

EQUITAS ACADEMIES TRUST



EQUITAS
— ACADEMIES TRUST —

WEAPONS POLICY

Review Date: July 2024

To be Reviewed: July 2025

Agreed: Equitas Leadership Team

Policy Lead: Deputy Head Teachers

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Pages</u>
1. Introduction	3
2. A definition of weapons	3
3. Crime prevention	3
4. Searching	4
5. Wanding	4
6. Confidentiality	4
7. Reporting procedures	4
8. Parental involvement	4
9. Police involvement	5
10. Disciplinary response	5

WEAPONS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Equitas Academies Trust recognises that on occasion staff may be confronted by some students who may be in possession of a weapon. It is the Trust's responsibility to ensure that students, staff and visitors to each Academy within the Trust are safe in their environment. This policy gives clear guidelines on dealing with weapon related incidents.

Weapons are not allowed in any Academy within the Trust. Possession of a weapon is illegal. All weapon related incidents will be reported to the police.

2. A DEFINITION OF WEAPONS

A weapon is any article made, intended or adapted to be used to cause harm or injury.

Examples of weapons: (this list is not exhaustive)

- knives
- knuckle-dusters
- metal bars
- chains
- guns
 - BB Gun
 - replicas
 - pellet
 - potato
 - bullet
- laser pens
- screwdrivers
- scissors
- any sharp instrument
- ***any instrument / substance / chemical that could be used to cause harm, injury or damage.***

3. CRIME PREVENTION

As part of our RSHE / Pastoral curriculum, staff, along with appropriate outside agencies, plan and deliver materials aimed at discouraging the use of violence and discouraging involvement in 'gang culture'. Community Police Officers support each Academy and help to explain what weapons are and the legal penalties for possession of weapons.

The Trust acknowledges that a positive ethos helps students to feel valued and part of the community, and in so doing, helps to foster positive self-images which may help students cope better in situations that may lead to violence.

4. SEARCHING

Where there is suspicion or information received that a weapon is being carried a search will be carried out. The Trust refer to the DFE guidance on Searching, screening and confiscation July 2022. Headteachers and any staff member authorised by the headteacher can search for:

Any item with consent

Any prohibited or banned item without consent

The headteacher or authorised staff member will:

- Make an assessment of how urgent the search is, and consider the risk to other pupils and staff
- Explain to the pupil why they are being searched, how and where the search will happen, and give them the opportunity to ask questions about it
- Always seek the pupil's cooperation
- Always have two members of staff present and make a record of the search

If the pupil refuses to cooperate:

- The school will assess the risk to the student/staff and others
- Contact parents to request the parent attends the school premises
- Supervise the pupil somewhere away from other pupils
- May sanction them in line with the behaviour policy and sanctions may include suspension or permanent exclusion
- Assess whether it's necessary to use reasonable force to conduct the search.
- The school priority is at all times for the welfare of the child and others in the school.

Weapons will be seized, kept in a safe place and handed over to the police.

Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a weapon is being carried the school will carry out a search. The academy will request the pupil's consent; however, a search may be carried out by a member of staff (with another senior member of staff present) directed by the Headteacher without consent.

5. WANDING

"Wanding" is the process of manually scanning a person for metallic objects on their person with a "wand" that sounds when in proximity to electromagnetically reflective or metal objects, possibly hidden under person's clothes. The Trust may require pupils to undergo screening by a walk-through or hand-held metal detector, even if there is no suspicion of having a weapon and without consent of pupils.

If a pupil refuses to be screened, the school may refuse to have the pupil on the premises and may contact/refer the student to the appropriate agency (e.g. the Police). Where this is the case the Trust will suspend the pupil and consider permanent exclusion.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

All young people within Equitas Academies Trust need to feel able to talk to a member of staff about a problem without the fear of being judged or reprimanded. The welfare of young people will always be central to Trust policy and practice with any related problem. Students are encouraged to talk to staff if they have any fears that a violent situation may occur.

The secondary provision within the Trust makes use of the SHARP system, which is a student web-based system that allows students the opportunity of communicating with staff in a confidential way.

7. REPORTING PROCEDURES

The reporting procedure ensures that only a limited number of people will be involved in any incident. All incidents will be reported to the Headteacher (*the Deputy Headteacher in the Headteacher's absence*) and the appropriate Assistant Headteacher. If permanent exclusion is considered, then the procedure for this will be put into action by the Headteacher, involving the Trust Board. All incidents will be recorded and passed on to the appropriate body.

8. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

If a child is found to be in possession of a weapon, or any other article that can be used as a weapon or suspected of being in possession of a weapon then parents / carers will be contacted.

9. POLICE INVOLVEMENT

Both Academies within the Trust maintain strong links with the local community police. It is Trust policy to contact the police if any student is found to be in possession of any type of knife or gun. Other weapon related incidents may also be reported to the Police.

10. DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE

The Trust will consider disciplinary action for the possession of a weapon off-site where the safety of students and staff in school is affected.

Situations that include breaking the Trust rules on weapons will result in sanctions. The type of sanction will depend on the exact nature and degree of offence. Permanent exclusions will be considered in any situation when a weapon is brought into any Academy within the Trust. Trustees, parents/carers and those involved will be kept informed throughout the investigations.

Reviewed and approved by:	Date approved:	Next review date:
Equitas Leadership Team	July 2024	July 2025