

## SMITHILLS SCHOOL

**POLICY:**

### **SCREENING, SEARCHING AND CONFISCATION**

#### **RATIONALE**

At Smithills School we aim to keep all members of our school community physically and medically safe. If deemed necessary, pupils will be asked to be searched for any banned items. Smithills School also has statutory powers to search pupils, without consent, if it is suspected that the pupil has prohibited items of knives, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items.

#### **PURPOSES**

1. This policy is applicable to all pupils, Smithills School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.

#### **2. PROCEDURE**

**School SLT staff can search pupils with their consent for any suspected item banned by the school rules. For any reason a pupil refuses this, the member of SLT will contact the Police.**

School SLT staff can search pupils without their consent for any suspected knives, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items (from now on called prohibited items).

#### **When and where a search can take place**

A search can take place if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited or banned item. The member of SLT staff should take into account all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgement to determine whether such a search should take place. The search may be of the pupil's clothing, footwear, bags or locker. Wherever possible, a search should take place in private, witnessed by another member of SLT staff. This may not be possible for example if searching a locker in a classroom which is in a public place.

**Written By:** S Barker, Vice Principal

**Signed:** A Cottrill

**Headteacher**

**Date:** July 2016

**Approved on behalf of Governing Body:**

I Carter - Chair

**Date:** September 2016

**For Review:** September 2017



### **Extent of the search**

When a search is required, there must be two members of SLT staff present. The first member of staff conducting the search must be the same sex as the pupil being searched. The witness (second person) who, where possible, must be a member of SLT staff and should be, again wherever possible, the same sex as the pupil being searched.

The staff conducting the search may conduct a "personal search" which requires the pupil to remove any outer clothing (outer clothing means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear; outer clothing includes sweatshirt, hats, shoes, boots, gloves and scarves). Staff are not authorised to conduct an "intimate search" which requires the removal of non-outer clothing. The Police must always be called if an intimate search is required as they have the legal powers required.

A pupil's possessions (any goods over which the pupil has, or appears to have control of such as bags and lockers) may be searched.

Force should not be used when conducting a search. If there are any concerns that the pupil to be searched may become aggressive then the search should not take place and the Police called.

The searcher should take care when touching the pupil's clothing or property to reduce the risk of injury from sharp objects. The pupil should turn out pockets, empty bags etc. Staff should only touch items which are visible and the risk of sharp items being present can be assessed by the searcher.

### **After the search**

SLT Staff must seize any prohibited or banned item found during a search. Any item seized which is prohibited (with the exception of alcohol) or a controlled drug must be delivered to the Police as soon as is possible. Items which are evidence of an offence must be passed to the police as soon as possible. Any seized substance whose legal status is unsure should be treated as a controlled drug. Any substance believed to be a 'legal high' will be confiscated. It would not be reasonable or desirable to involve the Police in dealing with low value stolen items such as pencil cases. The Police can be involved in higher value stolen items. The school first aid officer should be informed of any "sharps" items seized to arrange safe storage/disposal.

Alcohol which has been seized should be disposed of by pouring it down the sink. If alcohol has been found on a pupil more than once within the last 12 months then the School Police Liaison Officer will be informed. Any seized banned item (other than alcohol) should be handed into the school office immediately where it will be recorded in a log book and then locked away in a safe.

Pupil punishment will be according to the level of incident and may involve detention, internal isolation, fixed or in extreme cases permanent exclusion. Any pupil who refuses to cooperate with a search will be considered to have refused a reasonable staff instruction and will be sanctioned accordingly.

3.

### **Parent/carer involvement**

There is no legal requirement to inform the parent/carer. The school will inform a parent/carer



## Management of Pupils

	<p>where a seized item is prohibited unless this would compromise the pupil's safety. When a banned item has been confiscated, a parent/carer will then have to come into school to collect any item not delivered to the police or disposed of by SLT staff. A parent will be informed following a search if nothing is found but there are still concerns.</p>
4.	<p><b>Complaints and Allegations</b></p> <p>Any complaint or allegation of misconduct arising from an incident should be put in writing using the school's complaints procedure.</p>