Senior School Policy

Rewards, Behaviour and Discipline Policy

	Policy to be reviewed annually		
	Committee	**Date**	**Completed**
Reviewed	Deputy Head (Pastoral)	August 2026	✓
Reported	Safeguarding Steering	November 2026	
Approved	Board of Governors	November 2026	
Next review	Deputy Head (Pastoral)	August 2027	

Good behaviour in schools is central to a good education (Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff. *DfE February 2024*). The following policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and anti-bullying policy.

1. Policy Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To enable the Head to carry out their responsibilities of maintaining order and good discipline in the School;
- To promote good behaviour;
- To ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in this School is able to benefit from and make his/her full contribution to the life of the School, consistent always with the needs of the School community;
- To authorise the Senior School Pupil handbook which contains the School Rules and any procedures necessary for implementing them.

2. Senior School Handbook

The Senior School Pupil Handbook shall set out the principles of the School in relation to:

- Conduct and behaviour
- Self-respect and respect for others
- Respect for property and the environment

Parents will be expected to read the Senior School Pupil Handbook 2026-2027 with their children from time to time. Tutors will be expected to go through elements of it throughout the year. Its principles will be reinforced at assemblies and at other times. Sanctions are contained within the pupil handbook.

3. School Rules

The School Rules shall be set by the Head. The School Rules are necessary:

- For the safety and well-being of everyone at the School;
- For the reputation of the School community as a whole;
- For the protection of School property and the wider environment.

The School Rules apply to all age groups and at all times when the pupil is:

- At school, representing the School or wearing school uniform;
- Travelling to and from school;
- Associated with the School at any time;
- In any way identifiable as a pupil at the school.

Pupils are expected to know and understand the School Rules and to read them through with their parents in the Senior School Pupil Handbook. The School Rules will be amended from time to time and reinforced in Houses, at assemblies and on other appropriate occasions.

4. Scope

The Governors and the Head intend that the School Rules and the sanctions provided in them shall also, in appropriate circumstances, be capable of regulating the conduct of pupils when they are away from school premises and outside the jurisdiction of the School, for example during an exeat or half term and in the holidays. This will normally be where the conduct in question could have

repercussions for the orderly running of the School, affects the welfare of a member or members of the School community or a member of the public, or which brings the School into disrepute.

5. Rewarding Good Behaviour

It is an essential part of Gresham's ethos that we seek to perpetuate a culture of praise, encouragement and positive reinforcement amongst staff towards pupils in all fields of School life. We believe that carefully-directed praise is one of the most powerful tools at teachers' disposal for raising achievement and providing a sense of fulfilment for pupils. It also encourages a positive and supportive culture amongst the pupils themselves. Equally, we seek to improve poor performance and attitude in all fields of School life primarily through the guiding care of staff and especially the early intervention of the Housemaster/mistress (HSMs) and Tutors – not through punishment (although this will at times be necessary and appropriate). Therefore, we stress to staff the importance of awarding Merits, criticising pupils' performance and effort constructively, and communicating with the relevant pastoral staff if they are concerned, instead of issuing sanctions or emphasising negative behaviour.

The School is therefore committed to promoting and rewarding excellent effort, achievement and behaviour, and does so in several ways, most of which are celebrated in public, either in Chapel or in Houses.

Academic awards and rewards

- Merits for standard of work and for effort
- Bronze, Silver, Gold Merit certificates (termly)
- House Merit Cup (termly)
- Congratulatory card from the Deputy Heads (termly)
- Speech Day subject prizes (annually)
- Celebration in House or Chapel (ad hoc)

Pastoral rewards and Merits are given for:

- Community spirit
- Honesty
- Kindness
- Respect
- 100% attendance

Co-Curricular awards and rewards

- Merits for contribution

Sport

- Player of the match announced in Chapel (weekly) and Team of the Week for pupils in the Head's Office
- Most improved player and player of the season for every school team announced in Final Assembly (termly)
- Regional selection recognised in Chapel; international selection recognised at Speech Day
- Speech Day Sports cups
- Junior, half and full colours (termly) for each major sport

