



DORSET HOUSE SCHOOL

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

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Date of policy: November 2015

Last review: April 2026

Next review: September 2026

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Approved by: Governors' Academic Committee



1. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy applies to the whole school including EYFS and boarding. The school's main aims are firstly, to provide an excellent all-round education for pupils aged 4 to 13 years in a calm and stimulating environment. Secondly, to treat each child as an individual encouraging them to develop their strengths and to overcome any weaknesses with the support of dedicated and experienced staff. Dorset House aims to allow pupils to emerge as well-rounded young men and women who are eager to embrace the opportunities of life. We believe that our healthy, nurturing and ultimately challenging community prepares pupils for a demanding future.

We aim to encourage pupils to adopt the highest standards of behaviour, principles and moral standards. We aim to promote trust, mutual respect for everyone and we believe good manners and common courtesy in a secure learning environment play a crucial part in the development of motivated, interested and curious pupils.

The school has succeeded in maintaining a caring and supportive environment based on respect for and care of others. While the school is non-denominational, the Christian ethos is at the heart of the school's pastoral care programmes.

Good behaviour, hard work and self-discipline are rewarded. Good manners and respect for adults and peers are key parts of school life. Discipline is firm and appropriate.

Dorset House School sees education as a partnership. Our staff are committed to excellence, aiming to achieve a spirit of trust and cooperation. We expect the highest values and standards of behaviour both inside and outside the classroom, as well as outside the school and in any written or electronic communication concerning the school.

Everyone has the right to feel secure and to be treated with respect; particularly the vulnerable. Harassment and bullying will not be tolerated (see our Anti-Bullying Policy). The school is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, religion, gender, gender orientation or disability. We acknowledge our duties to these young people as set out under the Equality Act 2010 (see our SEND Policy). We expect pupils to behave at all times in a manner that reflects the best interests of the whole community.

This policy follows the DfE's Guidance: *Behaviour and discipline in schools – advice for Head Teachers and school staff (January 2016)* and *Getting the simple things right: Charlie Taylor's behaviour checklists*.



2. THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Dorset House school community of Governors, staff, parents and pupils adhere to a code of conduct rather than to lists of rules. DH does not wish to operate according to an exhaustive list of school rules. Instead, the school observes what is a Mission statement: To Be The Best We Can Be.

This statement includes the following expectations:

- being kind and inclusive to everyone in the school community
- being punctual
- being polite
- maintaining a neat and tidy appearance
- observing good table manners
- safeguarding the fabric, décor and furniture of the school
- always acting as a good ambassador of the school
- not disrupting the work, privacy, sleep or general well-being of others.

3. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

There are certain specific types of behaviour that we feel are unacceptable under any circumstances:

- Bullying
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Violence

Should a child be involved in any of the above they will place their future at Dorset House in jeopardy.

There are three other areas which will also be regarded as very serious:

- Persistent disobedience
- Knowingly or carelessly jeopardizing the safety and well-being of oneself or others
- Lying or blatant dishonesty

If a child is upset or hurt by another child they should report the incident to a member of staff who will deal with the matter appropriately.

Children are encouraged to be tolerant and to resist the temptation to retaliate if hurt.

4. DISCIPLINE AND EXCLUSION

Dorset House has a clear philosophy on discipline and we recognize that teachers' powers include the following key points as stated in the DfE guidelines (January 2016):

- Teachers have statutory authority to discipline pupils whose behaviour is unacceptable, who break the school rules or who fail to follow a reasonable instruction (Section 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006).
- The authority also applies to all paid staff (unless the Head says otherwise) with responsibility for



pupils, such as teaching assistants.

- Teachers can discipline pupils at any time the pupil is in school or elsewhere under the charge of a teacher, including on school visits.
- Teachers can also discipline pupils in certain circumstances when a pupil's misbehavior occurs outside of school.
- Teachers have a power to impose detention outside school hours.
- Teachers can confiscate pupils' property.

