



The Parks School

Motivate • Challenge • Support

Stop and Search Policy

“Our mission is to **inspire** growth, **nurture** potential and **support** one another with **passion**, upholding **integrity** and fostering **respect** whilst promoting **empowerment** with everything we do”

STOP AND SEARCH POLICY

Policy Version: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Policy Lead: Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Approved By: Proprietor

1. Statement of Intent

The Parks School is committed to providing a safe, secure and supportive learning environment where pupils, staff and visitors feel protected from harm.

As a specialist SEMH school, we recognise that effective safeguarding relies upon positive relationships, early intervention and consistent behaviour expectations. On occasions, it may be necessary to search pupils or their possessions where there are reasonable grounds to believe they are carrying prohibited or harmful items.

Searches will always be conducted respectfully, lawfully and proportionately, with the welfare and dignity of the pupil remaining central to all decision making.

2. Our Vision

Motivate

We create an environment where pupils understand that safe choices help everyone to learn and succeed.

We will:

- Promote responsibility.
 - Build trust.
 - Encourage honesty.
 - Develop self-regulation.
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Challenge

We maintain clear expectations to protect the whole school community.

We will:

- Challenge unsafe behaviour.

- Promote accountability.
 - Maintain consistent routines.
 - Encourage positive choices.
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Support

We recognise that behaviour often communicates unmet need.

We will:

- Use trauma-informed approaches.
 - Prioritise de-escalation.
 - Maintain dignity during searches.
 - Support pupils following incidents.
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3. Legal Framework

This policy reflects:

- Education Act 1996
 - Education and Inspections Act 2006
 - Education Act 2011
 - Searching, Screening and Confiscation (DfE – Current Guidance)
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (Current Edition)
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Independent School Standards Regulations
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4. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Safeguard pupils and staff.
- Prevent prohibited items entering school.
- Promote a safe learning environment.
- Ensure searches are lawful and proportionate.
- Protect pupils' dignity.
- Provide consistent procedures.
- Reduce risk through early intervention.

5. Principles

Searching will always be:

- Lawful.
- Necessary.
- Proportionate.
- Respectful.
- Child-centred.
- Recorded appropriately.
- Considerate of SEND and SEMH needs.

Staff will always seek to de-escalate situations before considering a search.

6. Prohibited Items

Staff may search where there are reasonable grounds to suspect possession of:

- Knives or offensive weapons.
 - Illegal drugs.
 - Drug paraphernalia.
 - Alcohol.
 - Fireworks.
 - Tobacco products.
 - Cigarettes.
 - Vapes or e-cigarettes.
 - Stolen property.
 - Pornographic material.
 - Fire-setting equipment (matches, lighters).
 - Mobile phones or electronic devices were prohibited by school rules.
 - Any item likely to cause injury or disruption.
 - Any item banned under school rules.
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7. Authorised Staff

Searches may only be undertaken by:

- Headteacher.
- Deputy Headteacher.
- Assistant Headteacher.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- Staff specifically authorised by the Headteacher.

Where possible:

- Two members of staff will be present.
 - One member of staff will be the same sex as the pupil.
 - Searches will take place in a private area while maintaining visibility where appropriate.
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8. Searching with Consent

Staff may ask a pupil to:

- Empty pockets.
- Open bags.
- Remove outer clothing.
- Hand over prohibited items.

Most searches will be conducted with the pupil's cooperation.

9. Searching Without Consent

Where legislation permits, authorised staff may search without consent where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil possesses prohibited items.

The decision will consider:

- Risk of harm.
- Nature of the suspected item.
- Immediate safeguarding concerns.
- Individual pupil needs.
- Advice from senior leaders where possible.

Where a pupil refuses to consent to a search, parents/carers will be contacted, and students will be sent home.

If staff suspects the pupil to have illegal/dangerous items in their possession, the police may be contacted.

10. Use of Metal Detector Wands

The Parks School may use handheld metal detector wands where appropriate.

The use of screening devices:

- Does not require physical contact.
 - Will be undertaken respectfully.
 - Will be explained to the pupil beforehand.
 - Will be recorded on the school systems. (Ed:Gen)
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11. Confiscation

Authorised staff may confiscate prohibited items.

Items may include:

- Mobile phones.
- Vapes.
- Cigarettes.
- Lighters.
- Alcohol.
- Illegal substances.
- Weapons.
- Other prohibited items.

Illegal items will normally be handed to the Police.

Dangerous items will be secured immediately.

12. Safeguarding Considerations

Finding prohibited items may indicate wider safeguarding concerns.

Staff will consider:

- Criminal exploitation.
- County Lines.
- Substance misuse.
- Self-harm.
- Radicalisation.
- Peer-on-peer abuse.
- Mental health concerns.

The DSL will be informed where appropriate.

13. Recording

All searches will be recorded, including where nothing is found.

Records should include:

- Date and time.
 - Staff involved.
 - Reason for the search.
 - Whether consent was obtained.
 - Items found.
 - Actions taken.
 - Parent contact.
 - Safeguarding concerns.
 - Follow-up actions.
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14. Parents and Carers

Parents will be informed where:

- A pupil has refused a search and school have refused entry.
- Prohibited items are found.
- Safeguarding concerns arise.
- Police become involved.

