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information

Anti-Weapon/Knife Crime Policy

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ANTI-WEAPON/KNIFE CRIME POLICY

Aberdeen City Council

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1. BACKGROUND TO POLICY

Following the tragic event at Cults Academy on the 28th October 2015 an independent multi-agency review was commissioned by members of a Chief Officer's Group.

The overall aim of the review was to provide independent assurance to partners and the public that all circumstances in relation to the event were reviewed and appropriate recommendations made for future practice. The review highlighted 20 recommendations to be actioned. A Northern Alliance Strategic Group was formed and an implementation plan created to meet the requirements of the review recommendations. This work commenced in August 2016 in collaboration with other key partners including the following

- Police Scotland
- Primary & Secondary Head Teachers
- Pupils
- Parents
- Community Teams
- Social Work Teams

The anti -weapon/knife crime policy was created to give direction to schools and their communities in order to meet all of the recommendations from the review.

2. LEGISLATION AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 1995.

Any person who without lawful authority, or reasonable excuse, has with him/her in a public place, any offensive weapon commits an offence.

Children's Rights

Our responsibilities are set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

"Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally. Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them." (Article 19)

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- To inform schools of expectations with regard to anti –weapon/knife crime.
- To provide procedural and operational guidance to all Aberdeen City Council schools and communities with regard to weapon/knife crime.
- To provide guidance on procedures with regard to the searching of pupils' personal belongings.
- To outline links to Aberdeen City Council Anti Bullying Policy

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4. EXPECTATIONS OF SCHOOLS

Curriculum Input

Aberdeen City Council has provided Primary and Secondary Schools with an anti-weapon school pack containing educational resources and promotional materials. Some of these lessons have been adapted from resources shared by the Ben Kinsella Trust in London.

Schools will be expected to deliver the following based on the anti-weapon school pack –

SCHOOLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share the age appropriate learning resources and lessons provided. Schools can deliver these resources where and when appropriate to their individual curricular structures and design.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work in partnership with Police Scotland to deliver the anti-weapon/knife crime presentations and assemblies to all Secondary 1 and Secondary 5 pupils.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage pupil councils and forums to have regular discussions of agenda items linked to the broader area of carrying weapons within schools. This will allow pupils to share their knowledge and to use the pupil voice to further develop safe practices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide the opportunity for pupil groups to forward feedback to Aberdeen City Council which will help to improve future educational resources and highlight any further actions in order to keep the strategy developing.

Aberdeen City Council will use its websites to share information on weapon/knife crime and will inform schools of updates. They will provide an anti-weapon message for schools to display on their individual school websites.

SCHOOLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School websites should display the anti-weapon message provided by Aberdeen City Council

Non-Curricular Expectations

Within the Aberdeen City Council anti-weapon school pack there are promotional materials to assist schools in highlighting the main messages of anti-weapon/knife crime.

SCHOOLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the contents of the pack are displayed and distributed appropriately throughout their establishment and to the wider school community thus

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promoting a zero tolerance approach to the possession of weapons/knives.

- Discuss the anti-weapon/knife crime policy with all staff to ensure they are aware of policy procedures and adhere to them.

The #lifenotknife is an online resource for pupils to pledge never to carry weapons and to share information.

SCHOOLS

- Guide and support pupils to participate and take an active role in pledging never to carry a weapon and to share information. Schools will find guidance notes on how to make a pledge in the anti-weapon pack.

Parental Engagement

Aberdeen City Council has provided a parent guidance leaflet which presents the facts on weapons crime and the consequences of carrying a weapon/knife. Parents and carers have a responsibility for ensuring that their child receives appropriate guidance which should include educating them about the dangers of weapons. Aberdeen City Council will also provide a parent agreement letter setting out the expectations of the school with regard to weapons/knives. It is the parent's responsibility to read the letter, sign it and return it to school. If a child is old enough he/she should also sign the agreement letter.