We believe that children require clear guidelines within which to develop. These guidelines, which need constantly to be reinforced, should be enforced, not through fear and rigid sanctions, but through explanation and example. Expected standards of behaviour should be reinforced again and again, firmly, consistently, but with a smile if at all possible. This does not mean that we are against punishment - merely against fear. We have a range of sanctions so that we can respond appropriately to any given incident.

A child's form teacher might be the best point of first contact in the event of a disciplinary problem, but the Deputy Head has overall responsibility for school discipline. She will always discuss issues with the Head, who will always be involved when the most serious rules are contravened. The Deputy Head will keep a record of such matters and, if the offence merits a letter home, she will draft and send an appropriate letter or email **with copies going into pupil files**.

For more serious offences, parents are often contacted. Parental support on such occasions is vital. Violence is never tolerated, no matter what the provocation. We might understand such behaviour, but we will never condone it.

For on-going day-to-day issues, we have a range of rewards and sanctions so that we can respond appropriately to any given event.

5. THE REWARD SYSTEM

The House System

The primary role of the House system is to reward pupils for their efforts and achievements throughout the school week. The aim of the scoring system is to encourage academic performance and also to foster a helpful and cooperative atmosphere in the community.

Each pupil is in a House (Hutchinson, Munro, Sims and Wilkinson) and each child will try and accumulate as many points as possible for themselves and their House.

The points have a Latin name: O = Optimus. Every week the House points are added up and the House with the most points wins. These points are also added up over the course of the weeks, creating both half-termly and termly winners. At the end of the summer term the House Cup is awarded in Prize-giving to the House that has accumulated most Os throughout the year. The winning House is also taken on an all-day outing to Paulton's Park.

Each form teacher keeps a weekly record of the Os that have been awarded to children in their form.



This record is then entered onto the Engage management system so that the member of staff in charge of the House system can see it before the Friday morning whole-school 'Rewards' assembly.

A good piece of academic work will receive an Academic O. All pupils can achieve Os because teachers reward effort and achievement based on the individual pupil's ability and effort. Academic Os are also awarded for music performances and a pupil who is learning three instruments has an advantage over a pupil who doesn't play any instruments because they will receive three times as many points if they practise all three instruments.

Os can also earn individual pupils' badges. 100 Os earns a bronze badge, 200 earns a silver badge, 300 earns a gold badge and 400 earns an (extremely rare) platinum badge.

Special Mentions

Special Mentions are also awarded in Friday assemblies. Teachers may nominate a pupil for an award for a particularly good piece of work, or behaviour that best embodies 'DH Spirit'. These 'Special Mentions' are rewarded with tuck vouchers. Tuck vouchers are currently exchanged on Friday afternoons before going home; Form teachers hand out small, individually wrapped bags of sweets.

Students themselves can also suggest nominations to staff for acts of kindness and other noteworthy behaviour.

6. SANCTIONS

Sanctions within the House System

The Pre-Prep

A traffic light system is used to manage behaviour in the Pre-Prep for all children in Reception to Year 3. If a child behaves in a way that is inappropriate they move their name to the orange "thinking" face and have time to think about how to change their behaviour. This gives children important reflection time and the teacher will find time to explain why the child's behaviour is not appropriate.

If the behaviour does not improve the child may have to move their name to the red "sad" face which will result in a sanction or missed play time. In the Pre-Prep it is important that children are talked through their behaviour and given guidance on how to deal with the problem, should it arise again. More serious offences and repeated poor behavior will result in the child having to see the Head of the Pre-Prep or the Deputy Head to explain their behaviour.

The Prep

Ds (D = detention) are given to pupils as punishment for inappropriate behavior, lack of work or a lack of general sensitivity to other people in our community. Teaching staff giving Ds should also provide a suitable punishment for the child concerned (perhaps a letter of apology or a break time detention). Ps (P = Pessimus) are given for more serious offences and result in the pupils having to take their P slip to the Head to explain their actions.