Music

- Music Certificates termly (Bronze, Silver & Gold)
- Outstanding performances recognised in Chapel and performed in Chapel
- Speech Day Music cups
- ABRSM Grade certificates awarded in House

Drama

- Drama Certificates termly (Bronze, Silver & Gold)
- Outstanding performances recognised in Chapel
- Speech Day Drama cups
- LAMDA Grade certificates awarded in House or Chapel

Others

- Duke of Edinburgh's Award Bronze, Silver and Gold awards (termly and Gold at Speech Day)
- CCF Speech Day awards and promotions in Chapel
- House Merits
- House colours and cups (annually)
- Flower Cup for House Co-curricular success

The rationale and procedures for making these awards and rewards are given in full in Appendix 1.

6. Addressing poor behaviour

Staff should be alert to the possibility that behaviour may be an indicator of an underlying safeguarding, pastoral, SEND or wellbeing need. Where there is a safeguarding concern, this must be reported in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

To flag up behaviour or attitude in need of improvement, staff are asked to log a comment under the appropriate form of behaviour in the 'Behaviour' section of CPOMS. This automatically alerts the Tutor and HSM of the issue. The primary purpose of this is to start a conversation between the pupil and the HSM/Tutor so that the behaviour/attitude may be addressed effectively, any patterns identified over time, and the pupil supported appropriately. This is not a sanction in itself. However, certain instances of poor behaviour will attract a sanction necessarily, and others may be issued at the discretion of the Tutor or HSM.

INSET training will be used regularly to develop and support staff approach to poor behaviour and discipline. When responding to behaviour, the School will consider whether a pupil's SEND, disability or other individual needs may have contributed to the behaviour and whether reasonable adjustments are required. The School will also consider whether there may be an underlying pastoral, safeguarding or wellbeing concern. This does not mean that pupils with additional needs are exempt from the School's expectations of behaviour or from appropriate sanctions. However, individual circumstances will be taken into account when deciding on the most appropriate response and support. Where behaviour is persistent or gives cause for concern, the School will consider whether additional support, assessment or intervention is required and will involve relevant pastoral, safeguarding, SEND or other professionals as appropriate.

7. Supporting pupils following poor behaviour

Before and after a sanction the HSM will speak to the pupil and parents to ensure they understand why they have been sanctioned and how to improve their behaviour. Parents are key so that the message can be supported at home. The DSL will always be kept informed of any serious sanctions in case further support is required. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) may also conduct pastoral reviews with the pupil and HSM in cases whereby there is concern that the pupil seems unable to change their behaviour.

In cases of suspension of expulsion, the Head or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will offer support to pupils and parents in conjunction with the HSM.

8. Breaches of School Discipline

Expulsion: Also known as 'permanent exclusion'. A pupil is liable to expulsion for a grave breach of school discipline, for example, a serious criminal offence or some wilful act calculated to cause serious damage to the School, its community or any of its members. Formal expulsion implies that the pupil's name will be expunged from the roll of the School and reference to the facts and circumstances will be made in response to every request for a reference. All outstanding fees up to and including the term of expulsion shall be payable and any deposit shall be retained by the School.

The Head is required to act fairly and in accordance with the principles of natural justice. The Head will make a decision on a case-by-case basis, will expel a pupil from the School only as a last resort and will not expel a pupil other than in grave circumstances. Please see separate policy on Expulsion, Removal and Review Policy

Requirement to leave: For a serious breach of school discipline falling short of one for which expulsion is necessary, but such that the pupil cannot expect to remain a member of the School Community, the pupil may be required to leave permanently. Subject to payment of all outstanding fees (the deposit being returned or credited to the account) the pupil will be given reasonable assistance in making a fresh start at another school.

Suspension: A pupil may be placed under suspension while a complaint is investigated or as a sanction in its own right. A pupil who cannot go home may receive an 'internal suspension'. These sanctions above will form part of the pupil's permanent disciplinary record.