Where immediate safeguarding concerns exist, staff will follow advice from the DSL or Police before contacting parents.

15. Police Involvement

Police may be contacted where:

- Illegal drugs are found.
 - Weapons are discovered.
 - Serious criminal offences are suspected.
 - Staff believe there is significant risk.
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16. Pupils with SEMH Needs

Staff will take account of:

- EHCP outcomes.
- Individual Risk Assessments.
- Trauma history.
- Communication needs.
- Emotional regulation.
- Additional vulnerabilities.

Reasonable adjustments will be made wherever appropriate.

17. Monitoring

The Headteacher and DSL will monitor:

- Frequency of searches.
- Patterns and trends.
- Equality of practice.
- Safeguarding themes.
- Staff training.
- Outcomes and follow-up actions.

Monitoring will help improve practice and reduce future incidents.

Related Policies

- Behaviour, Relationships and Positive Development Policy
 - Safeguarding, Child Protection and Early Help Policy
 - Positive Handling Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Online Safety Policy
 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
 - Complaints Policy
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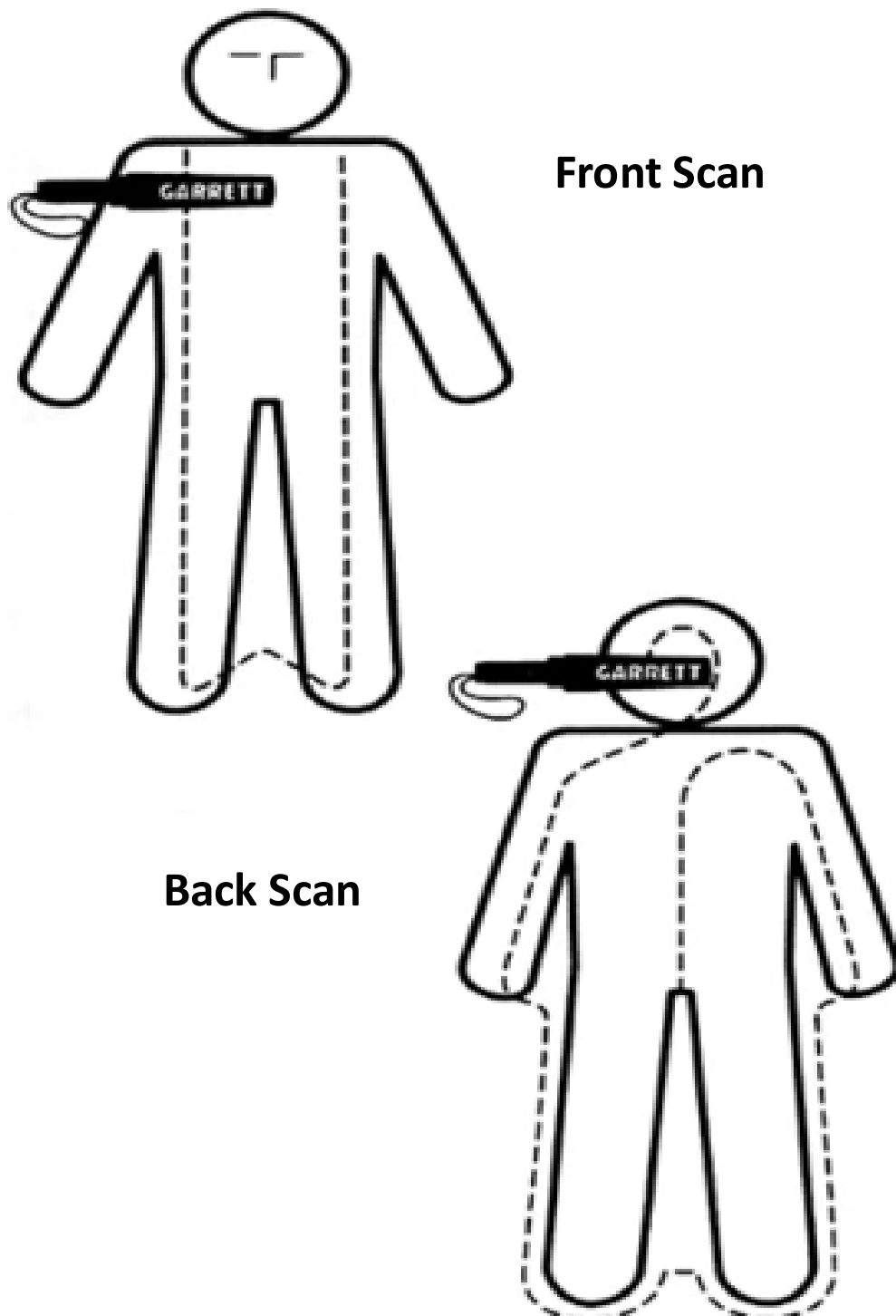
Legal Status

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, agency staff and contractors working at The Parks School. It should be read alongside the school's safeguarding, behaviour and physical intervention policies and complies with current statutory guidance relating to searching, screening and confiscation in schools.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will review this policy annually, or sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance or school procedures require.

Hand Scan Inspection Technique



Screening with handheld metal detectors requires no body contact.