All disciplinary incidents that merit Ps or Ds are logged. The slips are first passed on to the relevant form teacher by the member of staff issuing either Ds or Ps. The form teacher will then pass these slips



to the Deputy Head. Any issues arising are discussed at the weekly morning staff meeting. This ensures all staff are aware of any child who is having a particularly troubled time. The Deputy Head is responsible for keeping a record of the log.

In the unusual case of a pupil being given a second P within the space of a half term, the matter should be referred to the Deputy Head. A third P within a half term is a matter for the Head, who will then issue a Saturday detention.

If a child is badly behaved for whatever reason a judgment of how serious it is will be made. The following sanctions are imposed in order of severity:

- **Firstly, talking with the child**

This should always take place and there are many occasions when this may be sufficient. This is an important part of our pastoral care and our experience shows that the ethos of and respect for the school is enhanced by listening to our pupils and by encouraging constructive suggestions from them such as via the School Council meetings.

- **A small punishment**

Where possible this should be immediate and useful. The writing of lines should never be given as a punishment and children with any form of learning difficulty should not normally be given a written task as a punishment. Most punishments will need supervision or checking by the member of staff involved. Staff must make sure that the child is free to do the punishment and not involved in another activity. Punishments should not clash with activities etc. unless they have been agreed in advance with the member of staff concerned.

- **Report Card**

If a child continues to accumulate Ds then a weekly Report Card may be issued by the Form Teacher in consultation with the Deputy Head.

- **Referral to the Deputy Head**

Although all staff are expected to take responsibility for most behaviour, and to deal with it accordingly, they may wish to refer a child to the Deputy Head. This can be used to defuse a difficult situation, to explore the sanctions options available in a particular case or when the behaviour is such that the Deputy Head or Head is likely to consider contact with parents.

- **Direct Referral to the Head**

This should be a rare occurrence, reserved for the most serious of offences.

Unacceptable sanctions

No child should be belittled or humiliated particularly by being reprimanded in front of other children or adults.

Adults should refrain from shouting at children, particularly in a pejorative way. It is usually more effective to speak quietly and calmly to individual children or groups.



7. SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION

Internal suspension is a serious sanction. Children will normally be withdrawn from all school activities for a period of time and, where possible, work will be found for them. Parents will always be informed. This can be used for boarders or day children.

Suspension at home is normally used for more serious offences or where the child is unable to co-operate with internal suspension. There may be times when a pupil remains at home but is not suspended. A pupil may be sent, or released, home for a limited period either as a disciplinary sanction or pending a Governors' review.

Expulsion is retained as the ultimate sanction and is only taken after consultation with the Chairman of Governors. A pupil may be formally expelled from the School if it is proved on the balance of probabilities that the pupil has committed a very grave breach of school discipline or a serious criminal offence. Expulsion is reserved for the most serious breaches. The Head shall act with procedural fairness in all such cases. The Head's decision shall be subject to a Governors' Review if requested by a parent. Parents will be given a copy of the review procedure current at the time.

Malicious allegations against staff: Where pupils are found to have made malicious allegations against staff the school will apply an appropriate sanction. This sanction could include temporary or permanent exclusion (as well as referral to the police if there are grounds for believing a criminal offence may have been committed).

Governors' Review: The parents may request a review by Governors of a decision to expel or require the removal of the pupil from the School (but not a decision to suspend the pupil unless the suspension is for 11 School days or more, or would prevent the pupil taking a public examination). The request shall be made as soon as possible and in any event within seven days of the Head's decision being notified to the parents. The parents will be entitled to know the names of the Governors who make up the review panel and may ask for the appointment of an independent panel member nominated by the Governors / Chair of Governors and approved by the Parents, such approval not to be unreasonably withheld.

Removal in other Circumstances: Parents may be required, during or at the end of a term, to remove their child, temporarily or permanently from the School if, after consultation with the pupil and/or parents, the Head is of the opinion that by reason of the pupil's conduct or progress, the pupil is unwilling or unable to benefit sufficiently from the educational opportunities offered by the School. The same applies if the parents have treated the School or members of its staff unreasonably, or if in the opinion of the Head the parents have not remained fully committed to the ethos and values of the School. In these circumstances, parents may be permitted to withdraw the pupil as an alternative to removal being required. The Head shall act with procedural fairness in all such cases, and shall have regard to the interests of the pupil and parents as well as those of the School.