Deputy Head's Detention and "gating": A pupil may be in a DH detention or may be "gated" where, in the opinion of the Head or a Deputy Head, either sanction is a reasonable response to a breach of school discipline. Where appropriate, reasonable notice of the detention will be given although this may not always be possible if the following Saturday is within a holiday period. A pupil may be required to miss a fixture to complete the DH detention or may be asked to do it on their return. Parental consent is not required to issue DH detention.

Other sanctions: The Head may prescribe and authorise the use of such other sanctions as comply with good education practice and to promote observance the School Rules.

Corporal punishment: Corporal punishment is not permitted at Gresham's School.

Equality: The School will make reasonable adjustments for managing behaviour which is related to a pupil's special educational need or disability. Where expulsion needs to be considered, the School will ensure that a pupil with a disability or special educational need is able to present their case fully where their disability or special educational needs might hinder this. Any religious requirements affecting the pupil will also be considered.

9. Issuing of Sanctions

School sanctions: any academic member of staff may issue a weekday detention or confiscate a mobile device ensuring they have clearly communicated this with the pupil and explained the reason. The issuing member of staff will record the sanction on SIMS. Other School sanctions such as gating, report cards and Deputy Head's detention can be issued by the HSM in conjunction with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Deputy Head (Academic). The HSM should record this on SIMS and detail any further notes on CPOMS.

House sanctions: any tutor attached to the boarding house may issue a house sanction, as per the House sanction ladder, but should always inform the HSM as soon as possible and/or issue a house demerit. House sanctions can be issued to day and boarding pupils as appropriate. The

following list of sanctions is not exhaustive but is indicative of the type and extent of the sanctions issued:

- Early bedtimes for poor behaviour or repeated tardiness at bedtime
- Mobile phone confiscation for handing in a 'dummy' device or using a device at an inappropriate time
- House community service for not doing duties or leaving an area in an untidy or unsanitary condition
- Prep in the common room for disruptive behaviour during prep time
- Report cards

House sanctions will be logged on SIMS and any concerns discussed with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and noted on CPOMS.

ICT Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) violations

Pupils are expected to use technology in accordance with the School's Acceptable Use Policy and Online Safety Policy. Misuse of technology, whether using School or personal devices, may result in a disciplinary response in accordance with this policy.

Where technology is used to bully, harass, threaten, discriminate against or otherwise cause harm to another person, the matter will be taken seriously and may also constitute a safeguarding concern.

Access to inappropriate or harmful online content, including pornography or adult sites, will be considered in the context of the pupil's age, circumstances and the nature of the material accessed. Staff will consider whether the behaviour indicates a safeguarding or online safety concern and will involve the DSL or Online Safety Lead as appropriate.

The use of VPNs or other means to circumvent the School's filtering and monitoring systems is prohibited. The School will seek to understand the circumstances and purpose of such use and may apply appropriate sanctions, including restriction or confiscation of devices, particularly where the behaviour is repeated or has enabled access to harmful or inappropriate material.

Whilst this list is not exhaustive, HSMs can use the following actions to guide their response:

HSM and pupil discussion and note made on CPOMS

Parents contacted by the HSM and phone confiscated for 24 hours

Extended phone confiscation up to 5 days, meeting with Tom Burnett (Online safety lead and DDSL) and DH detention.

If a VPN is being used, a discussion must be had with the pupil in the first instance to ascertain why and to remind them of the AUP. It may be appropriate at this stage to seek the support of the IT department. If VPN use persists, then the device should be confiscated for 24 hours (1st offence), 1 week, parents contacted by HSM and DH detention (2nd offence), meeting with DHP and punishment deemed necessary by them and HSM (3rd offence). At this point, the DHP will consult with the Head to consider the most appropriate sanction in line with the Rewards, Behaviour and Discipline policy.

As ever, all actions following an AUP violation will be recorded on CPOMS under the following category: Safeguarding concern-referral to DSLs/online safety concern.