SCHOOLS

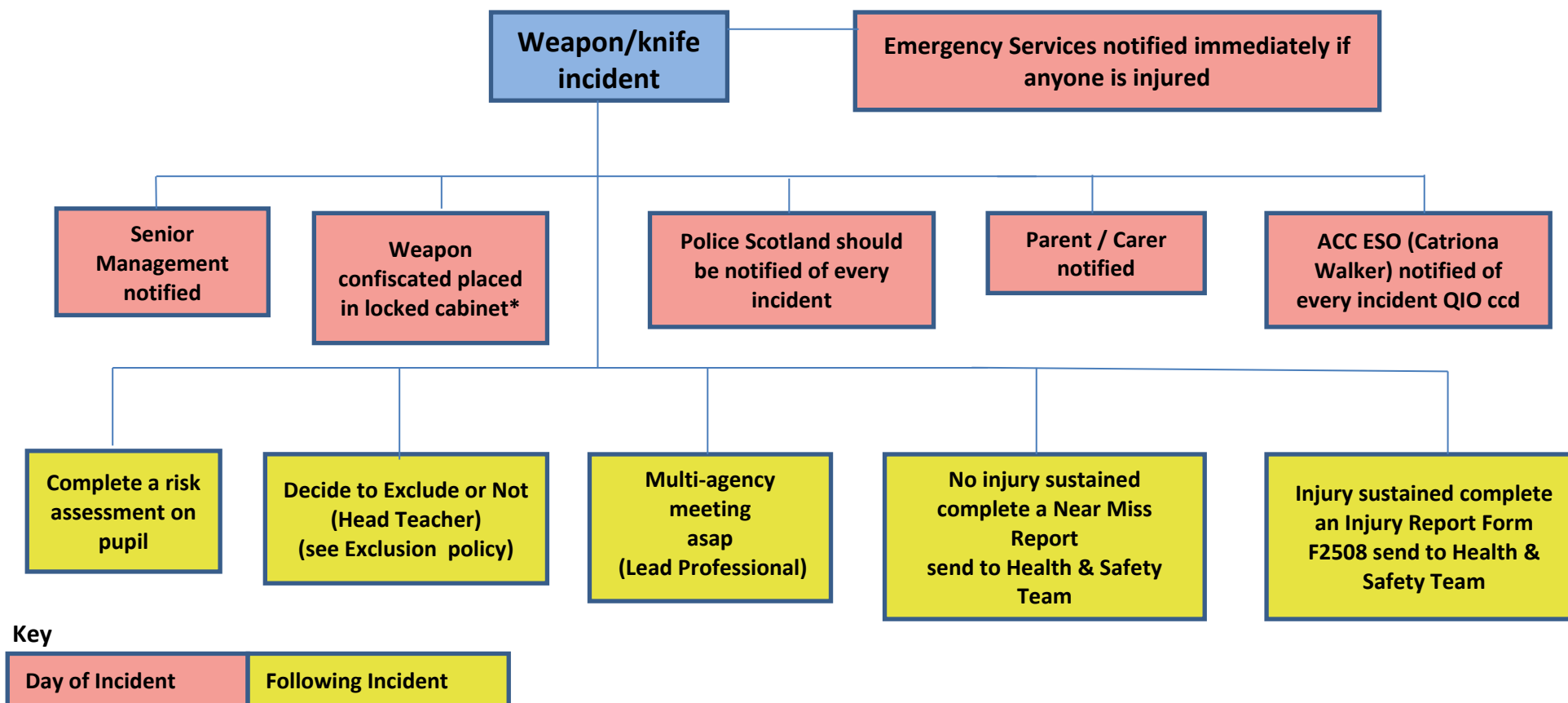
- Schools are responsible for ensuring that parents/carers receive both a parent agreement letter and a guidance leaflet.
 - Incorporate the parent letters into the school's Primary 1 induction pack and also put out again to S1 pupils capturing transition from P7 –S1.
 - Ensure new pupils/parents/families from outwith Aberdeen City Council receive the parent letter as part of the school's induction pack.
- All parent agreement letter returns should be recorded on SEEMIS using the ACC tab.

It is important to emphasise that the success of the anti-weapon/knife strategy lies heavily on all adults modelling and presenting the appropriate messages and behaviours.

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5. PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE FOR INCIDENT NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING



*Do not attempt to disarm a pupil armed with a weapon seek support from Police Scotland.
Please note Child Protection Services should only be contacted if the incident constitutes a child protection issue.

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6. PUPIL SEARCHES

If there is reason to believe that a pupil is carrying a knife or other offensive weapon the following steps should be followed –

Do not attempt to disarm a pupil armed with a weapon seek support from Police Scotland.

In accordance with the law of Scotland searches must be made with the pupil's consent.

Physical searching of a pupil can only be carried out by Police Scotland.

Where consent is given the Head Teacher or nominee can undertake searches of the pupil's belongings.

Where no consent is forthcoming schools will contact Police Scotland

Parents will be informed of any searches

Any weapon/knife found in a pupil's possession will be confiscated

Any weapon/knife found will be stored in a locked cabinet awaiting action by Police Scotland

7. LINK TO THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

The 2009 Policy on Positive Relationships and Anti-bullying approaches in Schools is currently being revised and will be developed as an Education and Children's Services service-wide policy. The revised policy has been launched and schools will be expected to develop their own local level policy to meet the needs of their school and school community.

Our expectation for the revised policy, its key messages and ethos is to keep a high profile in everyday practice, through relationships between staff, parents/carers, children and young people to foster respectful relationships and behaviours.

In the interim schools should use their existing anti-bullying policies and seek clarification from the appropriate member of the Senior Management Team if specific support or guidance is required.

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8. REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

9. USEFUL CONTACTS

Police Scotland 101
Crimestoppers 0800 555 111
Parentline 08000 28 22 23
Childline 0800 1111
www.benkinsella.org.uk
www.respectme.org.uk