



Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy

Date Reviewed:	26.06.2026
Next Review Date:	26.06.2027
Policy Owner:	Gemma Mitchell

Date	Amendment	Staff Member
5.2.26	Contact parents and ensure they are informed added. Appendix 1 added - The process if images are found on a device in school.	GM

Mission Statement

We are committed to providing a supportive, enjoyable and family style environment in which every child is nurtured and encouraged to achieve their potential through a broad-based curriculum and opportunities for developing sporting, dramatic, artistic and musical talents.

Statement of Aims & Objectives

- To enable each child to fulfil their own academic and personal potential.
- To instil in every child the importance of developing personal initiative and to foster in them a belief that they can fulfil their potential in any area of school life.
- To provide a broad based academic and extra-curricular education that is delivered in such a way as to satisfy the learning needs of each and every pupil.
- To help each pupil to develop both a set of values and an understanding and appreciation of other religious beliefs.
- To learn the difference between right and wrong and to appreciate that rights and responsibilities are equally balanced.
- To develop and promote a sense of caring and community between the pupils within the school and the wider community as a whole.
- To instil in each pupil a high degree of self-respect and respect for their fellow pupils, teachers and other adults.
- To prepare each child for the transition to the next stage of their education and to be able to take advantage of any opportunities as they present themselves.



Oakhurst Grange School

Safeguarding

Oakhurst Grange School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. At this school we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe that every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Oakhurst Grange School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all of our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. This should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy.

All staff will be asked to complete training annually following KCSIE updates. Further safeguard training will take place throughout the year. All staff must wear their lanyards at all times.

The Safeguarding governor is: Pauline Clark Pauline.clark@oakhurstgrangeschool.co.uk

DSL: Roxann Dowling (Head of EYFS)

DDSL: Gemma Mitchell (Headteacher)

DDSL: Faye Dance (Deputy Headteacher)

01883 343344

dsl@oakhurstgrangeschool.co.uk



Oakhurst Grange School

Oakhurst Grange School is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of pupils and staff and, in line with current relevant legislation (including the government-issued Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools 2022), the School can search pupils for any item if the pupil agrees. The School has a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may be in possession of a prohibited item. The Headteacher, and members of staff only as authorised by the Headteacher, may search pupils, without their consent, under the terms as laid out in this policy. Members of staff can search pupils, with their consent, for any item. The School is not required to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child. The school will however, contact parents and ensure they are informed.

Prohibited items:

- knives or 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 the property of, any person (including the pupil).
- tobacco and cigarette papers, and vaping devices¹
- fireworks
- pornographic images

The Headteacher and members of the Senior Leadership Team can also search for any item banned by the School Rules which has been identified in the Rules as an item which may be searched for. The School staff can seize and confiscate any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item, however found, which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline. The Headteacher will oversee the school's practice of searching to ensure that a culture of safe, proportionate and appropriate searching is maintained, which safeguards the welfare of all pupils and staff with support from the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). In particular:

1. Staff must consider carefully their interactions with pupils who may be welfare or safeguarding concerns or who are SEND pupils, and ensure they follow procedures effectively and sensitively
2. Aftercare for pupils who have been subject to a search is advised, and should take place in conjunction with pastoral and safeguarding teams.

Staff can carry out a search of a pupil, and without a witness present, but this applies only where it is reasonable to believe that there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if a search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.

With permission from the Headteacher or Deputy, school staff can view CCTV footage in order to make a decision as to whether to conduct a search for an item.

During the search

An appropriate location for the search should be found. Where possible, this should be away from other pupils. 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. The person conducting the search may not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing. 'Outer clothing' means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear but 'outer clothing' includes hats, shoes, boots, gloves and scarves. 'Possessions' means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control – this includes lockers and bags.



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A pupil's possessions can only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff. The power to search without consent enables a personal search, involving removal of outer clothing and searching of pockets, but staff must never carry out an intimate search going further than that, which only a person with more extensive powers (e.g. a police officer) can do.

Under common law powers, schools are able to search lockers for any item provided the pupil agrees. If a pupil does not consent to a search or withdraws consent then it is possible to conduct a search without consent but only for the 'prohibited items' listed above.

After the search

Whether or not any items have been found as a result of any search, school staff will consider whether the reasons for the search, the search itself, or the outcome of the search give cause to suspect that the pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer harm, and/or whether any specific support is needed. Where this may be the case, school staff must speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE 2025. They will consider if pastoral support, an early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

After a search has taken place, it must be fully reported to either the Headteacher or Deputy Head. The School's general power to sanction, as set out in Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary penalty, where reasonable to do so. A person carrying out a search can seize anything they have reasonable grounds for suspecting is a prohibited item or is evidence in relation to an offence.

The member of staff can use their discretion to confiscate, retain and/or destroy any item found as a result of a 'with consent' search so long as it is reasonable in the circumstances. The Headteacher or Deputy Head will inform the individual pupil's parents or guardians where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found.

In all cases of searching with/without consent, any confiscation must be discussed with the Headteacher or Deputy Head as to what is the best course of action regarding the items confiscated. Where the search is without consent then any alcohol, drugs, fireworks, tobacco, smoking paraphernalia including vaping devices, stolen items or pornographic images will be confiscated and not returned to the pupil. Where any article is thought to be a weapon, illegal drugs or items which are evidence of an offence, which may include theft, that article will be passed to the police as soon as possible.

Where the person conducting the search finds an electronic device that warrants examination, please confiscate it and pass it to the Deputy Head, DSL or another member of the Safeguarding Team, who will take the matter up. They may examine any data or files on the device if they think there is a good reason to do so (if there has been, or could be, harm caused, or to disrupt teaching or to break the School Rules.) Where pornographic images are involved, staff should never intentionally view such images (and may be committing an offence if they do).

This Policy is subject to regular review.

Appendix 1 –



If sexual images are found on a device in school

1. Don't view, copy, or share the images

Staff should **not scroll through, save, forward, or screenshot** the images.
Why? Because it can become illegal possession/distribution.

The device should be **confiscated** and kept secure.

2. Safeguarding Lead (DSL) takes control

The teacher passes it straight to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.

The DSL:

- Records what was reported (who, when, what was said)
- Assesses the **risk and nature** of the images

3. Decide what kind of incident it is

The DSL decides which category this falls into:

A. Normal but risky behaviour

Example:

- Consensual sexting between two students of similar age
➡ Usually handled internally with:
- Safeguarding support
- Education about online safety
- Parents informed (in most cases)

B. Concerning / harmful behaviour

Example:

- Pressure, coercion, blackmail
- Large age difference
- Threats or exploitation
Escalated to:
- Children's Social Care
- Possibly police

C. Illegal content involving children

Example:

- Images of younger children
- Non-consensual images
➡ **Must be reported to police**
School should **not delete or distribute** the images themselves.

4. Parents / carers are informed



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Usually parents are told, unless:

- It would put the child at **risk of harm**
- Social services/police advise otherwise

5. Support for the pupil(s)

The school will provide:

- Pastoral support
 - Mental health or safeguarding support
 - Online safety education
- This is about **protecting children**, not criminalising them where possible

6. Sanctions

Oakhurst Grange School may apply behaviour policy consequences, but safeguarding comes first.