Classroom behaviour management
Teachers will always try to resolve issues with pupils through dialogue and support. However, in

some situations it is necessary for teachers to use sanctions. We believe strongly that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe, focused and supportive environment. All pupils should come prepared for lessons, be polite and willing to learn. Merits are given to pupils for both effort and work and behaviour points can be given for no prep, disorganization and disruptive behaviour as well as other issues. It is expected that tutors will review both merits and behaviour points with their tutees and refer them to the HSM if pupils are not seeming to make changes.

Detention can be given by staff either after repeated issues with a pupil's behaviour or late/inadequate prep which have been noted on SIMS. Teachers are also permitted to issue a detention in one-off cases where prep has not been submitted or behaviour has been particularly poor and will follow up with the tutor via CPOMS to explain the rationale. Detentions can be given and sat on the same day.

10. Child-on-child Abuse

The School has a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. Sexual violence, sexual harassment and other forms of child-on-child abuse are never acceptable and will not be dismissed as "banter", "having a laugh" or an inevitable part of growing up.

Any report or concern will be taken seriously and managed in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a deputy, will be involved as appropriate.

Where disciplinary action is appropriate, this will be considered alongside the School's safeguarding response. The School will consider the needs and safety of all pupils involved and will ensure that any disciplinary action does not prejudice a safeguarding investigation or place a pupil at further risk.

11. Malicious Allegations Against Staff

Where a pupil makes an accusation against a member of staff and the accusation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the Head will consider whether to take disciplinary action in accordance with this policy.

Where a parent has made a deliberately invented or malicious allegation, the Head will consider whether to require that parent to withdraw their child or children from the School on the basis that they have treated the School or a member of staff unreasonably.

12. Restrictive Interventions and the Use of Reasonable Force

The School has regard to the Department for Education guidance *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools* (2026).

The School seeks to minimise the need for restrictive interventions through positive relationships, effective behaviour management, prevention and de-escalation. Staff should consider whether there are alternative ways of managing a situation before using force, where it is safe and practicable to do so.

All members of School staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. Any use of force must be reasonable, proportionate and lawful, using no more force than is necessary and for no longer than is necessary.

Reasonable force may be used where necessary to prevent a pupil from:

- committing an offence;
- causing injury to themselves or another person;
- damaging property; or
- causing serious disruption or disorder.

When considering whether and how to intervene, staff will take account of the individual circumstances of the pupil, including their age, SEND, disability, medical needs or other vulnerabilities. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments and individual behaviour or support plans will be used to reduce the likelihood that restrictive intervention will be necessary.

Force will never be used as a punishment.

Seclusion is not a disciplinary sanction and will only be used as a safety measure where this is necessary to protect a pupil or others from harm. Any pupil who is secluded will be appropriately supervised and allowed to leave as soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced.

Significant incidents involving the use of force, and incidents involving restraint or seclusion, will be recorded in writing as soon as practicable after the incident in accordance with statutory requirements and School procedures. The member(s) of staff involved should normally complete the record on the same day.

Parents/guardians will be informed in writing as soon as practicable following a significant use of force, restraint or seclusion and normally on the same day, unless doing so would be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil, in which case the School will follow the statutory reporting requirements.

Following an incident, appropriate support will be offered to the pupil and staff involved. Where relevant, any individual behaviour or support plan and risk assessment will be reviewed in order to identify whether further preventative or supportive measures are required.

Further detail is contained in the School's separate Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions Policy.

13. Searching Pupils – see appendix 2

14. Records

Administration of major punishments are recorded on SIMS, with the name of the pupil concerned, the reason for punishment and the name of the person administering the punishment. Details will also be recorded on CPOMS to ensure a clear line of communication between the pastoral team.

