

FRED LONGWORTH HIGH SCHOOL



Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy

October 2022

This Policy was approved by:

The Pastoral Committee: October 2022

Date for Review: November 2024

Fred Longworth High School's policy reflects the Department for Education's advice on powers of screening, searching and confiscation.

Wherever possible, searches will be undertaken with the consent of the student. However, school staff do have the right to carry out a search for the following items without consent if it is necessary and in the best interests of the school/other students and there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student is in possession of a prohibited item.

Searches will be undertaken by a member of SLT or the relevant HOY. At times a search may involve two members of SLT or two HOYs.

Two members of staff will always be present during any search.

If staff think there are reasonable grounds to search a student they should send for one of the above members of staff.

Prohibited Items:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal Drugs/'Legal Highs' (there are several of these)
- Stolen Items
- Tobacco, cigarette papers, lighters
- E-cigarettes
- Fireworks
- Pornographic Images
- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student).

The member of staff undertaking the search will be the same sex as the student being searched. (The only exception to this would be if there is a risk of serious harm caused to a person if we do not conduct the search immediately).

The search needs to take place in a private area. The offices in the Inclusion Centre, HOY offices or SLT offices are ideal locations for this.

Searching with Consent

School staff can search students with their consent for any item. In this circumstance, a student will be asked to turn out his/her pockets AND allow the staff member to look in the student's bag.

If the student refuses to consent, the school reserves the right to impose an appropriate punishment for refusal to co-operate. This will most likely be a fixed term suspension followed by a reintegration period in Internal Exclusion

and a parental meeting. However if there is compelling evidence that a student is carrying a weapon with intent to harm, or is carrying drugs with the intent to sell, a more serious sanction may result, examples of which are a permanent exclusion from school/managed move to another school.

We would search a student's bag without their consent if we believed that they were carrying a weapon, as long as this can be carried out in a safe way. If a weapon was found and there was evidence of intent to harm, we would contact the Police on 999. Guidance has been given to schools on this area (Child Centred Policing - When to call the Police 2021).

In extreme circumstances, for example if a student posed a significant risk to others carrying a weapon which the student refused to safely hand over, we would need to call the Police. The Police would search the student with the agreement of the senior member of staff present. This may involve a strip search if appropriate, as a last resort.

Any search that is undertaken will be recorded on the form shown in this policy. A copy of this form will be sent to the Pastoral Deputy Head.

Confiscation

School staff will seize any prohibited item or any item considered to be harmful/ detrimental to school discipline found as a result of a search.

Any items which are confiscated will not be returned to the student. They will be returned to parents OR the Police if the item could be used to commit an offence/cause injury/damage.

In the case of stolen items, these will be returned to the owner, or disposed of according to DfE guidelines.

In the case of indecent images on students' mobile phones, these may be deleted or passed to the Police if appropriate. In general with images we would ask a student to keep this on their phone for future reference, and parents would be contacted. This would be done on a case by case basis.

Mobile phones will be confiscated in accordance with the school's Mobile Phone Policy.

Jewellery will be confiscated in accordance with the school's Uniform Policy.

Please note:

The school is not required to inform parents before a search takes place or seek their consent. Parents will be informed if alcohol, illegal drugs, potentially harmful substances or objects are found.

By law, schools can require students to undergo screening by a walk-through or hand-held metal detector even if they do not suspect them of having a

weapon, without the consent of the student. Screening is currently a very rare occurrence in schools and is only introduced when deemed to be necessary.

Any searches undertaken will be mindful of a student's privacy. Any complaints regarding screening/searching should be made through the normal school complaints procedure.

Searches of students are very infrequent and are undertaken when there is good reason to believe that it is in the best interests of the students and the school to do so.

This policy is one of the school's pastoral policies and should not be read in isolation from the Whole School Behaviour Management Policy.

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Record of a search for a prohibited item

Date:	Time:
Venue of search:	
Name of student:	Consent given by student Yes/No (please circle)
Item(s) being searched for:	
Item(s) found Yes/No Details:	
Who conducted the search:	
Parents informed Yes/No	Member of staff informing parents:

Further details:

Signed : (member of staff)
Name:
Witness: Name: