



Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy

Policy lead:	Chris Leigh
Last review date:	September 2023
Next review date:	September 2025
Approval needed by:	Headteacher

Rationale

Searching, screening and confiscating should be used as a measure if a member of staff has reason to believe that an individual is in possession of an item that:

- is perceived to be dangerous
- is disrupting learning
- is one of the banned items listed on the school uniform list and in student planners
- is an illegal substance or judged to impair health

Staff can seize and confiscate any prohibited item found as the result of a search or screening. They can also seize any items that they consider detrimental to discipline within school.

Searching Students

There will be times at which staff become concerned that a student may be in possession of a banned item. On such occasions the member of staff may decide that carrying out a search may be an appropriate course of action.

Search with Consent

Any member of staff can carry out a search if they gain consent (this does not need to be written consent) from the student concerned. The member of staff should ask the student to empty their belongings out of their bag and empty their pockets. At this point the member of staff can check through the items. The member of staff may also check through for any items in the student's blazer or coat. It would be good practice if this search took place in the presence of another member of staff although this is not essential.

Search without Consent

If the student does not give permission for a search of their belongings then if it is felt that the allegation is serious enough then the member of staff must contact either HOY/Student Support Staff/Ass Headteacher or any member of the leadership team providing them with as much information as possible.

Once the information has been assimilated by the member of staff if it is felt that there is a need to search a student's belongings then the following protocol should be adhered to.

In this instance the search should be carried out by a member of staff of the same sex as the student with an accompanying member of staff (who is again of the same sex as the student). It must be remembered that this is a serious step and should only be taken in exceptional circumstances.

If the student does not allow the search to take place and is unwilling to hand over belongings to be searched then the member of staff should contact parents/guardians and if appropriate the police.

In any search the members of staff involved can search the following items with or without the permission of the student involved:

- Bag
- Outer clothing (blazer/coat/shoes)
- Locker

It is best practice that this search takes place with two members of staff and the student also present. It is though recognised that on occasions it may not be possible for two members of staff to be present.

Screening Students

The school has the authority to require any student to undergo screening with a metal detector (arch or hand-held wand) if they suspect that they may be in the possession of a weapon. This can be carried out by any member of staff and without the permission of the individual student.

If the student refuses to be screened then the school has the right to refuse the student entry. Under these circumstances the student is not excluded but the absence should be treated and recorded as unauthorised.

At all times the student should be encouraged to comply with the screening and should attend school.

Informing Parents

The school is not required to inform a parent prior to a search and the school does not need to gain a parents consent. The school is also not required to keep a record of every search carried out although this will be done when any search or screening results in the confiscation of an item which may lead to a disciplinary sanction.

Confiscation

The “Education and Inspections Act” (2006) provides any member of staff with the authority to seize, confiscate and dispose of a student’s property as a disciplinary measure wherever reasonable to do so.

When confiscating an item from a student they will usually fall into one of the following categories:

- Alcohol : the item should be disposed of by school staff. Parents should be informed.
- Drugs paraphernalia : the item seize should be disposed of by school staff and parents should be informed
- Drugs (see drugs policy) : the items seized should be handed to the police and the police and parents informed.
- Offensive weapons : the item seized should be handed to the police and the police and parents informed.

When items are disposed of by school staff then staff should complete the “Disposal of Confiscated Items” form (see Appendix 1). This form should then be scanned and stored on CPOMS.

Devising this policy the school has made reference to The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Searching, Screening and Confiscation at School and advice received from the DFE and ACPO in relation to drugs.

Illegal Substances

The school has a detailed policy relating to drugs and this policy should be adhered to in relation to any confiscated items.

Appendix 1



Disposal of Confiscated Items

Date of disposal	
Description of Item	
From whom was the item confiscated?	
Staff completing the disposal	
Method of disposal	

Staff Initials	
Staff Role	
Date	
Signed	
Staff Initials	
Staff Role	
Date	
Signed	

