



Searching students - Guidelines for staff

Searching a student's possessions might be necessary if the student

- a) is suspected of possessing a weapon or dangerous item
- b) is suspected of having a banned item which is not dangerous e.g. a phone
- c) is suspected of possessing an item which does not belong to him/her .

a) Searching a student who is suspected of possessing a weapon or dangerous item

If a member of staff has a concern that a student may be in possession of a weapon, he/she should call for the support of a senior member of staff immediately. The senior member of staff will remove the student and his/her possessions and deal with the matter, following the Academy's protocol for dealing with such incidents. **The member of staff should not attempt to deal with the situation or search the student him/herself.**

b) Searching a student who is suspected of possessing a banned item which is not dangerous

If a member of staff has a concern that a student may be in possession of a banned item e.g. a mobile phone, it would be advisable to call for the assistance of the duty teacher or a senior member of staff. If the member of staff decides to conduct a search him/herself, the protocol outlined below must be observed.

c) Searching a student who is suspected of possessing an item which does not belong to them

If a member of staff has a concern that a student may be in possession of a stolen item, he/she is advised to call for the assistance of the duty teacher or a senior member of staff. If the member of staff decides to conduct a search him/herself, the protocol outlined below must be observed.

Protocol for conducting a search of a student's possessions:

1. The student's privacy should be respected
2. The student should not be touched
3. The student and their possessions should be removed from the view of other students. However, a search should not be conducted in a space which is shut off from the rest of the school community – i.e. the door should be kept open. If several students are being searched, they should be isolated from each other
4. No students other than the student whose items are being searched should be present.
5. There should be 2 members of staff present. Depending on the nature of the item being searched for, and the individual concerned, it may be appropriate for both members of staff conducting the search to be of the same gender as the student
6. One member of staff should explain to the student clearly the purpose of the search and ask the student to empty their bag/pockets and place the items on a table top, rather than doing so for them.
7. It is important to gain the student's consent.
8. If the student does not give their consent for the search, the matter should be referred immediately to a member of the leadership team who will involve the student's parents and/or the police (depending on the circumstances).
9. No members of staff should search items of clothing which the student is wearing. Students should only be requested to take off external items of clothing for searching - shoes, coats and jackets. Any necessary further clothing searches will be conducted by the police.

Reviewed June 2017