



HAVERING SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

HSFC has largely been spared the events witnessed in other London colleges surrounding knife crime and other violent acts. We pride ourselves in a friendly, work-driven atmosphere where support exists for both staff and students at many levels. At the same time the college meets challenging behaviour in a firm manner, making full use of the disciplinary procedures so that we can maintain this positive atmosphere.

The college's priority must be prevention of any possible violent incidents, particularly those involving weapons. A number of steps will be undertaken by the college to achieve this:

- Avoiding serious incidents in and out of college can be facilitated by the creation of this positive learning environment where learners are supported and clear boundaries are set. The college places the greatest emphasis on this goal. Serious infractions of college rules and procedures will be dealt with speedily, efficiently and appropriately
- The college will work closely and cooperate fully with both the local 'safer neighbourhood team' of police officers as well as the Transport Police in any investigations.
- The college will operate an 'open door' policy for the local police, allowing them to come on site at any time to talk to staff & students, wander through the college and be visible as part of the college's policy of maintaining a safe & secure environment
- The college will take part in police campaigns aimed at general personal safety, including the occasional setting up of the police 'metal detecting arch' in order to inform staff & students as to its function and purpose in the campaign against weapons
- College Safety Officers will receive regular training in managing challenging behaviour
- When appropriate the college tutorial programme will be used to get across the message of zero tolerance regarding the carrying & use of weapons

The college does, however, recognise that specific policies need to be in place in the event of someone being found on site with a dangerous weapon. The Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 (sections 45 & 46 respectively, section 46 inserting a new section 85B to the Further & Higher their Education Act 1992) gives educational institutions further powers in this area:

- Students may be screened, even without suspicion and without their consent
- Students may be searched for weapons with reasonable grounds for suspicion and without their consent

Both of the above are subject to the following conditions;

- They are exercised on the college's premises or elsewhere where the member of staff has lawful control of the student (e.g. during a field trip) and the member of staff is of the same sex as the student and is accompanied by another designated member of staff of the same sex
- Searches are undertaken or authorised by the Principal, either generally or to deal with a specific incident
- The student can only be required to remove outer clothing, i.e. clothing not worn next to the skin or immediately over underwear. The member of staff can request the student to remove a hat, gloves, scarf or shoes
- Any offensive weapon found may be seized and then handed over to the police as soon as reasonably practical
- Whilst the person conducting the search may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, if the use of force is anticipated it is advisable to call the police and even postpone the search until they arrive

In the light of the above the college has adopted the following policy:

- If the college believes that an offensive weapon has been placed in a locker or any other part of the college, a search will be carried out by 2 senior members of staff and if anything is found the police will be called immediately.
- If the college believes that a student is in possession of an offensive weapon the police will be called immediately. If there is no obvious & immediate threat to anyone, no action will be taken until the police arrive. Upon their arrival their advice will be followed regarding the appropriate course of action.
- If a dangerous and threatening situation arises, all staff and students will be evacuated from the immediate vicinity and safety officers and senior staff called. The college will dial 999 straightaway. No search will take place and the student(s) concerned will be kept in their current location if at all possible. If the student attempts escape still in possession of the weapon, then no attempt is to be made to apprehend the individual(s).
- If suspicion exists that a student may be carrying an offensive weapon and during any discussion with him /her he / she offers to be searched and stands back from any bag or item of clothing which is suspected of possibly containing a weapon, then 2 senior members of staff may carry out a search, strictly adhering to the conditions listed above.
- The only staff designated to carry out searches are members of the College Executive or a Senior Tutor. Staff training will be provided to those staff designated by the Principal to carry out such searches
- Any such incidents or searches will be recorded and reported to the Corporation of the college and included in an annual report to that body
- Staff, unions & students will be informed of the policy
- Staff will be covered by public liability insurance to meet any claim which may be made by a student arising from the exercise of such powers