



# Searching, Screening and Confiscating Policy

<b>Date of last review:</b>	2021	<b>Review period:</b>	3 Years
<b>Date of next review:</b>	2024	<b>Written by:</b>	Alison Hopkins
<b>Type of policy:</b>	Non-statutory	<b>Committee:</b>	FGB
<b>Signature:</b>			

The “Searching, Screening and Confiscating Guidance for Schools” issued by the Department of Education in January 2018 states that:

*“School staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees.”*

The ability to give consent may be influenced by the child’s age or other factors and therefore, this guidance also states that:

*“Headteachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item. Prohibited items are;*

- *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 the property of, any person (including the pupil).”*

In addition, the guidance goes on to say that:

*“Headteachers and authorised staff can also search for any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.”*

At Wyre Forest School this prohibited item list is the same as the list above. In addition to this list Wyre Forest School staff are also authorised to search any mobile device that may contain inappropriate images or content.

As a result of this search, this guidance also makes it clear that:

*“School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item, however found, which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.”*

In situations involving mobile technology and inappropriate content staff can seize the device and check the content to ensure pupils are safeguarded. The headteacher can also authorise for content to be removed from a mobile device if this content contravenes the schools’ rules. In situations where items are seized there must be two members of staff present to validate the seizure and at least one of these members of staff must be of the same sex as the pupil searched.

Pupils and staff at Russell House have the same rights to be safeguarded and protected outside of school hours and, as such, staff are permitted to act within the procedures listed in this policy.

### **Recording and Reporting:**

Where items are found or where a search has taken place, it is imperative that this is recorded in full with the reasons for the search and the actual items found. It may be that staff are linking the confiscation of an item to a sanction where this has been related following an incident of challenging behaviour. All instances of the searching of pupils' belongings must be recorded on CPOMS and, in addition, parents/carers must be informed along with social workers as appropriate.

The following document provides guidance for Senior Leadership as to whether the incident should be reported to the Police:



### **Follow-up:**

It is important that such an incident is not seen in isolation, and that the pupil/s involved are given opportunity to discuss the procedure with a trusted adult afterwards. This should

focus on why the incident occurred, contextualized safeguarding concerns and how to safeguard the pupil in the future.

There may be a need to support and educate the pupil further via targeted PSHCE lessons.