15. Review

A pupil or his/her parents may request a Governor's Review of the Head's decision to expel or require a pupil to leave, or where a decision has been made to suspend a pupil for eleven School days or more, or where suspension would prevent the pupil from taking a public examination. Please see the School's separate Expulsion, Removal and Review Policy

Appendix 1: Awards and Rewards

Academic awards and rewards

1. Merits

Merits are awarded on SIMS to provide an easy, formal way of recording teachers' praise that makes it straightforward for Tutors and HSMs to follow up with pupils and parents. They contribute to a positive Merits tally for the pupil. Merits can be awarded for anything the teacher feels on instinct warrants special praise and should be given freely. When a Merit is given on SIMS, an email is automatically generated to inform the pupil, HSM and Tutor. Tutors are encouraged to send these to the pupil's parents so that they, too, are informed. There are two levels of reward:

- A Merit
- A Triple Merit

Below is a non-exhaustive list of example criteria for academic Merits. Heads of co-curricular activities will provide a similar list if they feel it is necessary in their area. Otherwise, take this list and apply the same principles, and some common sense, to your sport/activity. In SIMS, the options to choose from remain as before, and it has not been possible to change the system nomenclature from 'points' to 'Merits'. Please add a brief reason for your decision in the comments box.

Example criteria for awarding academic Merits and Triple Merits
A Merit for day-to-day academic achievement in School. E.g.:

- Active and excellent participation in a lesson individually or in group work beyond the expected
- Completing a piece of high quality prep beyond the expectations
- Demonstrating a piece of excellent and valuable extended learning outside the classroom
- Moving onto extension tasks in lesson with high quality work completed beforehand
- Marked improvement in content/quality/presentation of work
- Responding to a target set on marked work and improvement subsequently made
- Achieving a score above ability in an in class mini assessment activity
- Assisting another pupil in a lesson or work outside the classroom when they are struggling with work or have a concern

This list is not exhaustive.

A Triple Merit awarded less regularly (say, every 3 weeks or half-term) or for one-off events, to reward performance and effort above and beyond our expectations. E.g.:

- Exceeding expectations for a half termly/termly assessment based on baseline data and teacher professional judgement
- Exceeding Challenge Grade in half termly/term's work based on baseline data and teacher professional judgement
- Leading/Supporting/Assisting a subject area (such as talks/lectures/Open Day – an ambassador for a subject)
- A sustained period of outstanding work in a subject area across a term or half term
- A significant performance in an extended project

This list is not exhaustive.

2. Bronze, Silver, Gold Merit certificates

These are awarded to individuals who gain a certain number of Merits in a term. The colour of the

award depends on the number of Merits won. Bronze and Silver certificates are awarded in Houses; Gold in the Final Assembly each term.

3. House Merit Cup

This is awarded in the Final Assembly to the House which has won the most Merits per pupil that term. House Merits are not included in the totals.

4. Congratulatory card from the Deputy Head Academic, Pastoral or Co-curricular

These are handwritten by the Deputy Head to pupils who have been nominated by teaching staff for special recognition of their achievement, effort, attitude or contribution on a termly basis.

5. Speech Day subject prizes

These are awarded by academic departments to the best pupils in their subject.

6. Celebration in House or Chapel (ad hoc)

Co-Curricular rewards and awards

1. Merits

The same principles are applied in awarding these as in academic Merits. Single and Triple Merits are available.

2. Sport

a. Player of the Match announced in Chapel through the Team of the Week – the coach of each team that has recently played a fixture is expected to send a brief match report with a PoM included to the Head for recognition in Chapel. Also Team of Week presentation in Chapel on a Tuesday breaktime.

b. Most Improved Player and Player of the Season for every school team announced in Final Assembly – certificates and awards awarded for the season's play by the Head.

c. Regional selection recognised in Chapel; international selection recognised at Speech Day – pupils will shake the Head's hand and be applauded by the School.

d. Speech Day Sports cups – awarded for individual excellence in sport

e. Colours

The award of Colours reflects a sustained commitment on the part of the pupil to the spirit of the sport for which they are awarded, above all other considerations. Colours are to be nominated by the Directors of Sport. The Director of Sport may decide to nominate Colours for pupils not in regular school teams but who meet the general criteria set out below. An example of this might be national selection in a minor sport. The Head will ratify all Colours being awarded. The criteria are set out in general terms for team sports. There may be sports, such as shooting, which have their own specific criteria, but these are to reflect the guidelines given here. Colours may be awarded as soon as they are deemed to have been earned. It is quite possible for a pupil to be awarded all three types of Colours during his or her school years.

