

Searching, Screening & Confiscation Policy

Date of last review:	September 2025
Review Cycle:	Annually
Date of this review:	September 2025
Date of next review:	August 2026
Approval by the Proprietor	September 2026

INTRODUCTION

Teenage Kicks fully recognises the responsibility for having arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils.

This policy has been written using the guidance contained in the document 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation - Advice for head teachers, school staff and governing bodies DFE - January 2018.

Summary of the Screening and Searching Powers including Screening in low contact and non-Contact situations.

1. School rules can require pupils to undergo random screening by the use of a walk through or hand held metal detector (arch or wand) without suspicion as part of the school's disciplinary power and the duty to manage risk. This applies even if they do not suspect them of having a weapon and without the consent of the pupil.
2. Schools statutory power to make rules on pupil behaviour and their duty as an employer to manage the safety of pupils, staff and visitors enables them to impose requirements that pupils undergo screening.
3. At Teenage Kicks all pupils who arrive at the school site are expected to comply with the screening process. This comprises of a hand held metal detector.
4. Screening pupils on entry to the school is not for a limited period and is an embedded system which forms part of the rules and procedures at Teenage Kicks.
5. The Leadership team may decide that additional screening would be useful, and so occasional screening of randomly-selected pupils while on the premises — for example, a class or a year-group - should normally be enough to deter and prevent;
6. If a pupil refuses to be screened, the school may refuse to have the pupil on the premises or on an off-site educational visit. The school has a statutory power to make reasonable rules as a condition of admission. If the pupil fails to comply, and the school does not let the pupil in, it is unauthorised absence: the school has not excluded the pupil. The pupil's duty is to comply with the rules, and attend. Parents/carers will be notified of any refusal to comply with our system. This unauthorised absence will be investigated by the pastoral team in the same way as any other unauthorised absence.
7. Non-contact screening is not subject to the same conditions as with-suspicion searches under the statutory power to search. Schools can screen in view of other pupils. Schools should still take care to conduct screening reasonably, and should obtain training in the use of wands (see section 6, training). Authorisation of staff, required for no-consent searches, is not required for screening. Staff should require pupils to remove any items from their pockets, before screening, such a metallic object that could cause a 'beep'. Staff will also pad down pockets to ensure any prohibited items are not concealed. There may also be occasions where staff may request a student to remove shoes, should they be suspicious a child is containing prohibited items within them.
8. Searches on suspicion and without consent can also start by screening. If a wand "beeps", showing it has detected metal, after a pupil has initially said that no metallic objects remain in their pockets, then this detection might help the searcher to gain consent, cooperation, or surrender of the object.

Searching with consent

9. School can search pupils with their consent for any item.
10. School does not need to obtain formal written consent from the pupil, pupil verbal consent is sufficient.
11. The school behaviour policy provides details on the items that are banned under the school rules.

This list includes (BUT NOT EXHAUSTIVE);

- Knives and weapons.
- Alcohol.
- Illegal drugs.
- Stolen items.
- Tobacco/cigarettes.
- Vape pens
- Liquids
- Fireworks.
- Pornographic images.
- Any article that a member of staff suspects has been or is likely to be used to commit a crime or cause personal injury or damage property.

12. If a member of staff suspects a pupil has a banned item they can instruct the pupil to turn out their pockets or bag and if the pupil refuses then appropriate action will be taken and parents contacted.

Any item found on a pupil will be confiscated by school staff and where appropriate passed to relevant professionals including the police, social care and/or disposed of by school.

Should a student be found with any prohibited items on their persons following a screening, they will be issued a 5 day fixed term suspension.

Searching without consent

13. Safety advice reminder: No-one should be authorised to do a search before being trained. The power to search should be used only where it is judged safe. If the school decides it is unsafe to search, they should call the police.
14. The Headteacher & members of Senior Leadership can conduct a weapons search without consent where there are reasonable grounds to suspect the possession of a weapon. Other school staff trained and competent in this area are authorised by the Headteacher to conduct a weapons search.
15. Authorised staff — A search must be made in the presence of another member of staff. The other member of staff will be authorised to take part in the search by the Headteacher. Note: The law on without consent search defines "a member of the staff of a school" to include teachers and anyone else authorised by the Headteacher to have lawful control or charge of a pupil.

16. Same Sex Searchers — As well as the searcher, one other member of staff must be present at a search of a pupil and must be of the same sex as the pupil searched. When the pupil's possessions are searched, the pupil and a second member of staff must be present, but the staff may be of either sex.
17. Suspicion — The searcher must have reasonable grounds for suspecting a pupil may be carrying a knife or other weapon. The search can take place on school premises or on a school visit. The searcher can seize anything he reasonably suspects is a weapon or evidence of an offence.
18. Clothing — The searcher can require the pupil to remove outer clothing such as a coat or jumper. Where the pupil refuses to do so, the searcher can use reasonable force to remove, for example, an overcoat.
19. Force — The member of staff searching the pupil may use reasonable force.
20. Weapon found — The searcher may confiscate a weapon or anything which he or she suspects is intended to be used as a weapon; and must pass it to the police as soon possible. Other evidence of an offence can also be seized and, if seized, must be passed to the police. The confiscation data base is in place to record all items seized, this is managed by the Headteacher.

