



WORLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

SEARCHES POLICY

OCTOBER 2015

Searches

Worle Community School will follow the national guidelines to conduct searches where it is suspected that a student has a prohibited item on them. A list of prohibited items is shown below. If this is refused, the school will consider whether to call the Police and parents/carers in order to support the school. Searches will be conducted in such a way as to minimise potential embarrassment or distress.

Prohibited items include:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that has been, or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.
- Mobile phones
- Energy drinks*

*Energy drinks, such as Monster, Relentless and Red Bull are deemed unsuitable for children to drink as they can cause serious health conditions in addition to having a detrimental effect on concentration and therefore learning in lessons.

Personal searches

When a person is suspected of concealing controlled substances or other unauthorized items a same sex member of staff **will carry out a personal search**; this includes the searching of outer clothing and inside pockets. Every effort will be made to persuade the person to hand over voluntarily any items, in the presence of a second adult witness. Where the individual refuses and the item is believed to be prohibited, the school will proceed along formal lines and the Police and parents/carers will be called.

Searches of School property

Staff may search school property if they believe prohibited items to be stored there. Prior consent will be sought, however individuals will be made aware that if consent is refused school staff may proceed with a search. Where consent is refused, the School will balance the likelihood that an offence has been committed against the risk of infringing the individual's privacy without just cause.



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Searches of personal property

The school has the power to search students or their possessions without consent where they have reasons to suspect the student has a prohibited item in line with DfE guidance.

After any search involving students, parents/carers will normally be contacted by the School, regardless of whether the result of the search is positive or negative.

The law permits School staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled substance for the purpose of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that the drug providing that all reasonable steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected controlled substances staff will:

- ensure that a second adult witness is present;
- seal the sample in a plastic bag or envelope and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present;
- store it in a secure place;
- without delay inform the Police, who will be asked to collect it and then store or dispose of it. **The law does not require the School to divulge to the Police the name of the student from whom the drugs were taken but in the case of controlled substance will do so. Liaison will take place to ensure safe disposal of any substances.** Where a student is identified the Police will be required to follow Police procedures;
- Record full details of the incident on SIMS, including notes of any discussions with the students. These should include date, time place and people present. The Police incident reference number should also be included.

Staff should not attempt to analyse or taste unknown substances. Police may advise on analysis and formal identification.

If formal action is to be taken against a student, the Police will make arrangements for them to attend a local police station accompanied by an appropriate adult for interview.

An appropriate adult should always be present during interviews, preferably a parent/carers or duty social worker.

Next Review Date for this Policy: October 2017