



Cleeve Park School

Screening & Searching Policy

November 2022

This policy adheres to the Department for Education ‘Searching, Screening and Confiscations advice for Head Teachers, school staff and governing bodies’ July 2022 document.

Cleeve Park School has a duty of care to all our students. This means we need to safeguard all students by confiscating harmful, illegal or disruptive items. This policy explains Cleeve Park School’s legally permitted rights for searching and screening students. In particular, it explains the use of those rights to search students without consent. It also explains the powers that schools have to seize and then confiscate items found during a search. It includes statutory guidance which schools must have regard to.

SEARCHING

- The Executive Head Teacher, or a nominated member of SLT, is authorised to search students or their possessions, without consent, where the Executive Head Teacher or a member of SLT has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student may have a prohibited item.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

This list is not exhaustive; examples are:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs / drug paraphernalia
- Stolen items
- Tobacco / cigarettes / smoking paraphernalia
- Fireworks / explosive devices
- Pornographic material
- Any other article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to:
 - Commit an offence
 - Cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student)

In addition to the above list, authorised staff can also search for other specific items banned in Cleeve Park School such as stolen property.

Use of CCTV in deciding whether to undertake a search

- All Cleeve Park School employees can view CCTV footage **once authorised** by the Executive Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teachers or Business Manager, in order to make a decision as to whether to request a search for an item. Such footage is not to be shown to parents / carers without prior permission from the Executive Head Teacher.
- Any copies of such footage need to be authorised by the Executive Head Teacher

Before Searching

A search will be considered if the designated staff member has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item. A risk assessment must be carried out of the urgency required and the risk to other students and staff.

The staff member must explain to the student why they are being searched.

If the student is not willing to cooperate with the search the staff member must consider why.

Reasons may be:

- they are in possession of a prohibited item
- they do not understand the instruction
- they are unaware of what a search may involve
- they may have had a previous distressing experience of a search.

If the student continues to refuse, the staff member may sanction in line with the behaviour policy. If the student still refuses, the pupil should be kept supervised but isolated from other students whilst the Executive Head Teacher and DHTs risk assesses whether reasonable force should be made. Should the EHT not be available then 2 DHTs will jointly risk assess. This will be on a case by case basis. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be involved.

During a Search

An appropriate location for the search will be found away from other students and on the school premises unless it is on a school trip. The staff member must be the same sex and the student being searched and another member of staff must be present. The only exception to the staff member being the same sex is if there is a matter of urgency and there is not time available to safeguard the student or other students or staff. Good practice is that the other member of staff present is the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The person conducting the search may search the students outer clothing, pockets, possessions. Outer clothing is defined as a garment that does not work next to the skin. The student's possessions may only be searched in their presence.

After a search

If a student is found to be in possession of a prohibited item the student will be sanctioned in line with the school's behaviour policy.

All searches will be recorded on CPOMS (the school's online reporting system) whether an item was found or not. The information recorded will include:

- date, time and location
- name of student
- who was present
- what was being searched for
- reason for search

- what was found
- follow up actions as a consequence.

Parents or carers will always be informed and the outcome regarding what, if anything, has been confiscated and what action the school will be taking.

Confiscation

An authorised staff member carrying out the search can confiscate any item that they believe:

- poses a risk to staff or pupils
- is prohibited
- is evidence in relation to an offence

Any confiscated items will be disposed of in accordance with the guidance in **‘Searching, Screening and Confiscations advice for Head Teachers, school staff and governing bodies’ July 2022 document.**

Screening

Screening is the use of a walk through or hand held metal detector to scan all students before they enter the premises. If the Executive Headteacher decides to introduce a screening arrangement they will inform parents and students beforehand.

STATUTORY GUIDANCE FOR DEALING WITH ELECTRONIC DEVICES

If there is a strong suspicion that there is inappropriate data or files on an electronic device owned by students or staff, it must be reported to a member of the safeguarding team and / or senior leadership team. Other members of staff must not investigate.

Where the member of safeguarding or senior leadership staff undertakes the investigation they must not examine any data or files on the device, but,

- The student must be asked if there is any inappropriate data or files on the electronic device.
- If the reply is yes, the staff member should ask for a description of contents. This should be written down, dated and signed.
- If the data or files are thought to be of a sexual nature, no staff member should view it. The police should be called and the item confiscated until the police arrive.
- The staff member must reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or to break the school rules.
- If there is data regarding a fight or public disturbance, school should not take copies of the content without parental permission.

CONFISCATION

Authorised staff (or staff nominated by them) can seize any prohibited item found as a result of the search.

PROTOCOL REGARDING A SEARCH OF A STUDENT

- The designated senior staff member is authorised to conduct a search with the student's consent
- Only staff of the same sex as the student is permitted to conduct a search. There must be a witness to this search. The witness could be:
 - The Police
 - The student's parent / carer
 - A member of staff nominated by the designated senior staff member who is permitted to search.
- If a student refuses to a search and there is reasonable doubt that they may be carrying an item which may cause serious harm to themselves or others, the matter must be decided by the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School or person nominated by them.

TRAINING FOR SCHOOL STAFF

When designating a member of the school staff to undertake searches under these powers, the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School should consider whether the member of staff requires any additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.

LOCATION OF A SEARCH

Searches without consent can only be carried out on the Cleeve Park School site, or, if elsewhere, where the member of staff has lawful control / charge of the student - for example, on school visits in England or in training settings.

EXTENT OF THE SEARCH – CLOTHES, POSSESSIONS, DESKS AND LOCKERS

What the law says:

- The power to search without consent enables a personal search, involving removal of outer clothing and searching of pockets, hats, footwear, gloves, scarves etc.; but not an intimate search going further than that, which only a person with more extensive powers (e.g. Police Officer) can do. The search can also be undertaken where the student has, or appears to have, control, e.g. Desks, lockers, bags.

USE OF FORCE

- Members of staff can use such force as is deemed reasonable (please refer to Cleeve Park School's restraint policy) given the circumstances when conducting a search for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, smoking paraphernalia, cigarettes and tobacco, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm.

See the Department for Education Searching, Screening and Confiscations advice for Head Teachers, school staff and governing bodies, January 2018 document.

Policy review date: November 2024

Policy to be reviewed by: Designated Safeguarding Officer