



## **SEARCHING, SCREENING AND CONFISCATION POLICY**

The Westleigh School's policy reflects the Department for Education's advice on powers of screening, searching and confiscation.

Wherever possible, searches will be undertaken with the consent of the student. However, school staff do have the right to carry out a search for the following items without consent if it is necessary and in the best interests of the school/other students and there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student is in possession of a prohibited item.

Searches would normally be designated members of staff – SLT, Discipline Officer, Heads of Year, Pastoral workers, SENCo and Assistant SENCo. If staff think that there are reasonable grounds to search a pupil they should send for the above members of staff.

However, in exceptional circumstances other staff are authorised to conduct a search if that is felt to be in the best interest of students and staff.

### **Prohibited Items:**

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal Drugs
- Stolen Items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic Images
- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or
- To cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student).

The member of staff undertaking the search will be the same sex as the student being searched. (The only exception to this would be if there is a risk of serious harm caused to a person if we do not conduct the search immediately).

### **Searching with Consent**

School staff can search students with their consent for any item. In this circumstance, a student will be asked to turn out his (her) pockets AND allow the staff member to look in the student's bag or locker and for the student to agree.

If the student refuses, then school reserves the right to impose an appropriate punishment for refusal to co-operate.

## **Confiscation**

School staff will seize any prohibited item or any item considered to be harmful/ detrimental to school discipline found as a result of a search.

\* (Please note: E-cigarettes are also banned in addition to the prohibited items and can be confiscated).

Any items which are confiscated will not be returned to the student. They will be returned to parents OR the police if the item could be used to commit an offence/cause injury/damage. In the case of stolen items, these will be returned to the owner, or disposed of according to DfE guidelines.

In the case of indecent images on students' mobile phones, these may be deleted or passed to the Police if appropriate.

Mobile phones will be confiscated in accordance with the school's Mobile Phone Policy. Jewellery will be confiscated in accordance with the school's Personal Presentation Policy.

In line with our health eating policy in school, students are not allowed to bring the following drinks into school:-

- Energy drinks, (Lucozade/Isotonic/'Monster') and other drinks which have a high sugar content.
- Fizzy pop, such as coke/diet coke, etc.

Such drinks do not assist good behaviour for learning. If students are seen with these drinks, they will be confiscated and not returned to the student. Instead, students are advised to bring water (natural or flavoured) or juice, which will hydrate them and not interfere with good learning.

### **Please note:**

The school is not required to inform parents before a search takes place or seek their consent. Parents will be informed if alcohol, illegal drugs, potentially harmful substances or objects are found.

By law, schools can require students to undergo screening by a walk-through or hand-held metal detector even if they do not suspect them of having a weapon, without the consent of the student. Screening is currently a very rare occurrence in schools and is only introduced when deemed to be necessary.

Any searches undertaken will be mindful of a student's privacy. Any complaints regarding screening/searching should be made through the normal school complaints procedure.

Searches of students are very infrequent and are undertaken when there is good reason to believe that it is in the best interests of the students and the school to do so.

*This policy is one of the school's pastoral policies and should not be read in isolation from the whole school Behaviour Management Policy and the school's policy on Security and Offensive Weapons.*

<b>Adopted by the Board of Governors and recorded in the Minutes of the meeting held on:</b>	06/11/2014
<b>Review Date</b>	November 2015
<b>Headteacher</b>	