



# Search Policy

<b>Schedule for Development, Monitoring and Review</b>	
Approved by governors on:	October 2019
Implementation monitored by:	Hilroy Thomas
Review arrangements:	Annually All policies will be reviewed if there are any significant developments or changes to legislation
Reviewed:	October 2020 October 2021
The next review of this policy:	<b>October 2022</b>

## Search Policy

This policy has been developed to support the school/setting behaviour policy, and in particular, the possession of knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items. It has been introduced primarily in order to safeguard pupils but also to protect staff and others as well.

Headteachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they suspect the pupil has certain prohibited items. The items that can be searched for under this power are knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items. The DFE have said that screening which does not involve physical contact does not require consent as the law currently stands. The Headteacher/Centre Leader can request, and police do provide, searches of as many pupils as is necessary where credible intelligence indicates that someone somewhere in a school is concealing a weapon. Indeed, the Government encourages head teachers staff authorised by them and a local police commander to take such action and this is the policy in our school.

However, it will be noted that there remains a gap in the law that allows pupils to refuse to allow a member of school/setting staff to search them or their bag or jacket. This potentially allows for them to dispose of a weapon or other indication of antisocial behaviour such as illegal substances, etc. while the school/setting asks the police to attend and a police officer makes their way to the school. Therefore it is the policy of the school/setting to seek and obtain parental permission at the initial entry meeting to screen personal belongings prior to admission into any of the LPS's Centres or sites. As a school we make parents aware that there may be a need to search a pupil or their bag or jacket in the presence of at least two authorised members of staff, where possible, including the Headteacher or staff authorised by them is not available in circumstances where it is believed that a weapon or illegal substances are involved.

For information, the police can, with reasonable suspicion, enter a school to search without a Headteacher's consent, conduct a personal search without a pupil's consent, and conduct an unannounced search of more than one pupil in a school, using powers under the Offensive Weapons Act 1996.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school/setting policies and procedures:-

- Behaviour
- Physical Intervention
- Child Protection & Safeguarding

There are occasions when it might be necessary to determine whether or not a pupil is in possession of a substance or object which may be harmful to themselves or others, illegal or which may have been obtained in an unlawful manner. In such

---

The electronic version of this document is the latest version. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure any paper material is current.

Date: October 2021

circumstances this search policy may be applied. The procedures for the searching of pupils are detailed below:

Firstly, it is illegal to search a pupil without their consent, accept in the case where they suspect the pupil has certain prohibited items. The items that can be searched for under this power are knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items. . All searches conducted by authorised members of staff must be undertaken with pupil consent and using one or more of the following procedures.

