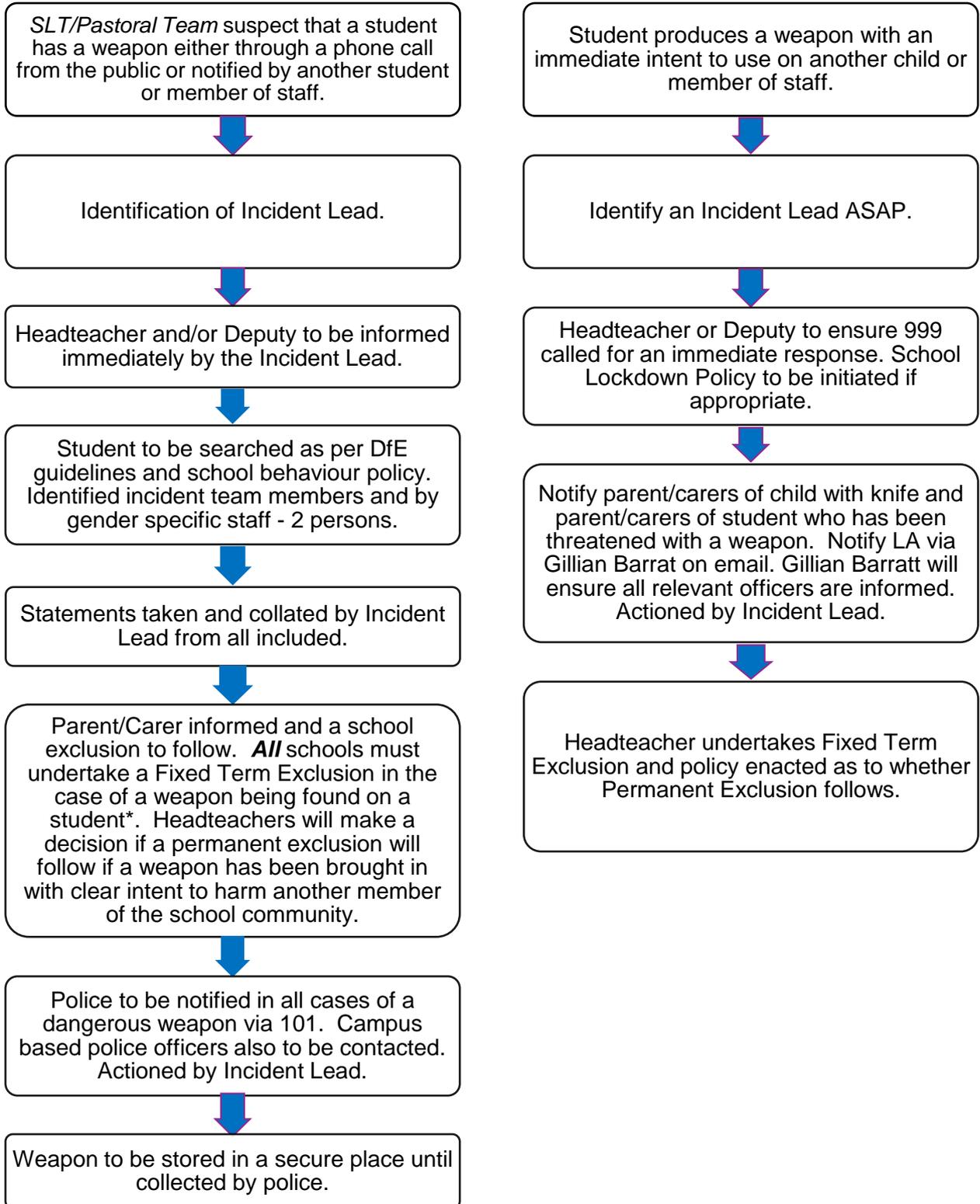


Weapons Protocols for Primary and Secondary Schools in Rochdale

Published February 2020
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Secondary Pathway Response



*In exceptional circumstances, professional judgement will be exercised by the Headteacher in line with the DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education and other statutory Safeguarding documents.

Exclusion also takes place if a student has a knife/weapon on their way to and from school.