Application of the RULES

21. The statutory power to search applies where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil has with him or in his possessions any of the following:

Anything referred to in this guidance as a 'knife' — to be precise, any article which has a blade or is sharply pointed. The definition does not include a folding pocket knife other than one whose cutting edge exceeds three inches or one which is not readily foldable at all times (such as a locking knife). This definition is taken from section 139 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988;

An object referred to in this guidance as an offensive weapon — to be precise, any article made or adapted to injure a person, or any article which is intended by the person carrying the article for such use by him or by another person. This is taken from section 1 of the Prevention of Crime Act 1953;

Three types of article are covered:

- A weapon made for causing injury, such as a gun;
- An article adapted for causing injury, such as a bottle broken deliberately for the purpose; and
- An article not made or adapted for causing injury but which the person who has it intends to be used for the purpose of causing injury, e.g. a baseball bat;

22. The power includes a power to search where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in innocent possession of a weapon. The power does not allow without-suspicion (whether random or blanket) searches, but see also the separate section in this guidance on "screening".

Key Points- POWERS, NOT DUTIES

23. The guidance emphasises that the power to search is exactly that — a power and not a duty — and should only be used where school staff judge that it is safe to do so. In particular, if members of staff believe that a pupil is carrying a weapon and is likely to resist a search physically, they

should call the police rather than try to overcome the pupil. Other factors that school staff can consider in deciding whether they judge that a search would be safe include:

- School staff, especially senior managers, are highly skilled and experienced in managing the behaviour of young people in their charge.
- This includes the ability to resolve difficult confrontations;
- The law requires a second adult to be present for a search;
- This guidance recommends training before any staff do a search;

Existing and new powers

26. It is already a criminal offence [under the Criminal Justice Act 1988] to bring a knife or other weapon to school. School staff can already search a pupil, with consent, as part of their authority to discipline. The power to screen without suspicion will help to deter pupils from carrying a weapon in the first place. The new statutory search power, under education law, allows schools to search without consent, though within a range of safeguards.

Training

27. Teenage Kicks has a trained team who carry out the searching, screening and confiscation and associated duties.

Authorisation of staff by the Headteacher

28. A Head teacher needs no authorisation to conduct a weapons search without consent. Other school staff must be authorised by their Head teacher / SLT before they can do so. Authorisation may be on a long term or permanent basis, or for a stated shorter period, and should be in writing. It is recommended that the "second person present" at a search should be authorised and trained to search, because while they are witnessing the propriety of a search, the member of staff conducting the search might ask the member of staff witnessing to help more actively. They must be authorised if they join the search.

Use of force in conducting a search

29. The guidance makes clear that the existing powers to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, damaging property, or prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline also applies to a search without consent. However, the guidance advises that if it is thought that a pupil suspected of carrying a weapon is likely to resist physically, school staff should call the police rather than using force to continue a search.

30. Teenage Kicks maintain records of the justification for searches. Please refer to appendices at the end of this policy.

Extent of Search

31. The power to search on suspicion and without consent enables a personal search, involving removal of outer clothing only and searching of pockets; but not an intimate search going further than that, which only a person with more extensive powers (e.g. a police officer) can do.

Seizure of offensive weapons

32. All weapons are stored on site and logged onto the confiscation database. Parents/carers and Police will be notified. All items are held in a secure cupboard. The keys are held by Headteacher.

33. Further advice can be found in the following publication:

The full document can be read/downloaded at: [Searching and screening of pupils for weapons January 2018](#)

Requirements of Good Practice

The following requirements remain as good practice where the process of "search" is to be applied.

WE SEARCH NOT TO FIND BUT TO PROVE THERE IS NO THREAT PRESENT

- All searches must be competent in the search techniques they are to conduct.
- Only those authorised to do so may search.
- Only those staff that have agreed to do so may search, this includes both methods of search and items searched for.
- All searches must be reasonable, proportionate and justified in relation to perceived risk.
- All searches must be documented.
- All finds (confiscations) must be documented.
- Where a searcher believes it is unsafe to search or is subsequently unsure as to whether it is safe to continue to search then the search should cease at this point with the pupil remaining under observation whilst advice is sought..
- Searchers must use their professional judgement to avoid using any force in relation to search.
- Searches must be carried out by two members of staff and at least one of the same gender as the pupil.
- Searchers must be provided with the equipment and documentation relative to the search technique(s) being used.

Bag Search - This requires the bag being emptied, the bag checked items removed checked and on completion, if the process has been correctly followed it is a reasonable assumption that there is no threat present.

Area Searches — These are more complicated, whether the area is inside or outside. Areas searches take longer. School maintain records of wider area searches. This is conducted in a systematic methodical way.

Reactive Search - A search conducted where there are reasonable grounds that a threat exists.

Proactive planned search — a planned search conducted within a set frequency as identified by risk assessment process. As per the systems for pupil entry into Teenage Kicks identified on page one.

Proactive Random Search - A search conducted in frequency identified by a risk assessment process additional to practice searched to mitigate the predictability of planned searches.

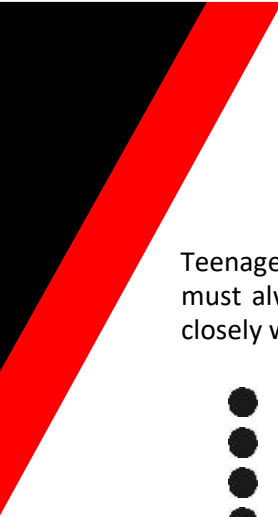
PPE

Staff Must always wear — PPE (gloves)

Searchers must be in pairs

Searchers must be able to observe each other while searching.

Links with other Policies:



Teenage Kicks is committed to the Health and Safety of all its staff and pupils, and we believe that we must always take action to safeguard the well-being of all concerned. This policy, therefore, links closely with the following:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Staff Behaviour (Staff Handbook)
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Improving Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Policy.

Review of Policy: This policy was formally adopted by Teenage Kicks in 2024, is renewed every two years and at this point in time is a new policy to the school. It provides evidence of procedures and guidelines in use within the establishment.

