Lincoln Christ's Hospital School

Banned items Policy

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Principles

There are 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.

Governing bodies have 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.

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with DfE Guidance.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's published, *Drugs Policy*, *Conduct for Learning Policy*, *Safeguarding Policy*, *Uniform Policy,* and *Health and Safety Policy*. It has been produced using the Lincolnshire Children's Service recommended model.

BANNED ITEMS POLICY

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with:

- *DfE Guidance Screening, Searching and Confiscation July 2022*
- *https://www.gov.uk/school-behaviour-exclusions/searches*
- *DfE Behaviour in Schools February 2024*
- *Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (effective until 25 July 2026)*
- *Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (comes into force from 26 July 2026)*

PROHIBITED ITEMS

The 2022 DfE Screening Searching and Confiscation Advice is the foundation for this policy and it identifies prohibited items as:

- knives or weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:
    - to commit and offence, or
    - to cause personal injury to, or damage to property or, any person (including the pupil).
- An article specified in regulations[1]:
    - Tobacco and cigarette papers[2];
    - Fireworks
    - Pornographic images

[1] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/951/made

[2] This does not include e-cigarettes or vapes.

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, or any bladed item.

The term 'weapon' refers to any gun, including air rifles, BB gun, toy guns, pellet guns, crossbows, 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 school's *Drugs Policy*.

UNAUTHORISED ITEMS

In addition to the prohibited items identified above and detailed in the *DfE Screening Searching and Confiscation Advice,* there are a number of other items which could cause harm, distress or injury to pupils or persons o**r, 'adversely affect good order and discipline of the school community'**.

(DfE Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (Jan 16)

The Governing Body consider 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;
- Gas canisters;
- Any item fashioned to cause injury e.g. 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 or vapes;
- Stink bombs;
- Solvents;
- Chewing gum, energy drinks, super glue;
- Needles (syringes, if required on medical grounds, should be kept in accordance with the pupil's own care plan and the school's 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 Head teacher may consider other items as inappropriate if he believes that the possession of the item is to cause harm, distress or injury to another.

INCIDENTS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

The 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 and the school's *Conduct for Learning Policy*.

PUBLICATION AND AWARENESS

This policy will be actively promoted to parents, staff and students of the school by the use of:

- SMSC;
- School Website/Social Media;
- Assemblies;
- Notice boards;
- Annual reminder to parents of the policy in a 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 as required for the school 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 COSSH guidelines including those for educational purpose and for the routine maintenance and cleaning of the school premises.

CONSEQUENCES

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

When considering the consequences of such an event the Head teacher or designated member of staff will thoroughly investigate the circumstances and if necessary the Head teacher will suspend the pupil for a fixed term period whilst this process is underway. When reviewing the appropriate response, the Head teacher will have regard to any likely consequences following from any breach including safeguarding the student involved, impact on students, members of staff, and the wider school community. The Head teacher will review:

- The specific item;
- Student's awareness of the health and safety implications of the item in his/her possession;
- The student's own statement;
- Motivation and intention;
- 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 have.

RESPONDING TO AN INCIDENT INVOLVING PROHIBITED OR UNAUTHORISED ITEMS

All Screening Searching or Confiscation will be carried out by designated staff representative of the school/Academy and **in accordance with the *DfE Screening Searching and Confiscations Advice 2022*:**

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 work in our remove room and be given the opportunity to make a statement concerning his/her reasons for having this item in school.

Parents will be contacted by telephone or email.

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

The Head teacher 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 Head teacher will always consider his 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 Head teacher 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, the school will make a referral to appropriate agencies, such as Prevent, 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 make a safeguarding referral.

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

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

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

CONSEQUENCES

Following investigation, the Head teacher will consider an appropriate response which could include one or more of the following:

- 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 suspension;
- Changing classes or teaching groups;
- Restorative conversation;
- Pastoral Support Plan;
- Behaviour contract;
- Internal support such as Solutions Focused Coaching
- Referral to external support;
- Managed move;
- Risk assessment
- Any other arrangements to minimise further breaches and to support the student's continuation in the school.

PERMANENT EXCLUSION

- DfE Guidance on *Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (comes into force from 26 July 2026) states that:*

This government supports headteachers in using suspension and permanent exclusion as a sanction when warranted as part of creating calm, safe, and supportive environments where both pupils and staff can work in safety and are respected. (p.11)

A permanent exclusion is when a pupil is no longer allowed to attend a school (unless the pupil is reinstated). The decision to exclude a pupil permanently should only be taken:

- 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 such as staff or pupils in the school. (p.13)

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

- Thoroughly investigate the incident and take witness statements etc.;
- Refer to the school *Behaviour Policy* and other policies as necessary;
- Enable the student to make his/her own statement regarding the incident;
- Consult with the LA Pupil Reintegration Team;
- Consider a referral for a restorative conversation;
- Explore an off-site direction, if appropriate. This could be a short-term placement or a 'fresh start' depending on the circumstances.

For students with an Educational Health Care Plan/Statement of SEND or for LAC students, the Head teacher will also contact the relevant team at Lincolnshire Children's Services.

Any decision to fixed-term or permanently exclude a student will follow the process and procedures as required in the *Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (comes into force from 26 July 2026).*