and carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- support the school's expectations regarding safety and behaviour.
- work collaboratively with the school following incidents or concerns.
- inform the school of relevant concerns that may affect a pupil's safety or wellbeing.

### **6. Prevention and safeguarding**

Hopebright School Bolton recognises that pupils may carry weapons for a variety of reasons including fear, coercion, exploitation, peer pressure, trauma, criminal exploitation or involvement in gangs.

The school adopts a safeguarding-led approach and recognises that carrying a weapon may indicate that a child is vulnerable or at risk of significant harm.

The school will:

- promote a culture of safety, respect and positive relationships.
- provide pupils with opportunities to discuss safety, risk and consequences.
- educate pupils about the dangers associated with carrying weapons and serious violence.
- identify pupils who may be vulnerable to exploitation or violence.
- work with external agencies where appropriate.
- ensure pupils know how to seek help and report concerns.

Relevant concerns may include:



- changes in behaviour or presentation
- increased aggression or intimidation
- unexplained injuries
- association with risky peer groups
- involvement in violence or criminal activity
- unexplained possessions or money
- fearfulness or anxiety about travelling to and from school

### **7. Searching, screening and confiscation**

Hopebright School Bolton reserves the right to search pupils and their possessions in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance.

Searches will be carried out lawfully, proportionately and respectfully.

Staff authorised by the Head Teacher may search a pupil where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item, including a weapon.

Where appropriate:

- searches should be conducted by two members of staff.
- consideration should be given to the pupil's age, needs, vulnerabilities and communication abilities.
- the pupil should be informed of the reason for the search, where possible.
- searches should be conducted in a safe and appropriate location.

Staff may confiscate any item believed to:

- present a risk of harm.
- be prohibited by law.
- compromise the safety or good order of the school.

Any weapon or suspected weapon confiscated by staff must be handed immediately to the Head Teacher or senior member of staff.

Staff must not:

- handle weapons unnecessarily where doing so may place them or others at risk.
- attempt to investigate criminal matters themselves.
- place themselves in danger when responding to incidents.

### **8. Responding to concerns about weapons**

Where a concern is raised that a pupil may possess or have access to a weapon, staff must:

- remain calm and avoid escalating the situation.
- inform a senior member of staff immediately.
- undertake a dynamic risk assessment.
- prioritise the safety of all pupils, staff and visitors.
- follow guidance from senior leaders and/or police.



Staff should not confront a pupil aggressively or attempt to physically remove a weapon unless absolutely necessary to prevent immediate harm.

Consideration must always be given to:

- the age and understanding of the pupil.
- the nature of the concern.
- the immediate level of risk.
- the safety of others nearby.
- whether emergency services are required.

### **9. Responding to incidents involving weapons**

In the event of an incident involving a weapon, the school will take immediate action to safeguard all individuals.

Responses may include:

- securing the area.
- removing other pupils from danger.
- contacting emergency services.
- seeking medical assistance where required.
- implementing lockdown or emergency procedures if necessary.
- informing senior leaders immediately.

The school will ensure that:

- pupils and staff are supported appropriately following the incident.
- safeguarding procedures are followed.
- parents/carers are informed, where appropriate.
- all actions and decisions are recorded.

### **10. Recording and reporting incidents**

All concerns and incidents relating to weapons must be recorded accurately, factually and without delay.

Records should include:

- the date, time and location of the incident.
- names of individuals involved.
- the nature of the concern or incident.
- action taken by staff.
- any witness accounts.
- details of communication with parents/carers, police or external agencies.
- safeguarding actions and outcomes.

Records must be stored securely in accordance with data protection and safeguarding requirements.

### **11. Police involvement**

The school will involve the police where appropriate.



Police involvement is likely where:

- a weapon has been brought onto site.
- a weapon has been used or brandished.
- threats have been made involving a weapon.
- there is a risk of serious violence or criminal activity.
- possession of the item may constitute a criminal offence.

The decision to involve the police will normally be made by the Head Teacher or senior leader.

Where police involvement is required, the school will cooperate fully with any investigation.

### **12. Support following an incident**

Following a weapon-related incident, Hopebright School Bolton will consider the support needs of all pupils and staff involved.

Support may include:

- safeguarding intervention
- pastoral support
- risk assessment reviews
- therapeutic support
- referrals to external agencies
- restorative work where appropriate
- staff debrief and supervision

The school recognises that incidents involving weapons may have a significant emotional impact on pupils, staff and families.

### **13. Behaviour management and sanctions**

Any incident involving a weapon will be treated seriously.

Consequences may include:

- internal sanctions
- suspension
- permanent exclusion
- restricted access to activities
- behaviour management reviews
- increased supervision
- police involvement

The school will consider each case individually, taking into account:

- the level of risk posed.
- intent and understanding.
- safeguarding considerations.

- the age and needs of the pupil.
- any evidence of coercion, exploitation or vulnerability.

#### **14. Off-site visits and educational activities**

This policy applies during all off-site visits, educational activities and transport arrangements organised by Hopebright School Bolton.

Staff must:

- undertake appropriate risk assessments.
- maintain appropriate supervision.
- remain vigilant to safeguarding and safety concerns.
- follow emergency procedures where necessary.

Any concerns regarding weapons during off-site activities must be reported immediately to senior staff.

#### **15. Staff training**

Hopebright School Bolton will ensure that relevant staff receive appropriate training in:

- safeguarding and child protection
- searching, screening and confiscation
- behaviour management and de-escalation
- serious violence and exploitation
- emergency procedures
- restrictive physical intervention, where appropriate

Training will be refreshed regularly in line with school procedures and statutory guidance.

#### **16. Monitoring and review**

The Head Teacher is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner in response to:

- changes in legislation or statutory guidance
- serious incidents
- safeguarding reviews
- local or national concerns regarding serious violence or weapons

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact the Head Teacher.