Post Exclusion - following an exclusion the following needs to be enacted:

- Risk Assessment to be undertaken by the school. Actioned by the Incident Lead.
- School to call a meeting within 10 working days of the incident. Schools to contact YOT on bandryot@rochdale.gov.uk who will liaise with relevant partners – Complex Safeguarding, probation, youth service, early help, police and school. All relevant information to be shared at this meeting. Wider knowledge and issues important for these meetings. Actioned by the Incident Lead.
- Youth Offending Team to liaise with the school as to any wider risks posed by the student. Actioned by the Incident Lead.
- In the initial meeting wider services to put in package of support for the student and family. All agencies are agreed that the responsibility for reviewing this support must be shared amongst all the different agencies. Actioned by the Incident Lead.
- Incident Lead to keep SLT informed of progress/actions/outcomes.

Incident Lead to ensure the incident is logge

This advice is for all schools and colleges in Rochdale to use when a child brings in a weapon either with intent to use or when found carrying a weapon. The advice is intended for pupils aged 11-19.

Introduction

When a young person makes a decision to take a knife or other offensive weapon into a school, it is a serious one with potentially fatal consequences. Furthermore, the carrying of weapons or the thought that other young people carry weapons can have a negative impact on children's wellbeing, mental health and academic attainment. It can contribute to high levels of stress and anxiety within children and a feeling that violence is inevitable, as opposed to preventable. This has an impact on communities within schools and externally.

This document has been created to enable all schools in Rochdale to have a consistent approach to dealing with weapons and to understand the law surrounding weapons. It is expected that a multi-agency approach with police, youth services and youth offending team will support children, within the law, who make a decision to carry a weapon and to make positive changes. It applies to primary schools, secondary schools and colleges.

Statutory guidelines relating to schools

The DfE statutory guidelines with regards to searching and screening can be found in the document below. In summary, Headteachers and staff authorised by them can search a pupil without consent if there is reasonable ground for suspecting a pupil has a prohibited item. Prohibited items are:

- 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).
- Headteachers and authorised staff 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.

You must be the same sex as the pupil being searched; and there must be a witness (also a staff member) and, if possible, they should be the same sex as the pupil being searched.

There is a limited exception to this rule. You can carry out a search of a pupil of the opposite sex to you and / or without a witness present, but only where you reasonably believe that there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if you do not conduct the search immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.

School behaviour policies should include a section on searching, screening and confiscation.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674416/Searching_screening_and_confiscation.pdf

The law in relation to knives and weapons states that Law states it is an offence to possess an offensive weapon or bladed or sharply pointed article in a public place or on school premises. There is also an aggravated form of these possession offences, committed when the person in possession of the weapon uses it to threaten another in such a way that there is an immediate risk of serious physical harm to that person. Offenders aged 16 or over convicted of these possession offences will (in certain circumstances) receive a minimum custodial sentence.

Police Guidelines on the Investigation, Cautioning and Charging of Knife Crime Offences set out an expectation that those who illegally carry and use knives will be prosecuted. There are also statutory restrictions on the use of cautions for serious offences, including the knife possession offences described in this note. Further details can be found in the embedded document below.

Post Exclusion - following an exclusion the following needs to be enacted:

- Risk Assessment to be undertaken by the school.
- School to call a meeting within 10 working days of the incident. Schools to contact YOT on bandryot@rochdale.gov.uk who will liaise with relevant partners – Complex Safeguarding, probation, youth service, early help, police and school. All relevant information to be shared at this meeting. Wider knowledge and issues important for these meetings.
- Youth Offending Team to liaise with the school as to any wider risks posed by the child.

- In the initial meeting wider services to put in package of support for the child and family. All agencies are agreed that the responsibility for reviewing this support must be shared amongst all the different agencies.

Appendix B

This protocol was initiated by Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership's Complex Safeguarding Sub Group and authored by the Headteacher of Falinge Park High School, Rochdale.

It has included discussion with:

- National Probation Service
- Rochdale Community Safety Partnership, RBC
- Greater Manchester Police
- Youth Service, RBC
- Youth Offending Service, RBC
- Secondary Headteachers
- Primary Representative Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Protocol was finalised in February 2020 following some refinement to primary schools procedures and the role of YOS.