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29 January 2018

Mr K Mcloughlin  
Assistant Coroner, West Yorkshire (Eastern)  
Coroner's Office and Court  
71 Northgate  
Wakefield  
WF1 3BS

**Sean Harford HMI**  
National Director, Education

Our ref: KM/KLA/1154/14

31 JAN 2018

Dear Mr Mcloughlin

**Inquest touching the death of Ann Maguire (deceased)**

Thank you for your letter of 22 November 2017 following the inquest on the death of Ann Maguire, who was a teacher at Corpus Christi Catholic College in Leeds. May I thank you for providing an extension to the deadline for this response to the coroner.

We have noted the enclosures relating to your communications to government departments and Amazon. This response deals specifically with your Annex A covering Regulation 28, which is directed to Ofsted to consider.

We agree with the Coroner's concern regarding the need to prevent weapons being brought into schools. In relation to the specific recommendations for Ofsted, the need for inspectors to report on the arrangements in schools for protecting pupils is already a mandatory part of our inspection process. Our current inspection framework for education inspections is undergoing a review with a view to having a revised framework in place for September 2019. We will, as part of that review, consider whether it is possible to give more focus to the specific matter of protecting pupils and staff from the risk of violent attack.

Ofsted's cross remit Safeguarding Group has a responsibility to keep under review the effectiveness of our school inspection process in so far as it relates to safeguarding. The chair of this group has been made aware of the coroner's concerns and these will be taken into account in future reviews.

In terms of the second part of the recommendation about Ofsted publishing a list of prohibited items, to do this would be going beyond Ofsted's responsibility as an inspectorate. Such matters are relevant to the Department for Education (DfE), as the lead government policy department with responsibility for schools. I note that a

similar request to publish a list of prohibited items has been directed to the Secretary of State for Education and confirm that this is the appropriate place for such matters to be considered. We are in regular contact with officials at the DfE and will, as always, ensure that our inspectors are aware of any specific guidance that is issued by government in relation to the safety of pupils and staff in schools.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Harford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end.

**Sean Harford HMI**  
National Director, Education



2017-0057479POSoS

**Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP**  
Secretary of State

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Kevin McLoughlin  
Assistant Coroner, West Yorkshire (Eastern)  
By email: [hmcoroner@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:hmcoroner@wakefield.gov.uk)

Your ref: KM/KLA/1154/14

*Dear Mr McLoughlin*

Thank you for your letter of 22 November, addressed to my predecessor, following the inquest into the death of Mrs Ann Maguire.

You highlight some extremely important issues in the report you have enclosed. I share the concerns you have identified and it is important that we take whatever steps we can to help prevent future tragedies of this kind from occurring. Your report highlights two specific actions that you have concluded would help address your concerns. These are:

- (1) the Secretary of State is asked to consider circulating a prohibited items list to schools nationally in order that the lesson arising from this case can be disseminated to all educational establishments; and
- (2) to consider a national campaign to highlight the need for children to report to an adult any matter which concerns them (along the lines, "see a knife, tell a teacher", or the broader message used on National Rail and the London Underground, "see it, say it, sorted").

I would like to assure you we are committed to making schools as safe as we possibly can. That is why we introduced new measures for schools in the Education Act 2011 to give staff extended powers to search a pupil, or their property, if they believe they are carrying dangerous items. A list of prohibited items is set out in legislation, in sections 550ZA to 550ZD of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by section 242 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and section 29 of the Education Act 2011), and includes knives and weapons.

The prohibited items list and the associated search powers are important components in ensuring pupil and staff safety in schools. My department's published advice, *Behaviour and discipline in schools: guidance for headteachers and staff*, includes the list of prohibited items and sends the important message to schools that the power to search for these items is an integral component of their behaviour policies. The advice is available online at: [tinyurl.com/PP9vcu8](http://tinyurl.com/PP9vcu8).

To help schools with the implementation of these powers, we also set out the list of prohibited items in my department's guidance, *Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools*. This advice explains to schools their statutory power to set rules governing pupil behaviour and their duty as employers to manage the safety of staff and pupils. This advice is available at: [tinyurl.com/m3msoQf](http://tinyurl.com/m3msoQf).

I fully understand the thinking behind a national campaign. The culture of carrying knives amongst our young people is a problem that we must address. As you know, issues relating to knife crime and the associated culture extend beyond schools, and the Home Office leads on these matters. The Home Office launched a consultation in October containing legislative proposals to tackle knife crime. This included proposals to restrict the online sale of knives to prevent sales to under 18s, and to extend the possession of knives and offensive weapons offence to education institutions other than schools. The consultation closed on 9 December and the Home Office is now considering the responses.

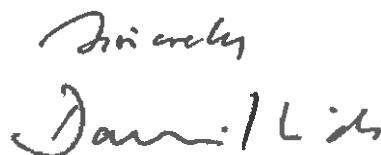
The Home Office is also taking forward an immediate package of non-legislative actions, including a new national anti-knife crime campaign in the early part of this year. Although this campaign will not focus exclusively on the matters addressed in your report, it will undoubtedly be relevant to young people of school age.

I share the sentiments set out in your report that it is important for schools to have clear policies and properly promote them. This is vital to ensure that young people know exactly what to do if they become aware of potentially harmful matters. The Home Office's campaign provides an opportunity for us to consider how to get this message into schools most effectively, and how we can ensure that pupils are comfortable with sharing information about knives and other items that may be used as weapons.

My department will be reviewing both *Behaviour and discipline in schools: guidance for headteachers and staff* and *Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools*. We will also review *Advice on school security: access to, and barring of individuals from, school premises*, which we are planning to update. This guidance is available at: [tinyurl.com/zo3olv4](http://tinyurl.com/zo3olv4). Revising this guidance, and the associated communications we will have with schools, will enable us to ensure that we have a strong and consistent message to promote to schools, which addresses the issues you highlight in your report.

I consider the issues you raise to be of utmost importance and propose to have changes to the aforementioned published advice in place for September 2018. I will ensure you are kept informed of progress with this work.

Thank you for writing on this important matter.



**Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP**  
**Secretary of State for Education**