



Ripon Grammar School

Searching and Confiscation Policy

1. Introduction

Ensuring school staff and students feel safe and secure is vital to establishing calm and supportive environments conducive to learning. Using searching and confiscation powers appropriately is an important way to ensure students and staff welfare is protected and helps schools establish an environment where everyone is safe.

2. Policy

- School staff can search a student for any item if the student agrees (the ability to give consent may be influenced by the child's age or other factors).
- Headteachers, and staff authorised by them, have a statutory power to search students or their possessions/lockers without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student may have a prohibited or banned item or have misused an electronic or mobile device. For the purpose of this policy prohibited items are classed as (these lists are not exhaustive):
 - Knives or weapons
 - Alcohol
 - Illegal drugs
 - Stolen items
 - Tobacco and cigarette papers
 - Fireworks
 - Pornographic images
 - Images that have been taken without consent
 - Misuse of school email
 - Misuse of mobile/electronic devices that have broken school rules
 - 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 student).

For the purpose of this policy banned items are classed as:

- Matches
 - Vaping equipment and fluid
 - Sharp cutting tools or blades
 - Chewing gum
 - Expensive item of school property
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- 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.
 - Schools are not required to inform parents before a search takes place or seek their consent to search their child.

- Staff will inform parents when a search has been conducted and will inform parents of the outcome of a search. School should inform the individual student's parents or guardians where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found, though there is no legal requirement to do so.
- There is no legal requirement to make or keep a record of a search, but a record of the search will be kept on the student's file.
- Complaints about searching should be dealt with through the school's complaint procedure.

Policy last reviewed: January 2025

Appendix 1: Documents used in devising this policy:

- Department of Education Searching, screening and confiscation - Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies (July 2022)
- BSA National Minimum Standards (September 2024) 15.1 in consultation with Section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996
- "A person who does not have parental responsibility but has the care of the child may do what is reasonable in all the circumstances for the purpose of safeguarding the child's welfare" S.3 (5) of the Children Act 1989
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024