



Arrangements for Searching Students and Their Possessions

The College is committed to safeguarding the welfare and safety of all its students and staff and strives to promote an environment of mutual respect, understanding, academic success and achievement, all of which allow individuals to develop self-esteem and make sensible well thought out and positive life decisions.

In order to promote and protect such an environment it may become necessary that a student's possessions be searched if it is suspected that he/ she may have in their possession items that may cause harm to themselves or others, for example, illegal substances such as drugs or any items not permitted on College premises including alcohol, legal highs or dangerous weapons. College premises in this context may include the host family home, the Boarding House or any location during off site visits or trips.

Such searches should only be undertaken by a senior member of staff unless there is a sense of urgency and no senior member is present i.e. during a residential or College trip. Where possible it is always desirable to seek the cooperation of the student concerned. Explain why you believe such research to be necessary, that under UK law you have permission to do so and seek their cooperation. Staff may search a student if they agree.

Only when all such lines of communication have been exhausted should a member of staff search a student and/or their belongings. Where possible, two members of staff should be present and again if possible staff of the same gender of the student may be an advisable approach.

The student should again be given the opportunity to empty drawers, bags etc. If the student fails to do so staff may continue to search belongings, including the host family accommodation room, or College lockers, placing any items confiscated into a plastic bag which should be sealed and labelled for further investigation as necessary. The student should remain present at all times where possible.

If the student himself / herself is to be searched, do not do this without very good cause. In addition, do not carry out any of the following unless the circumstances are serious enough to warrant such intervention and action:

- Do not touch the student; refer to CTC's Restraints Policy if restraint is deemed necessary
- Do not remove student clothing; you may ask them to remove an outside coat or jacket
- If searching the student's person this must not extend beyond the outer layer of clothing i.e. coat, hoodie, if other layers are underneath
- Do not turn out the student's pockets; ask them to do so
- Do not consider undertaking a search alone (minimum of two members of staff) unless there is a sense of urgency and no other member of staff is available

If a student does not consent to a search, then it is possible to conduct a search without consent but only for the "prohibited items" as above. Although staff may use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm, the College advises that the police be called in these circumstances, to conduct the personal search, if such a search is deemed necessary and to avoid confrontation.

Again, any items confiscated should be placed into a plastic bag, labelled and sealed for further investigation as necessary.

Depending on what, if any, items or substances are found, will dictate the next course of action. It may be necessary to involve parents, police, or outside agencies. It may be that any breach of rules has proved to be

minor or unfounded but in all cases the search should be recorded and the appropriate paperwork passed to the Principal or Vice-Principal. The report should then be passed to the Head of Student Welfare for retention in the Incident File so that any patterns may be identified and a copy placed onto the student file.

The report should include:

Name of student:

Date and time of search:.....

Location of search:.....

Confirmation that the student had been informed of the reason for the search and whether they were prepared to cooperate or not:

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Staff present:

Outcome of search: (i.e. Details of items removed or confiscated)

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Were the parents/ police / outside agency contacted:

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Any other comments: (i.e. other students involved, any further information):

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Full name of member (s) of staff involved in search:

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Report passed to Principal/ Vice Principal for further action as appropriate:

Signature:

Signature:

Date:

(A template of this report form is available from the Head of Student Welfare)

Reviewed August 2019 PMB

Next Review Due: August 2020

Reference :

Department of Education: Screening, searching and confiscation Advice for head teachers, school staff and governing bodies Feb 2014

Department of Education: Use of reasonable force: Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies July 2013

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/355362/use_of_reasonable_force.pdf

Department for Business Innovation & Skills, October 2012 :Screening, searching and confiscation advice for principals and staff of further education colleges, sixth form colleges and 16-19 academies

CTC Restraints Policy should be read in conjunction with this policy