



Searches of Pupils and their Possessions Policy

General Principles

1. The Principal, the Head of Senior School, the Head of Junior School or another member of staff who is acting under the authority of the Principal may, with the informed consent of the pupil (if over 12 years old), or their parent (if under 12 years old) search pupils' property, including their lockers or bags if they reasonably believe that they may have in their possession any item which is banned by the School's Code of Conduct or has significance in an investigation. A pupil can be asked to show the contents of their pockets, but members of staff should not search a pupil's person or clothing.
2. If the pupil or parent refuses consent and the member of staff has a reasonable suspicion that the pupil is in possession of an illegal item or an item that could be used in the commission of a crime, the police shall be called. The police have a statutory power to search the pupil.
3. Where the Principal or a member of staff authorised by the Principal reasonably believe that mobile phones or other electronic devices may have been used for an illegal purpose, (including cyber bullying and sexting) or where it may have been used to communicate about an illegal act, the member of staff may take possession of the device and place it in the hands of the police without trying to access the contents.
4. If the pupil unreasonably refuses consent to a search or to surrender their device, this may constitute a disciplinary offence under the Code of Conduct for Pupils and an appropriate sanction may be issued after an investigation and consideration of all the facts and circumstances, in accordance with the Pupil Attendance, Uniform and Disciplinary Policy. If a parent unreasonably refuses consent this may place the parent in breach of the Terms and Conditions of Enrolment and could affect their child's place at the School.
5. Random or routine searches of pupils, their possessions or lockers are not permitted.
6. It is the policy of the School to report criminal matters to the police, where appropriate, and to cooperate fully with the police and other agencies in order to protect pupils and staff and to deter, detect and investigate crime. Where the Police undertake a search of a pupil, their possessions, locker or room this will be conducted following their own procedures, which may differ from the School's.

Protocol for Searching Pupils and their Possessions

At least two members of staff should be present during a search at all times.

Pupils must not be involved in the searching of other pupils' property, except insofar as is necessary to confirm the ownership of their own property.

Any search of possessions, a bag or locker shall be carried out in the presence of the pupil unless, once consent has been obtained, the urgency of the situation requires otherwise. The member of staff must explain to the pupil why the search is considered to be necessary under this policy.

In all cases a record of the search and its outcome must be made contemporaneously and signed by both members of staff present and (where present) the pupil.

Items which are in the possession of a pupil contrary to the School's Code of Conduct or the law may be seized and may be destroyed, handed to the Police or other agency or returned to parents at the discretion of the School.

Ownership and Review

The Principal is the Owner of this Policy.

The Policy will be reviewed every two years.

Relevant Documents/Information

Code of Conduct for Pupils (Junior School)

Code of Conduct for Pupils (Senior School)

[Pupil Attendance, Uniform and Discipline Policy](#)

Version 2/ Issue 1