8. SUPPORTING PUPILS

We recognize that good pastoral care lies at the heart of supporting pupils. Good pastoral support is concerned with academic attainment and developing pupils' ability to become good citizens – it is not just about behaviour. We achieve good pastoral care through utilizing the role of the form teacher, PSHEE/RSE lessons, assemblies, the School Council, Parents' Evenings and surgeries, visiting speakers (and, on occasion, the Independent Listener) and academic assessment and monitoring. The school's code of conduct is designed to encourage positive behaviour.

We also recognise that when dealing with pupils with complex SEND needs, some adjustments may have to be made. Parents of the pupils concerned are normally consulted earlier in these cases than might otherwise happen, as working in partnership with home is almost always the most effective way forward.

On occasions, supporting pupils may involve working with external agencies. The agencies most often called upon are educational psychologists and Speech and Language Specialists. Other agencies could include Education Welfare Officers, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and the school's independent listener.

Should behaviour ever become an issue, the school's sanctions are to help us to manage challenging behaviour. Parents and Guardians undertake to support the authority of the Head in enforcing them in a fair manner that is designed to safeguard the welfare of the community as a whole. Parents are encouraged to attend school meetings and events so that they are made aware that learning and teaching cannot take place without a strong framework of discipline and understanding. We aim to develop a spirit of co-operation with parents. All parents should be confident that we deal with behaviour problems patiently and positively.

The Head for his part undertakes to apply any sanctions fairly, and, where appropriate, after due investigative action has taken place. Sanctions may undergo reasonable change from time to time; but will not involve any form of unlawful or degrading activity. Examples of sanctions include: detention in some cases on a Saturday morning, withdrawal of privileges, assistance with domestic tasks, such as collecting litter, suspension for a specified period of time, removal or exclusion.

Complaints: We hope that children or parents do not have any complaints about the operation of our Behaviour and Discipline policy; but copies of the school's Complaints Procedure can be sent to you or collected from the school office.



Appendix 1: Restrictive Interventions Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy explains how the School promotes good behaviour and, where necessary, uses restrictive interventions, including reasonable force, non-physical restraint and seclusion, in line with Department for Education guidance and applicable legislation. It sets out definitions, decision-making principles, unacceptable practices, and our statutory recording and reporting duties so that staff and parents understand when and how such measures may be used, and how we reduce their use over time.

Definitions

Restrictive intervention: any action that prevents, restricts, or subdues a pupil's movement (or part of the body), including physical and non-physical measures, used to reduce immediate risk of harm.

Reasonable force: the minimum degree of physical force necessary, used for the least time, to prevent immediate risk of harm or to conduct a lawful search for a statutorily prohibited item.

Restraint: a form of restrictive intervention involving the use of force to hold back, physically prevent, or otherwise restrict a pupil's movement; this includes non-physical restraint (e.g., removal of a mobility aid).

Seclusion: a non-disciplinary, time-limited safety measure in which a pupil is supervised away from others to reduce immediate risk of harm; it must never be used or threatened as punishment.

Significant incident: any use of force that goes beyond appropriate physical contact, including where the degree, duration or context of force is more than minimal. Staff will use proactive strategies and de-escalation wherever possible; restrictive interventions are used only when necessary, proportionate and time-limited to address an immediate risk of harm. We communicate this policy to staff, pupils and parents as part of our behaviour culture.

We will reduce the need for restrictive interventions through consistent, whole-school measures that promote safety, predictability and inclusion for all pupils. Whole school measures include:

- Having clear, positively framed routines and expectations taught explicitly and revisited in lessons, assemblies and tutor time and a curriculum that builds social, emotional and self-regulation skills.
- Creating a calm, predictable School and classroom environment.
- Practising restorative approaches including the use of recognition and reinforcement of positive behaviours and restorative conversations to repair harm and relationships following incidents and build trust.
- Ensuring staff receive regular training and reminders on de-escalation, communication, trauma-informed practice, autism and ADHD awareness, and lawful decision-making in regard to the use of restrictive interventions.
- Monitoring behaviour and restrictive-intervention data to identify patterns, triggers, and disproportionality to inform improvement planning, environmental adjustments and staff training.



