

Open Academy

Search Policy

Policy Type:	Academy Policy
Approved By:	Local Governing Body
Date Approved by LGB:	25/01/2024
Review Date:	January 2025
Person Responsible:	Principal

Summary of Changes

The policy has been amended as follows.

Page Ref.	Section	Amendment	Date of Change
All	All	Brand new Academy policy	Jan 2023
All	All	Updated to include current government guidance	Jan 2024

General Policy Roles and Accountabilities

The Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) is accountable for all policies across its Academies. All policies, whether relating to an individual Academy or the whole Trust, will be written and implemented in line with our ethos and values as articulated in our prospectus. We are committed to the provision of high-quality education in the context of the Christian values of service, thankfulness and humility where individuals are valued, aspirations are high, hope is nurtured, and talents released.

A Scheme of Delegation for each Academy sets out the responsibilities of the Local Governing Body and Principal. The Principal of each Academy is responsible for the implementation of all policies of the Academy Trust.

All employees of the Academy Trust are subject to the Trust's policies.

Headteachers and staff they authorise, have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item (1) or any other item that the school rules (2) identify as an item which may be searched for.

The list of prohibited items is:

- knives and weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- 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 property of; any person (including the pupil).
- an article specified in regulations
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks; and
- pornographic images.

Role of Principal and DSL (3)

Under common law, school staff have the power to search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees. The member of staff should ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted so that their agreement is informed.

Only the principal, or a member of staff authorised by the headteacher, can carry out a search. The staff at the Academy are: JFD, KWA, SRI, LDV, LMI, JCL, KWE, SHE

The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be informed of any searching incidents where the member of staff had reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of a prohibited item. The staff member should also involve the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) without delay if they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk.

An appropriate location for the search will be found. Where possible, this will be away from other pupils in a year team office. The search must only take place on the school premises or where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil, for example on a school trip. (4)

The law states the member of staff conducting the search must be of the same sex as the pupil being searched. There must be another member of staff present as a witness to the search. (5)

If a pupil is found to be in possession of a prohibited item, then the staff member will alert the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and the pupil will be sanctioned in line with the school's behaviour policy to ensure consistency of approach.

Any search by a member of staff or police officers will be recorded in the school's safeguarding reporting system, including whether or not an item is found. All searches will be recorded on a central spreadsheet by the member of staff carrying out the search. This allows the designated

safeguarding lead (or deputy) to identify possible risks and initiate a safeguarding response if required.

Parents should always be informed of any search for a prohibited item that has taken place, and the outcome of the search as soon as is practicable. A member of staff should inform the parents of what, if anything, has been confiscated and the resulting action the school has taken, including any sanctions applied.

Screening (6)

Screening helps provide reassurance to pupils, staff and parents that the school is taking measures to create a calm, safe and supportive environment.

The Academy's statutory power to make rules on pupil behaviour and their duties as employers in relation to the safety of staff, pupils and visitors enables them to impose a requirement that pupils undergo screening.

The Academy can use a hand-held metal detector (arch or wand) to scan all pupils for weapons before they enter the school premises.

If the Principal decides to introduce a screening arrangement, they should inform pupils and parents in advance to explain what the screening will involve and why it will be introduced.

If a pupil refuses to be screened, the member of staff should consider why the pupil is not co-operating, and make an assessment of whether it is necessary to carry out a search.

Search as part of a Risk assessed safety plan

At times, where the Academy has reason to believe that a young person may present a risk to individuals or themselves, part of their risk assessment may include random searches / bag checks to be conducted as above. Any risk assessment will be reviewed after a maximum of 7 weeks to ensure it is still appropriate

1A 'prohibited item' is defined in subsection (3) of Section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996.

22 For maintained schools, see Section 89, Education and Inspections Act 2006. For independent schools and academies, see Schedule 1, Paragraph 9 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014. For more information on what should be included in a school's behaviour policy, see the Behaviour in Schools guidance.

3 See 'The role of the headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead and authorised members of staff' section within Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022

4 The powers to search outlined in this guidance only apply in England. When on a trip outside England, the law of that country should be followed.

5 See Screening Section of Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022

6 See Who section of Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022