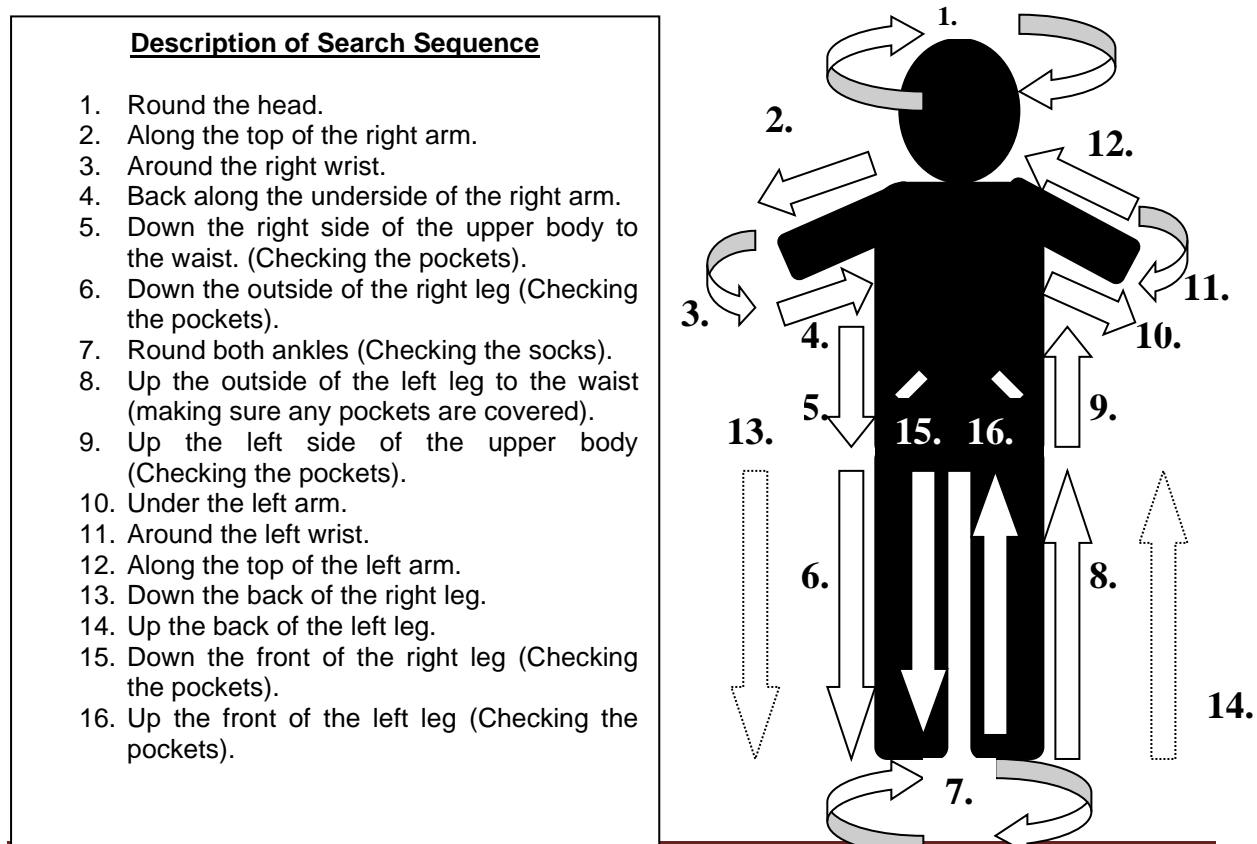
### **Daily Student Screening**

The everyday use of metal detectors to check students on arrival is regarded as screening [This screening does not require staff to make any specific requests of a student or to make contact with a student ] and unless there are any concerns raised as a result of this screening process no further searches, as detailed below are required.

### **Metal Detector Screening Procedure:**

The metal detector procedure should be operated [or witnessed] by the member of staff who is the same sex as the pupil and should not come into contact with the pupil during the search.

The metal detector should be used in audio mode so that the pupil can hear any changes in the sound. The metal detector will be moved over the body using the following sequence



The electronic version of this document is the latest version. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure any paper material is current.

Date: October 2021

### **Low Level Searches:**

In circumstances involving non-threatening incidents members of staff are permitted to request that pupils demonstrate that they are not in possession of certain items or objects e.g. items of equipment, cigarettes, lighters, etc. Once the decision has been made to ask a pupil to consent to a low level search at least two authorised members of staff must be present.

When conducting a Low Level Search the member(s) of staff directing the search should ask the pupil to turn out their pockets and if necessary to demonstrate that they are not concealing any objects in their socks or up their sleeves. During a low level search there should be no contact with the pupil or their clothing.

Following a Low level Search a senior manager will decide whether or not further action or reporting is required and will direct the relevant staff accordingly.

### **Procedure if a potentially dangerous or prohibited object or substance is detected:**

It should be explained to the pupil that if a metal or prohibited object or substance is detected they will be required to identify the object / substance that they have on their person and will be required to hand in the object / substance. If the pupil refuses to comply the area will be checked again with the metal detector and the request repeated. If the pupil continues to refuse then a Medium or Higher Level Search procedure may be required [See below].