The Governing Body and the Head will regularly review data on use of force, seclusion and restraint.

- Communicating with parents and pupils, providing clear information on our approach to behaviour and safety and providing opportunities to share pupil preferences, regulation strategies and communication needs.

When restrictive interventions may be used

The School does not operate a “no contact” policy. Staff may make appropriate, non-force physical contact in context (e.g., first aid, assisting with personal care in line with care plans, guiding a pupil, comforting a distressed pupil, or demonstrating activities), consistent with discharging safeguarding duties.

Like all Schools, we reserve the right for our staff to use reasonable force to control or restrain a pupil in specific circumstances. Staff may use restrictive interventions only when necessary to prevent a pupil from:

- (a) causing injury to themselves or others;
- (b) seriously damaging property where this creates a risk to safety; or
- (c) posing an immediate risk of disorder that presents a risk of harm.

Any intervention used will be the least restrictive option likely to be effective and used for the minimum time to reduce the immediate risk.

Before intervening, and while an intervention is ongoing, staff will always consider:

- **Necessity:** Is there an immediate risk of harm that cannot be addressed safely by de-escalation or other less restrictive alternatives?
- **Proportionality:** Is the degree and duration of restriction the minimum necessary to reduce the risk?
- **Welfare and context:** Has the pupil’s age, size, medical conditions, SEND, trauma, dignity, communication needs and the environment been considered?

Staff will pause or stop where the intervention escalates the risk. It is unlawful to use force as punishment. Staff will not restrain a pupil in a way that affects the airway, breathing or circulation (for example, pressure to the neck, chest or abdomen, or covering the mouth or nose). Prone or ground restraints carry elevated risk and will be avoided wherever possible; if a pupil is taken to the ground, staff will release or reposition as quickly as possible. Holds designed to inflict pain will not be used and staff will immediately ensure that a medical assessment is undertaken where any injury may have occurred.

All of our staff are trained in the circumstances in which reasonable minimum force may be used, both as part of their induction and regular refresher training on managing pupil behaviour. Staff likely to use restrictive interventions will receive relevant training, including prevention and de-escalation. The school will undertake risk assessments to support staff to act safely and lawfully, in line with our duty to protect staff health, safety and welfare.

In particular, they are advised always to use their voices first and to use the minimum force necessary



to restrain a pupil for the shortest possible period of time. The use of force can include either passive contact (such as standing between pupils or blocking a path) or active contact (such as leading a pupil by the arm away from a situation).

Members of staff (including non-teaching staff) may use reasonable force at any time off the School premises when they have lawful charge of the pupil elsewhere (e.g. on a school trip or other authorised out of School activity).

Recording and reporting

Every member of staff will inform the Head immediately after they have needed to restrain a pupil physically. The School will record and report restrictive interventions, including significant uses of force, seclusion and non-physical contact.

Incidents will be recorded as soon as practicable, and where possible the same day. The record will include the names of staff and pupils involved; details of the pupil's needs/SEND status, if any; the time, date, location and duration of the incident; a description of the incident; details of any de-escalation attempted; the type and degree of force used; the rationale for necessity and proportionality; any injuries sustained and medical attention provided and details of any post-incident support required.

Incidents will be reported to each parent of the pupil concerned as soon as practicable, in writing and, where possible, the same day. The report will include the time/date/location/duration of the incident, details of why the use of force was necessary, the type and degree of force used, and details of any injuries sustained. Parents will be invited to the School, so that we can, if necessary, agree a [protocol/plan] for managing their child's behaviour. There are limited exceptions to this procedure where safeguarding is a consideration and it appears to the Head or DSL that reporting the incident to a parent would likely result in significant harm to the pupil. If that is the case then a report will not be made to that parent and if a report cannot be made to any parent for this reason then a report will instead be made to the local authority where the pupil is ordinarily resident. Parents of EYFS pupils will be informed of the incident on the same day or as soon as is reasonably practicable.

