



SEARCH, SURRENDER AND RETENTION POLICY

Outcome statement

We aim to ensure that the school and hostel environments are safe and secure places.

Scoping

In order to ensure the safety within the school, when we have reasonable grounds we must check that students are not in possession of illicit items, including drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, cigarettes, vaping paraphernalia, pornography, weapons, stolen property or any other item that may be harmful or likely to endanger the safety of others. This also applies to items, devices and information stored on devices that is likely to detrimentally affect staff, students or the learning/living environment.

Expectations and limitations

Reasonable grounds must be established for a search to be conducted. All searches will be carried out in a manner that is culturally sensitive, that ensures the protection of the dignity of the student and in accordance with the following process:

1. A teacher or hostel supervisor may require a student to produce, reveal, surrender an item and/or surrender a device on which information is stored. If items are found, they must be passed to a Deputy Principal/Principal (Assistant Hostel Manager/Hostel Manager) and safely stored or disposed of as appropriate. An incident report will be prepared by the teacher and passed to the person managing the case.
2. If the student does not co-operate the teacher will seek assistance from a female Deputy Principal/Principal (Assistant Hostel Manager/Hostel Manager) who may conduct a search witnessed by another female member of staff. In the absence of a female Deputy Principal/Principal (Assistant Hostel Manager/Hostel Manager), a search may be conducted by a female Dean or Head of Department (Supervisor).
3. If a serious criminal offence is thought to have been committed and drugs and/or weapons are involved the Police will be notified and parents will be contacted.
4. In conducting a search, the student may be required to remove outer clothing or surrender a bag or other belongings in which it is suspected the item/device is. Staff may not search clothing that the student is still wearing. Bags and pockets should be emptied by the student.
5. If items are found, they may be disposed of or retained as appropriate. Items that are retained are to be safely stored and within a reasonable time returned preferably to a

parent or in the case of drugs and/or weapons to the Police. Whether or not items are found the clothing, bag or other belongings will be returned to the student immediately.

6. If a student refuses to be searched by a Deputy Principal/Principal (Assistant Hostel Manager/Hostel Manager) the student's parents will be contacted and the student will again be asked to co-operate. In the absence of a parent a Guidance Counsellor may be asked to attend in support of the student.
7. Parents/caregivers will be contacted in all situations involving a search regardless of whether or not items have been found.
8. A report of the incident will be prepared for the Principal by the person managing the case and placed on the student's file. The Principal will report to the Board.
9. Appropriate disciplinary action may be applied at any stage and could include (but is not limited to) a stand-down or suspension.
10. All due care will be taken to ensure that retained items are safely stored. In the event of loss, the school will not be liable.

Related Procedures or Supporting Documentation

[Ministry Guidelines for the surrender and retention of property and searches](#)

Reviewed and ratified: September 2020

Next Review: September 2023