Full Colours in a sport are awarded for sustained selection and outstanding play for the First team over the period of at least two full seasons. Additionally, they may be awarded for outstanding commitment to a sport, or national recognition or selection in sport. Full Colours are normally only

awarded to players in Year 13, but exceptional circumstances may pertain. Colours are recognised in an awards ceremony, normally as part of a whole-school chapel service. They consist of a tie for boys and a brooch for girls, which can be worn at any time. Half Colours may be awarded in two categories:

a. To a Year 13 pupil for very good play for the First team during a season. Additionally, sustained commitment by a Year 13 player to sport in general may also be awarded with half Colours.

b. Year 12 pupils may be awarded with Half Colours for sustained selection and outstanding play for the First team over one full season.
Half Colours are recognised in an awards ceremony, normally as part of a whole-school Chapel service. Junior Colours are awarded for sustained selection and outstanding play in Year 11 (under-16 age group), with that player normally having represented the lower school age groups to a similar standard. If no Year 11 teams routinely exist in a particular sport (for example, girls' hockey) then the award of Colours may be made in Year 10 (under-15 age group). Junior Colours are recognised in an awards ceremony, normally as part of a whole-school Chapel service, and consist of a certificate and a badge.

3. Music

a. Music Certificates - These are awarded to pupils who have been enthusiastically and actively involved in all aspects of music-making and who have been performing to a very high standard and awarded at Bronze, Silver and Gold.
b. Outstanding performances recognised in Chapel by the Head
c. Speech Day Music cups – awarded for individual excellence in music
d. ABRSM Grade certificates awarded in Houses – public recognition of attainment in instrumental studies

4. Drama

e. Drama Certificates – These are awarded to pupils who have leading roles in a number of productions and have performed those roles to a very high standard and awarded at Bronze, Silver and Gold.
This award can be for backstage roles (e.g. lighting or stage management) as well as for acting.
a. Outstanding performances recognised in Chapel
b. Speech Day Drama cups - awarded for individual excellence in drama
c. LAMDA Grade certificates awarded in House or Chapel - public recognition of attainment in individual public-speaking/acting studies

5. Duke of Edinburgh Bronze, Silver and Gold awards

These are presented in Chapel by the Head with Gold at Speech Day.

6. CCF Speech Day awards

In recognition of outstanding individual contribution to the CCF

7. House Merits

Awarded by HSMs, Tutors and Matrons in recognition of very good individual contribution within the House. Merits and Triple Merits may be awarded.

8. House Colours and Cups

Awarded in certain Houses, at the HSM's discretion, in recognition of outstanding and sustained individual contribution and commitment to the House over a period of time. The Flower Co-Curricular Cup is awarded annually to the House who have been most successful in the co-curricular events and activities.

Appendix 2: Searching and Confiscation

Searching and confiscation plays an important role in keeping pupils and staff safe. The focus will always be to promote high standards of behaviour to avoid searching and confiscation unless necessary. Pupils have the right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy. When searching does take place the age and needs of the pupils will be considered and reasonable adjustments made. The School may, exceptionally, conduct searches across all pupils concurrently if there have been concerns that prohibited items are being kept in pupils' possessions in more than one boarding house. This type of action is rarely used but, when agreed with the Head, is for the safety of the wider community and to maintain disciplinary standards.

All schools have a general power to impose reasonable and proportionate disciplinary measures (Education and Inspections Act 2006). This enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary penalty where it is reasonable to do so. The School's policy on searching and confiscation has regard to guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Searching, Screening and Confiscation July 2022.