The School will ensure that records kept will be accurate, factual and completed by any staff involved (and quality-assured by a senior leader). We will retain records in line with our retention schedule

As required under the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, senior leaders will monitor the use of restraint and take appropriate action to prevent the inappropriate use of restraint. They will take effective action when inappropriate restraint has been used.

In addition, the Head will consider whether staff require any additional training and support to enable them to de-escalate potential confrontations between pupils, or potentially violent behaviour, to minimise the need for restraint.

Support following an incident

The immediate focus following an incident will be on the wellbeing and safety of any pupils and staff involved. The School will provide medical assessment/treatment for injuries where appropriate and, once appropriate to do so, will facilitate debrief conversations with the pupil and involved staff, led by



a non-involved member of staff, to learn and repair relationships. The School will provide ongoing wellbeing support for pupils, staff, and any witnesses as needed.

As soon as practicable the School will evaluate the incident to understand why it occurred and identify how to reduce any future need for the use of reasonable force and/or restrictive interventions.

Seclusion

Seclusion is a non-disciplinary safety measure used only to protect others from immediate harm when a pupil is highly dysregulated and not acting with intent. It will never be threatened or used as punishment.

Any seclusion will occur in a safe, non-threatening space. The pupil will be continuously supervised and the seclusion will last only as long as necessary, and end as soon as the immediate risk reduces.

All incidents of seclusion will be recorded and reported in line with the above Recording and Reporting Duties

Pupils with SEND and individual support

The School recognises the risk that pupils with SEND may be disproportionately subject to the use of restrictive interventions. The School also recognises that some pupils, without SEND, such as those who have experienced past trauma, may require individual support.

The School understands the importance of identifying and understanding any underlying triggers of challenging behaviour so that they can provide individual, proactive support and create an inclusive environment.

The Schools will where possible utilise staff who know individual pupils well to help identify and manage risk such as trigger points when challenging behaviour is more likely to occur and develop proactive strategies to reduce the likelihood of restrictive interventions being used.

The School will work with the pupil, parents and other professionals to

- Develop prevention and de-escalation strategies. This may include removing stimuli that may be causing distress, giving pupils time, space and strategies to calm down before their behaviour escalates or engaging the pupil in an activity which can help them manage their feelings.
- Develop a behaviour support plan to include details of any adjustments required and the pupil's communication preference. The behaviour support plan will also clearly set out the parameters where staff may have increased physical contact with a pupil.
- Review the behaviour support plan with the pupil and their parent periodically and following any significant incident, so that changes can be made based on evidence of what has worked and what has not worked in practice for the individual pupil.

The Governing Body will regularly review data on use of force, seclusion and restraint to identify any disproportionate use affecting pupils with protected characteristics or SEND.



Appendix 2: Arrangements for Searching Pupils and their Possessions

POLICY STATEMENT

Dorset House is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the members of its community. Accordingly, there may be occasions when it becomes necessary to search the person, the belongings or, in the case of a boarder, the room of a pupil. Although the general high standards of pupil behaviour and the very good relationships between pupils and staff make it unlikely that searching pupils will be necessary, on occasions when it might be this policy should be followed.

These instructions set out the circumstances in which such searches can be carried out and the means by which it should be done, in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and DfE Guidance for Schools on Screening, Searching and Confiscation (February 2014) and DfE Behaviour and Attendance.

The fundamental principles are:

1. Act with due care, consideration and sensitivity and remain mindful of the need to respect privacy; particular thought should be given to boarders for whom, during term time, the School is their 'home'.
2. Remember that the need to protect persons/property from injury/damage and from loss is paramount and that this duty of care can in certain circumstances override all other protocols.