### **Medium Level Searches:**

Medium level searches may require members of staff to search a pupil's clothing or ask them to remove a jacket or their shoes in order to allow a member of staff to search them. As in the case of low level searches the pupil must agree to the search. Medium level searches should be conducted in a private area away from other pupils and must only be conducted in the presence of a senior manager and one other authorised member of staff, one of whom should be the same sex as the pupil. It is recommended that the clothing search and the request to remove clothing are made by the member of staff who is the same sex as the pupil.

Under no circumstances should clothing being worn by the pupil be touched by a member of staff. Clothing should only be searched once it has been removed by the pupil and handed to the member of staff by the pupil.

Following a Medium Level Search a senior manager will decide whether or not further action or reporting is required and will direct the relevant staff accordingly.

### **Higher Level Searches:**

Higher level searches can only be authorised by a senior manager. Higher level searches will normally be carried out on a planned basis and with the consent of

---

The electronic version of this document is the latest version. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure any paper material is current.

Date: October 2021

parents. However, they may be sanctioned by a senior manager if there is reason to believe that by not carrying out a search, the pupil, staff or other pupils will be placed at risk. For example, in the case where they suspect the pupil has certain prohibited items. The items that can be searched for under this power are knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items.

Higher level searches will require pupils to agree to demonstrate that they are not in the possession of dangerous, illegal or potentially harmful items before they are allowed to engage in any education or activity programmes. Higher level searches must be conducted in a private area, away from other pupils e.g. a reflection room. They must be conducted by a minimum of two authorised staff, one of whom must be the same sex as the pupil and one of whom must be a senior manager. Instructions to empty pockets or remove jackets or shoes must be made by a member of staff who is the same sex as the pupil. Under no circumstances should a pupil be asked to remove any item of clothing which would result in them having to display areas of their body such as their torso or legs.

If the pupil continues to refuse to comply the following action will be taken:

- The pupil will be required to remain in isolation.
- If it is suspected that the pupil is carrying a weapon or harmful substance the Police will be called using the 2222222 telephone number. Staff will then act on the advice of the Police and will either:
  - Keep the pupil in isolation until the Police arrive.
  - Keep the pupil in isolation until their parent/carer can be contacted and they can be sent home.

**Under no circumstances will a pupil who is suspected of carrying a weapon or harmful substance be allowed to circulate freely in any part of the building.**

Once a Higher Level Search has taken place, and regardless of the outcome, this must be recorded in the Duty Log/Search Register or similar which should be in the form of a bound book. In addition to this the following action must be taken:

- The Headteacher/Centre Leader must be informed when a higher level search has been conducted on a pupil.
- A Generic & Individual Risk Assessment & Positive Handling Plan must be completed for the pupil.
- Staff must be made aware of the risk assessment & positive handling plan for the pupil.
- If it is deemed appropriate to use a Higher Level Search on each occasion that the pupil attends the school/setting then the parent(s)/carer(s) must be informed and must consent to this, initially verbally over the telephone (recorded in the telephone log) and then by completing the following consent form which will be sent to them.

---

The electronic version of this document is the latest version. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure any paper material is current.

Date: October 2021

**LEICESTER PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL**  
**Higher Level Search Consent Form**

PUPIL'S NAME ..... GROUP: .....

I/We consent to our son/daughter being searched by staff on entry to the School/Setting. I/We understand that this will not involve staff making any physical contact with our son/daughter and will require him/her to comply and be willing to demonstrate that he/she is not concealing a weapon, harmful item(s) or substance(s) on their person. If necessary I/we consent to a metal detector being used.

Parent/Carer Name:.....Signature: ..... Date: .....

**PLEASE NOTE THAT REFUSAL TO SIGN THIS CONSENT FORM WILL RESULT IN YOUR SON/DAUGHTER BEING  
REFUSED ENTRY TO THE SCHOOL/CENTRE ON HEALTH & SAFETY GROUNDS**

(A copy of this search policy is available on request).