1. Prohibited items

The following are "prohibited items" under Section 550ZA(3) of the Education Act 1996 and Regulation 3 of the Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012:

- Knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks and pornographic images
- Any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:
  (i) To commit an offence, or
  (ii) To cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil) and
- Any item banned by the School rules that are identified as being items which may be searched for.

The School has banned items that are reasonably believed to be likely to cause harm or disruption. Pupils must not have these items in their possession on school premises or at any time when they are in the lawful charge and control of the School (for example, on a school trip).

As provided in the School rules, at Gresham's the following items are banned items that may be searched for if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil has the item in their possession:

- Knives, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, solvents and their paraphernalia, and stolen items
- Tobacco, cigarette papers, fireworks and pornographic images
- Vapes and related paraphernalia
- Over-the-counter and prescribed medication held in breach of the medical policy

2. Before a search – seeking co-operation

Before any search is undertaken, the pupil will normally be asked to co-operate with the search. The member of staff should explain why the search is considered necessary and how it will be conducted. The pupil's age, maturity, SEND, communication needs and any relevant safeguarding considerations will be taken into account.

If a pupil does not co-operate, staff should seek to understand the reason. This may include a lack of understanding, anxiety about the search, a previous distressing experience or another individual need. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments should be made.

If the pupil continues to refuse to co-operate, the member of staff will determine whether it is appropriate to use the School's statutory search powers or whether another course of action should be taken. Disciplinary action may be appropriate where a pupil refuses a reasonable instruction.

If a pupil continues to refuse to co-operate disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

3. Searching for Prohibited Items

Where the Head or an authorised member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil may have a prohibited item, consent is not required and the search will be carried out, using reasonable force where appropriate. Before carrying out a search, staff will consider any relevant safeguarding information and whether the pupil's individual needs or previous experiences require reasonable adjustments to the way in which the search is conducted.

The Head has authorised the following staff to carry out searches and retain or dispose of items in accordance with this policy:

- All members of SLT
- All housemasters and housemistresses
- All boarding staff
- All tutors working in boarding houses
- All matrons

Searches will be carried out only on school premises or, if elsewhere, where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil, for example on a school trip or in training settings.

When pupils travel outside England on a school trip, they will be required as a condition of participating in the trip to confirm their consent in writing to any search that may be considered necessary by an authorised member of staff during the period in which pupils are outside England.

If it is believed that a pupil has a prohibited item, it may be appropriate for a member of staff to carry out:

- A search of outer clothing and/or
- A search of school property (e.g. pupils' lockers or desks) and/or
- A search of personal property (e.g. bag or pencil case)

Searches will be conducted in such a manner as to minimise embarrassment or distress. Any searches of a pupil or their possessions will be carried out in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff. Where a pupil is searched, the searcher will be the same sex as the pupil.

Where it is reasonably believed that serious harm may be caused if the search is not carried out immediately and it is not practicable to summon another member of staff, a member of staff may carry out a search of the pupil of the opposite sex and/or in the absence of a witness.

Whether the Head, or staff authorised by the Head, find anything which they have reasonable grounds for suspecting is a prohibited item, they may seize, retain and dispose of that item in accordance with this policy.

School staff will never conduct a strip search. A strip search may only be carried out by the police in accordance with the law and relevant statutory guidance.

4. **Confiscation**

Under the School's general power to discipline, a member of staff may confiscate, retain or dispose of pupil's property as a disciplinary penalty where it is reasonable to do so.

Confiscation of an item may take place following a lawful search, as set out above, or however the item is found if the member of staff considers it to be harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

5. Searching Electronic Devices

An electronic device such as a mobile phone or a tablet computer may be confiscated in appropriate circumstances in accordance with this policy. An authorised member of staff may examine data or files on the device where there is good reason to do so and where this is permitted by law.

