

Parent, carer and student factsheet

No prohibited knives at school

NSW has the toughest knife laws in Australia. It is against the law for students to have a prohibited knife in a public place or at school. The minimum penalty is a fine of \$4,400, 4 years jail time, or both. The maximum fine is \$11,000.

No prohibited knives allowed at school under any circumstances

As school policy is designed to keep all students safe, no type of knife is allowed at school, including flick knives, sheath knives, push daggers, trench knives, butterfly knives, star knives or any item that can be used as a weapon (such as a chisel).

If a student is found to be possessing or carrying a knife at school the principal may call the police. The student may also be expelled or suspended from school immediately.

Possessing a knife includes a student having one in their bag or locker, even if they do not use it or threaten anyone with it. Having a knife for self-protection is also illegal. Any wellbeing or safety concerns should be escalated to the principal.

Parents and carers are advised not to send butter knives or fruit knives in lunchboxes, or knife tools for craft purposes. In lessons requiring the use of knives, for example cooking or trades, the student's teacher will supply and supervise the use of the tools.

Every student has the right to feel safe and secure at school. There is no good reason for a student to ever have a knife at school.

There are some senior subjects, such as hospitality, where students may be required to have their own knives. The school will advise parents, carers and students about these courses and the procedures for carrying knives legally to and from school.

Tougher penalties apply

The law makes parents and carers responsible. Parents and carers need to make certain their child is aware of the school's rules and the state laws about knives.

Parents and carers need to be aware of these laws, as they can also be charged if they allow their child to carry a knife.

The police can search any young person they suspect of having a knife and can confiscate any dangerous object they might find during the search. The young person must comply with such a police search, or they may be arrested and charged.

There are very tough sentences for assaults or threats that involve a knife, for example, if a student is in a fight and wounds someone with a knife.

If a student commits this sort of crime with other young people, the sentences are even tougher. In some cases, the jail term can be for 14 to 25 years.

It is also illegal for anyone to sell a knife to anyone who is less than 16 years old.

Exemptions

There may be circumstances when a knife is required to be carried and a person is able to establish a 'reasonable excuse' for possession.

A 'reasonable excuse' includes, but is not limited to, the knife being 'reasonably necessary' for:

- the lawful pursuit of an occupation, education or training
- participation in lawful entertainment, recreation or sport
- genuine religious purposes, or
- travel to or from any of the above.

Telephone interpreter service

If you would like more information please call the school principal. If you need an interpreter to assist with your enquiry, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on [131 450](tel:131450) and ask for an interpreter in your language.

Tell the operator the phone number you want to call and the operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with the conversation. You will not be charged for this service.