

Lampton School

CONFISCATION OF INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS POLICY

Introduction

High quality teaching and learning is a way of ensuring good behaviour in schools and at Lampton School we value good behaviour in the classroom and elsewhere to promote the school as a learning community and to ensure that classrooms are safe and effective learning environments. The highest regard is given to the quality of relationships between staff and pupils/students. At Lampton School we seek to develop independent and autonomous young people who are self-disciplined and who are able to self – regulate and manage their behaviour. We aim for Lampton pupils to take responsibility for their actions and for the school to be a physically and emotionally safe place for pupils to develop.

The school's behaviour policy sets out what is expected of pupils in the school and when engaged in school activities (such as school journeys, residential visits) .It also sets out the rewards which are used to encourage and develop good behaviour together with sanctions applied to assist in modifying inappropriate behaviour.

Pupils/students should not bring onto the school site or be in possession of items which detract from good behaviour or have a negative effect on their own learning or that of others. Pupils/students should not be in possession of items which endanger the health, safety and wellbeing of other members of the school community.

Objectives/Targets

Items which might be considered for confiscation include, among other items not listed here:

- Any item posing a threat to others: for example a laser pen being used to distract and possibly harm other pupils or staff;
- Any item posing a threat to good order for learning: for example a pupil using a personal music player in class;
- Any item which is against school uniform rules: for example a pupil refusing to take off a baseball cap on entering a classroom;
- Any item posing a health or safety threat: for example a pupil wearing jewellery in PE may present a safety threat to other pupils;
- Any item which is counter to the ethos of the school: for example material which might cause tension between one community and another;
- Any item which is illegal for a pupil to have: for example racist or pornographic material.

Action Plan

School staff can search a pupil for any item banned under the school rules, if the pupil agrees. Headteachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions without consent where they suspect the pupil has prohibited items. The items that can be searched for under this power are knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items. School staff can confiscate any banned or prohibited item found as a result of a search or which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

Searching Pupils with their Consent

Items that are banned by the school rules are communicated to parents/carers and pupils alike. School staff have the right to search pupils with their consent for any such item. Refusal by the pupil constitutes the same situation as when he/she refuses to obey any other kind of instruction, and an appropriate disciplinary sanction will be applied. Pupils/students can be searched without giving their permission for knives, weapons, illegal drugs and stolen items. An authorised member of staff of the same sex as the pupil will carry out the search and there must be another staff member present, preferably again the same sex as the pupil, as a witness.

Searching Pupils without their Consent

The power to search without consent allows a personal search involving the removal of outer clothing, but not an intimate search (Intimate searches may only be carried out by someone with more extensive powers such as a police officer).

Weapons, illegal drugs and stolen items will be handed to the police. In the case of alcohol, non-controlled substances and very low value stolen items, the members of staff involved will take into account all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgment to determine whether they can safely dispose of a seized item.

Informing Parents

Lampton School is not required to inform parents/carers before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child. Nor is there any legal requirement for the school to inform pupils'/students' parents/carers when alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found in the course of a search, but the recommendation is that it will be good practice to do so if circumstances permit.

School Procedures

Safeguarding Confiscated Items

As soon as practicable after confiscation, any item belonging to a pupil should be secured in an envelope or bag and marked with the pupil's name, form, description of the item and date of confiscation and placed in Student Services. A receipt should be completed at the time of deposit and a copy either given to the pupil directly or placed in their form folder and handed to them by their tutor at the earliest opportunity.

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that storage arrangements are secure.

For some items, Lampton School will always seek specialist advice, for example suspected illegal drugs and items which might be used as weapons. We are committed to working in partnership with Police, Youth Offending Teams and other specialist agencies to cover such issues. We will not hesitate to access specialist support and advice if an incident occurs.

Mobile Communication Technologies (Including Mobile Phones and Wireless Technologies)

The use of mobile phones must fit into a learning environment. Mobile phones remain the responsibility of the individual and the school will accept no claims for theft, loss or damage. They are not an essential item in school, as staff will always facilitate access to a phone in the event of an emergency. Mobile phones may only be used in lessons at the instruction of staff and for the exact reason specified by staff. Inappropriate use of mobile devices at social times or for inappropriate purposes for example, will lead to confiscation.

Pupils/students are discouraged from bringing into school items of significant value – cameras, laptops, etc – unless they are fully insured for use outside the home. This applies equally to mobile phones.

Where phones are brought into school they must be used appropriately: this means that they should be switched off in lessons, whilst moving between lessons, assemblies, etc

Should mobile phones be used inappropriately they will be confiscated.

Mobile phones, whilst having clear benefits for personal safety, are also a target for theft and have a nuisance factor in respect of text bullying, cyber bullying and taking pictures against the wishes of individuals. Should this occur, the above sanctions will be put in place, and the police involved as appropriate.

Examination board and school rules prohibit the use of mobile communication technologies in examination settings, including supervised course work/controlled assessment.

Length of Confiscation

Confiscated items are returned to a parent/carer on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 3.30 – 4.30pm. Parents/carers should report to Reception. Pupils may only collect confiscated items on the first Saturday of a school holiday (excluding half-terms) between 9-10am.

However, there are instances when the school will choose not to return an item to a pupil:

- Any item of an unlawful or hazardous nature;
- Should the family choose not to collect the item, it will be disposed of at the end of each term;
- Any item of no value such as an inappropriate message scrolled on a piece of paper.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored regularly to ensure that it reflects legislation at all times and will be evaluated in the light of any parental concerns.

Reviewing

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Next school review due: January 2014.

Appendix

LAMPTON SCHOOL

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Reviewed and updated: January 2013

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following: Education Update 2011 09 ii Imminent Legislation and Guidance.

Background

The Education Act 2011 contains legislation on schools' powers of searching and screening pupils and, in particular, the use of the right to search pupils without their consent.

A guidance document issued by the Department for Education explains the powers schools have to seize and then confiscate items during a search. The guidance "Screening, Searching and Confiscation" is directed at Headteachers, school staff and governors and replaces 'Screening and searching of pupils for weapons: guidance for school staff', part of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Members of staff are permitted to **confiscate inappropriate items** and are protected from legal proceedings arising from the confiscation of the same.