Before examining, deleting or otherwise interfering with data on a device, staff will consider whether the material may constitute evidence of a safeguarding concern or criminal offence. Where there is any such possibility, the DSL will be consulted, and the material will not normally be deleted. Police advice will be sought where appropriate.

Staff must not intentionally view, copy or share nude or semi-nude images of children except where specifically permitted by safeguarding guidance. Any concern involving such imagery will be managed in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

6. Disposal of Confiscated Items

Alcohol: Alcohol which has been confiscated will be destroyed.

Controlled drugs: Controlled drugs will usually be delivered to the police as soon as possible. In exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Head or authorised member of staff, the drugs may be destroyed without the involvement of the police if there is good reason to do so. All relevant circumstances will be taken into account and staff will use professional judgement to determine whether the items can be safely disposed of. They will not be returned to the pupil.

Other substances: Substances which are not believed to be illegal drugs, but which are harmful or detrimental to good order and discipline (for example, "legal highs") may be confiscated and destroyed. Where it is not clear whether or not the substance seized is an illegal drug, it will be treated as though it is illegal and disposed of as above.

Stolen items: Stolen items will usually be delivered to the police as soon as possible. However, if, in the opinion of the Head or authorised member of staff, there is good reason to do so, stolen items may be returned to the owner without the involvement of the police. This is likely to apply to items of low value, such as pencil cases.

Tobacco or cigarette papers: Tobacco or cigarette papers will be destroyed.

Fireworks: Fireworks will not be returned to the pupil. They will be disposed of safely at the discretion of the Head or other authorised member of staff which may include donation to an appropriate charity.

Pornographic images:

Where an item or device contains, or is suspected to contain, child sexual abuse material, nude or semi-nude images of a child, extreme pornography or other potentially illegal material, staff must not intentionally view, copy, print or share the material. The device or item should be secured and the DSL informed immediately. The DSL will determine the appropriate action in accordance with statutory safeguarding guidance and, where appropriate, seek advice from or make a referral to the police and/or children's social care.

Article to be used to commit an offence or to cause personal injury or damage to property: Such articles may, at the discretion of the Head or authorised member of staff taking all the circumstances into account, be delivered to the police, returned to the owner, retained or disposed of.

Weapons or items which are evidence of an offence: Such items will be passed to the police as soon as possible.

An item banned under school rules: Such items may, at the discretion of the Head or authorised member of staff taking all the circumstances into account, be returned to its owner, retained or disposed of. Where staff confiscate a mobile phone that has been used in breach of school rules to disrupt teaching, the phone will be given to their HSM for a period of 24 hours. If a pupil persists in using a mobile phone in breach of school rules, the phone will be confiscated and returned to a parent.

Electronic devices: If it is found that a mobile phone, laptop or tablet computer or other electronic device has been used to cause harm, disrupt teaching or break school rules, including carrying out cyberbullying, the device will be confiscated and may be used as evidence in discipline proceedings. Once the proceedings have been concluded the device will be returned to a parent or carer and the pupil may be prohibited from bringing such a device onto school premises or on school trips. In serious cases, the device may be handed to the police for investigation.

7. Use of Force

Members of staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search for prohibited items. Such force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

8. Communication with Parents

There is no legal requirement for the School to inform parents before a search for a prohibited item takes place or to seek parental consent. Parents will, however, be informed of any search for a prohibited item and of the outcome of the search as soon as practicable. Parents will also be informed of any appropriate sanctions or pastoral support put in place following the search.

We will keep a record of searches carried out on CPOMS. The record will include:

- Date, time and location of search
- Pupil name
- Who conducted the search and any other adults or pupils present
- Reason for search
- Item being searched for
- What items, if any, where found

- Follow up action

Complaints about searching or confiscation will be dealt with through the School's Complaints Procedure. A copy of the procedure is posted on the School website and hard copies are available from the Head's office on request.

The School will take reasonable care of any items confiscated from pupils. However, unless negligent or guilty of some other wrongdoing causing injury, loss or damaging, the School does not accept responsibility for loss of damage to property.