The people in the school who can carry out any such search are the Head, members of SMT or, in the case of a boarder, the House master/House Tutor/Matron of the pupil concerned. (In exceptional circumstances, such as a school trip, the Head may authorize others to carry out such a search)

Search of a Pupil

- In all circumstances the consent of the pupil to any search should be requested.
- A second adult witness should always be present.
- Incident reports must be submitted about any such search, listing all the main details:
 - o The reason for the search taking place
 - o The date and time of the search
 - o The results of the search
 - o All staff involved
 - o Other agencies involved
 - o The outcome (including any disciplinary action taken in respect of that pupil)
- Affected pupils' parents should always be contacted after any search, regardless of the outcome.
- School staff can search pupils with their consent for any item which is banned by the school rules.
- Schools are not required to have formal written consent from the pupil for this sort of search – it is enough for the teacher to ask the pupil to turn out his/her pockets or if the teacher can look in his/her locker/bag/cupboard/room
- If the pupil refuses to comply, this is not necessarily an admission of guilt; however the matter should be referred to a senior member of staff if appropriate.



- Items that can be searched for under these powers include any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property (referred to as prohibited items).
- The search should always be carried out in the presence of another adult witness. Every attempt should be made to ensure that one member of staff present is the same gender as the pupil.
- The search may be carried out if you have reasonable grounds of suspecting that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item.
- If a pupil is suspected of carrying a prohibited item he/she should be asked, in the presence of a second adult witness, to empty his/her pockets.
- Staff should not touch the pupil but are allowed to ask him/her to remove any outer clothing in order to conduct the search. (Outer clothing refers to any item which is not immediately touching the skin.).
- If this fails and possession of such items is still strongly suspected, he or she should then be told that the police will be called, who are allowed to conduct a personal search if they believe that a crime has been committed. (Parents will be contacted as appropriate).

Search of a pupil's possessions

- There may be circumstances in which staff wish to search a pupil's personal property, such as a bag, mobile phone or locked box.
- Under common law powers, if a pupil consents any item may be searched for.
- If a pupil does not consent to a search, it is only possible to search for the prohibited items listed earlier.
- Any such search must be witnessed by a second adult and, ideally, the pupil. Proper records should be kept.
- Those authorised to carry out searches may search school property, such as a pupil's locker or desk, if they believe prohibited items to be stored there.
- Prior consent can be sought, but individuals should be made aware that the school may still proceed with a search even if consent is refused.
- The decision to go ahead in such circumstances would have to take into account the likelihood of an offence having been committed.
- A second adult witness should always be present and, if possible, the pupil concerned.
- For less serious items, the same rules apply as above, but the extent and nature of the search should be proportionate to the value of the item sought and the likelihood of the item being found.
- Great care must be taken to avoid persistent targeting of individuals where allegations of victimisation or discrimination might arise.
- Forcible entry into locked school property is only justified in extreme circumstances and would also need the authorisation of the Head.

This policy on searches of pupils and their belongings applies at all times, irrespective of whether the pupil is on the school premises or on a school trip.

If the latter occasion arises, the adult in charge of the trip should make an effort to contact either the Emergency Contact (a designated member of SMT) to obtain authorization. If this proves impossible and the circumstances are such as to make a search necessary, the adult in charge is empowered to carry out such a search, following all the above procedures. A second adult should act as a witness. Full notes must be kept and an incident report submitted in due course. This will be kept by the DSL (Deputy Head) in the Child Protection file.



Confiscation

The same applies to confiscation: such items found in school or on a pupil's person may be confiscated for a time. Any valuable item confiscated should be kept safe and the details of the confiscation (item, date, time, location, owner, reason, etc) logged. An indication should be given at the time of confiscation to the pupil by the member of staff who has confiscated an item of when the item is likely to be returned. The duration of a confiscation should be reasonable and proportionate and, as in all matters, not unduly (or necessarily at all) punitive. 48 hours might be a reference-point for a confiscation period. Consideration should be given to the possible consequences of keeping the item and the pupil apart (for instance travel safety in the case of a confiscated mobile 'phone).