Norwood Green Junior School

Kirpan Policy

Ratified by Governors: May 2025

Review Date: May 2028

WEARING OF THE KIRPAN

This policy is intended to provide advice to pupils and staff regarding the wearing of the Kirpan. In view of the fact that a number of Sikh pupils have gone through the Amrit ceremony and are required to wear the "5 Ks", including the Kirpan, this policy has been created, based on guidelines issued by DfES.

Section 4 of the Offensive Weapons Act 1996 creates the offence of having an article with a blade or point (or offensive weapon) on school premises, etc. Under Section 4, subsection (4), a person has a defence if the article in question is worn for religious reasons or as part of any national costume.

a. School staff should be aware that the wearing of the "5 Ks'" at all times is of utmost importance and sensitivity for initiated Sikhs, and is the subject of vows made during the Amrit ceremony.

b. It is essential for an initiated Sikh to keep his/her vows, and this commitment, which is not entered into lightly or easily, should be respected by the school community.

c. The school has to balance the responsibilities of ensuring the health and safety of persons using the school premises, with the religious requirements of practising Sikhs.

d. The school's preferred option is that a symbolic version of the Kirpan is worn. The symbolic version of the Kirpan should be no more than one and a half inches long, secured and sealed in protective padding or embedded on a Kanga (comb).

e. Paragraph (d) may be acceptable to a number of learners and students. However, if it is the view of particular students/staff that paragraph (d) previous does not satisfy their religious requirements, then the school will allow the Kirpan to be worn, subject to the following conditions:

    - that it is restricted to students/staff who have gone through the Amrit ceremony. Proof of this will need to be provided to the school;

    - that the Kirpan, is no more than 6 inches long including the handle, will be sheathed and restrained to the satisfaction of the school, in such a way as to ensure that it will be incapable of withdrawal;

    - that the sheathed Kirpan will be further enclosed in secured padding and securely sewn up;

    - that the Kirpan will be worn under clothing and will not be visible, to provide the highest possible safety at all times;

    - that, on no account, will the Kirpan be drawn while the young person/staff member is on school premises whilst on a school trip or on school transport or involved in other school activity;

- that the student or parent/guardian (if the student is under 18 years of age or school carer of a young person), will be required to sign a declaration indicating that she/he is aware of the implications of the young person wearing the Kirpan in school and that she/he waive any claims against the school, its staff, and the Governors of the school should any personal injury ensue due to the wearing of the Kirpan, or loss of the Kirpan including theft of the Kirpan;

- if any of the above conditions have not been observed during the school day or whilst on a school activity, the Headteacher of the school has the discretion to exclude the student from a particular activity if she/he believes that the student or others may be at risk of injury. In the event of serious or persistent breaches of the above conditions by a student, the Headteacher may refuse permission for the student concerned to wear the Kirpan whilst at school or on any school activity.

f. In the interest of safety, the schools reference is that Kirpans are not worn during physical activities. For PE Kirpans will need to be removed and given to a member of staff for safe-keeping (class lockers) and collected after the activity is over.

Parent/guardian consent
This policy has been explained to me and I agree on the conditions set out above.

I, ……parent of ……consent to the conditions the school has set out above for the wearing of the Kirpan in school.

Sign …….. Date…….

Pupil consent
This policy has been explained to me and I agree to follow all the conditions of it as set out above.

Name (child) …….. Class……

Sign…… Date …….

Norwood Green Junior School – Kirpan Risk Assessment

Name of staff member carrying out assessment:_____ Name of child:_____ Class_____

Please complete this risk assessment for each child wearing Kirpan.

Area of risk	Level of risk (LxS)	Control Measures	Any further measures needed	Tick when complete
Child has not been through the Amrit ceremony or does not display understanding of the responsibilities of wearing Kirpan.	Low	Evidence of Amrit ceremony provided to school.	Appropriate staff member, with parents present, to talk through responsibilities with child.	
Kirpan is more than 6 inches long including the handle and/or is not sheathed and restrained to the satisfaction of the school, in such a way as to ensure that it will be incapable of withdrawal.	Moderate	Inspection by member of SLT	Kirpan measuring more than 6”or inadequately sheathed not permitted in school.	
Sheathed Kirpan is not further enclosed in secured padding and securely sewn up worn under clothing and will not be visible.	Low	Inspection by member of SLT	Visible Kirpan not permitted in school.	
Kirpan is drawn while child is at school or on a school activity or trip.	Moderate	All staff and volunteers aware of child wearing Kirpan, and rules around wearing it. Child aware of rules around wearing the Kirpan and has signed the declaration below.	Incident of drawing to be dealt with in line with Kirpan policy.	
Parent has not signed a declaration indicating that she/he is aware of the implications of the young person wearing the Kirpan in school and that she/he waives any claims against the school, its staff, and the Governors of the school should any personal injury ensue due to the wearing of the Kirpan, or loss of the Kirpan including theft of the Kirpan and that the Kirpan must be removed during PE.	Low	Parent to sign declaration, copy to be kept in pupil file.	Kirpan wearing not permitted without signed declaration.	

Appendix: Risk Matrix

		SEVERITY				
		INSIGNIFICANT (e.g. a physical injury sustained but no treatment of injuries is required) **1**	**MINOR** (e.g. injuries requiring first aid treatment) **2**	**SERIOUS** (e.g. injuries resulting in lost time and/or referral to other health professionals for further treatment or observation) **3**	**MAJOR** (Injuries meeting the statutory reporting criteria under RIDDOR e.g. fractures, dislocations, electrocution, unconsciousness, internal injuries, eye injuries, severe burns / scalds / lacerations, injuries requiring admission to hospital and/or surgery etc. **4**	**FATALITY / DISABILITY** **5**
LIKELIHOOD	**REMOTE** **1** (improbable but might happen only rarely)	LOW **(1)**	LOW **(2)**	LOW **(3)**	LOW **(4)**	LOW **(5)**
	UNLIKELY **2** (but could happen at some time)	LOW **(2)**	LOW **(4)**	MODERATE **(6)**	MODERATE **(8)**	MODERATE **(10)**