

Searching and Confiscation Procedures

Searches and confiscations are necessary from time to time in schools in the interests of maintaining good order and ensuring a safe environment for all pupils and staff. The Head oversees practice to ensure that a culture of safe, proportionate and appropriate searching is maintained. The School's policy is informed by Government guidance.

Safeguarding

All searches must be conducted in accordance with the School's Searching and Confiscation Policy to ensure that correct procedures are followed, and the welfare of pupils and Staff can be protected. All searches should be recorded via a report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, including whether or not an item is found. This will allow the Designated Safeguarding Lead to identify possible risks and initiate a safeguarding response if required.

When might a search be considered?

If Staff have reasonable grounds for suspecting a pupil may have an item which is prohibited by the School Rules or any other item which in the judgement of the Head may be harmful.

Who may conduct a search?

All Staff are authorised by the Head to search a pupil if the pupil agrees. Staff should ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted so that their agreement is informed. It is always preferable to search with consent, but the Head and Staff authorised by the Head (Deputy Heads, Proctor, Hsms and Deputies, Trip leaders and Staff i/c away fixtures or their appointed Deputies and any member of staff authorised by the Head) have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions without consent should this be deemed necessary.

What happens if a pupil is not willing to co-operate with a search?

Staff should consider why this may be and may sanction the pupil or refer the pupil to their Hsm or another senior member of staff. If Staff still consider a search to be necessary, and urgent, they should assess whether it is appropriate to use reasonable force in accordance with the School's Physical Restraint Policy. If Staff still consider a search to be necessary, but not urgent, they should seek the advice of the Head, DSL (or Deputy), Deputy Head Pastoral or Hsm. During this time the pupil should be supervised and kept away from other pupils.

Informing parents

Parents should always be informed of any search that has taken place, including if there has been a need for a search to take place without the child's having been notified in advance, and the outcome of the search as soon as is practicable. Staff should inform the parents of what, if anything, has been confiscated and the resulting action the School has taken, including any sanctions applied.

Complaints

Any complaints about searching or confiscation should be dealt with through the School's normal complaints procedures.