



SEARCH POLICY

Cumberland School Specialist Sports and Applied Learning College has the legal right to search, without consent, any pupil who is reasonably suspected of carrying a knife or weapon (**The Education Act 1996 – Section 550AA**). Consent will always be sought in the first instance. If this is refused the school may carry out the search regardless and/or may call the police. The Headteacher and designated staff (**Ms J Moore – Deputy Headteacher, Ms C Kelly – Deputy Headteacher, Ms J Doyle – Assistant Headteacher, Mr S Bowes – Assistant Headteacher, Mr J Lastiotis - Social Inclusion Team, Mr J Nuza - Social Inclusion Team and Ms R Brotherston – Social Inclusion Team**) will carry out all searches. Two members of staff, who will be the same sex as the pupil being searched, will always be present during the search. These will be conducted in such a way as to minimise potential embarrassment and distress.

Personal searches

When a pupil is suspected of concealing illegal or other unauthorised weapons, school staff will carry out a personal search. This includes the searching of outer clothing, inside pockets and bags. Every effort will be made to persuade the person to hand over any items voluntarily, in the presence of a second witness. Where the individual refuses, the items are believed to be illegal, and if the school wishes to proceed along formal lines, reasonable force may be used to allow the search to take place and the police will be called.

Searches of school property

Staff may search school property, for example, pupils' lockers or desks if they believe these items to be stored there. Prior consent will always be sought. Individuals will be made aware that if consent is refused the school may wish to proceed with a search. However, when consent is refused, the school will balance the likelihood that an offence has been committed against the risk of infringing the individual's privacy without just cause.

Random searches

The school will carry out random searches on pupils once per half term. This enables the school to use the search as a deterrent and pupils will be informed of the policy in assembly. The year group will be chosen by the Social Inclusion Team and the pupils will be randomly selected. The pupils will be asked to consent to the search. After any search involving pupils, parents/carers will be contacted by the school, regardless of whether the result of the search is positive or negative.