HABERDASHERS' ADAMS

HABERDASHERS' ABRAHAM DARBY

POLICY ON WEARING OF THE KIRPAN

POLICY ON WEARING OF THE KIRPAN	
Named Responsibility of Policy	Mr D Biggins – Headteacher, Haberdashers' Adams Mrs J Edgar – Principal, Haberdashers' Abraham Darby
Date of Policy	November 2026
Date of next Review	November 2027
Governor Accountability	PSW Committee

This policy is intended to provide advice to students and staff regarding the wearing of the Kirpan. In view of the fact that Sikh students/staff 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 DfE.

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

i. that it is restricted to students/staff who have gone through the Amrit ceremony.

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

iii. that the sheathed Kirpan will be further enclosed in secured padding and securely sewn up.

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

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

vi. 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, in particular, during physical education activities, and that she/he waive any claims against the school and the Governors of the school.

vii. 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 they believe 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 school's preference is that Kirpans are not worn during physical activities or other outdoor activities which is still in accordance with the Sikh *'maryada'* which states that the Kirpan should be worn on the person *"or as close as possible"* at all times.

g. If the Kirpan is removed for any of the activities in paragraph (f) above, the Kirpan must be given to a member of staff for safe-keeping and collected after the activity is over. During this time, the Kirpan must be kept in a box that respects it as an article of faith.

h. However, if parents of a student under the age of 18 decide that their child should wear the Kirpan during the activities referred to in paragraph (f) above, then it is expected that the sheathed and securely padded Kirpan must be worn under the clothing and will not be visible, or carried in a small pocket in clothing being worn, so that it is safe for the wearer. It should never be visible or other students have access to it. If the Headteacher considers that these requirements have not been met, he or she should take appropriate action to ensure the safety of all students.

These guidelines will be regularly reviewed.

For further information please use the links below

"What is the Kirpan" School uniform - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

"The five Ks" http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/sikhism/customs/fiveks.shtml