



Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy

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**To be read alongside all relevant BOA Digital Technologies
Academy policies and procedures**

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Statement of intent

At **BOA Digital Technologies Academy** we believe that students and staff have the right to learn and work in a calm, safe and supportive environment. Searching, screening and confiscation powers exist to help schools safeguard students and staff, prevent harm, maintain good order and remove items that may place the Academy community at risk.

This policy sets out the Academy's approach to searching students, screening where appropriate, and confiscating, retaining, returning or disposing of items. It explains the legal powers available to the Principal and authorised staff, the safeguards that must be followed, and how searches and confiscations will be recorded, reported and reviewed.

The Academy is committed to:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students
- Ensuring searches are lawful, necessary, proportionate and respectful of dignity
- Using search and confiscation powers consistently, fairly and without discrimination
- Considering the age, SEND, medical needs, communication needs and vulnerabilities of students
- Keeping clear records of searches and using this information to identify safeguarding risks or disproportionality
- Ensuring confiscated items are dealt with safely and in line with statutory guidance
- Maintaining transparent expectations through the Academy Behaviour Policy and related policies

This policy should be read alongside the Academy Behaviour Policy. The Behaviour Policy sets out the Academy's expectations, prohibited and banned items, sanctions and support. This policy provides the additional operational and safeguarding framework for searching, screening and confiscation.

Our Approach

Positive relationships are at the heart of all we do at BOA-Digital. Where concerns arise about a student having an item that may create risk or breach Academy rules, staff will aim to resolve the matter calmly, through clear communication and co-operation wherever possible.

Searching is not a punishment. It is a safeguarding, safety and behaviour management measure used when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student may have a prohibited item or an item identified in Academy rules as searchable, or where the student has agreed to a search.

The Academy will normally seek a student's co-operation and will conduct searches with sensitivity and respect. However, authorised staff may search without consent where the legal threshold is met. Staff must never conduct a strip search. Any police involvement must be managed with safeguarding, dignity and after-care at the centre of decision-making.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996, including sections 550ZA and 550ZB
- Education and Inspections Act 2006, including sections 89, 91 and 93
- Education Act 2011

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998 and Article 8 rights to respect for private life
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Coroners and Justice Act 2009
- Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and relevant PACE Codes
- The Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012
- DfE “Searching, screening and confiscation: guidance for schools”
- DfE “Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff”
- DfE “Keeping children safe in education”, as updated from time to time
- DfE “Mobile phones in schools” guidance
- UKCIS “Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people”

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Academy policies and procedures:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will have overall responsibility for:

- Ensuring that the Academy has a policy that reflects current statutory guidance and legal duties.
- Ensuring that this policy is applied fairly and does not discriminate on any grounds.
- Receiving appropriate information about searching, screening and confiscation, including patterns, trends, disproportionality and training needs.
- Ensuring that complaints regarding this policy are handled in line with the Academy’s Complaints Procedures Policy.

The Principal and Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.
- Authorising members of staff to search students or their possessions, either for all items identified in this policy or for specific items only.
- Maintaining an appropriate culture of safe, proportionate and lawful searching.
- Ensuring a sufficient number of staff are appropriately briefed or trained to carry out or support searches safely.
- Ensuring staff understand that a search should be recorded and escalated where required.

- Ensuring that confiscated items are stored, returned, disposed of or passed to the police in line with this policy.
- Ensuring that the Academy Behaviour Policy clearly identifies items for which a search can be made.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and safeguarding team will be responsible for:

- Being informed of any search where there were reasonable grounds to suspect possession of a prohibited item.
- Being involved without delay where a search reveals, or may reveal, a safeguarding risk.
- Considering whether a student is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm and whether pastoral support, early help, children's social care or police involvement is required.
- Ensuring relevant records are completed on CPOMS and that safeguarding follow-up is proportionate and timely.
- Supporting after-care where a search has been distressing, particularly where police involvement or a strip search has occurred.

The SENCO and Inclusion Team will be responsible for:

- Advising on reasonable adjustments for students with SEND, disabilities, communication needs, medical needs or other vulnerabilities.
- Supporting staff to understand individual needs that may affect how a student understands or experiences a search.
- Reviewing student profiles, risk assessments or support plans where searching or confiscation highlights additional need.

Authorised staff will be responsible for conducting searches in line with this policy. Staff who are not authorised to search without consent must seek support from SLT, the pastoral team or another authorised member of staff. A member of staff, other than security staff where relevant, may not be required to undertake a search if they refuse.

All staff are responsible for reporting concerns about prohibited or banned items, maintaining a calm and safe environment, and escalating safeguarding concerns to the DSL or a deputy. Students are responsible for following Academy expectations to be Ready, Respectful and Safe. Parents/carers are responsible for supporting the Academy's Behaviour Policy and reinforcing expectations at home.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Search	An examination of a student, their outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desk, locker, bag or other personal space where there are lawful grounds to do so.
Search with consent	A search carried out where the student agrees. Staff should ensure the student understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted.

Search without consent	A search carried out by the Principal or an authorised member of staff where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the student has a prohibited item or an item identified in Academy rules as searchable.
Prohibited item	An item listed in legislation, including knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images, and articles likely to be used to commit an offence or cause injury or damage.
Academy banned item	An item identified by the Academy as not permitted because it is detrimental to maintaining a calm, safe and supportive environment.
Possessions	Goods over which the student has or appears to have control, including bags, lockers, desks and other personal spaces.
Outer clothing	Clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over underwear, and includes hats, shoes, boots and scarves.
Screening	The use of a walk-through or hand-held metal detector to scan students for prohibited items
Confiscation	Taking possession of an item from a student, either following a search or as a lawful disciplinary penalty.
Strip search	A search involving removal of more than outer clothing. School staff must never conduct a strip search.

4. Staff induction, development and support

All new staff will be inducted into the Academy's behaviour culture, safeguarding expectations and the principles within this policy. Staff will be made aware of who is authorised to conduct searches, how to request support, how to record concerns and how to escalate safeguarding issues.

Training and support may include:

- The legal framework for searching, screening and confiscation
- Safe, proportionate and respectful search practice
- Safeguarding considerations before, during and after a search
- Reasonable adjustments for students with SEND, disabilities, medical needs or communication needs
- Handling electronic devices and online safety concerns, including nude and semi-nude images
- Recording on CPOMS and communicating with parents/carers
- Storage, return, disposal and police handover of confiscated items

Staff are not expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk. Where there is a serious safety concern, staff should seek support from SLT, the pastoral team, the DSL/deputy DSL and, where appropriate, the police.

5. Search culture and safeguarding principles

Searching can play an important role in keeping the Academy safe. It must be used carefully, proportionately and with safeguarding at the centre. Before any search, staff should consider

the student's age, needs, previous experiences, SEND, medical needs, communication needs, trauma, cultural considerations and any other vulnerability.

The Academy will apply the following principles:

- Searches will be carried out only where there is a lawful basis and a clear reason.
- Staff will seek co-operation and explain the reason for the search wherever possible.
- Searches will normally take place away from other students to protect dignity and privacy.
- Searches will be conducted by authorised staff only, except where a student voluntarily agrees to a search by another member of staff.
- The least intrusive approach will be used wherever possible.
- Safeguarding concerns identified before, during or after a search will be referred to the DSL or a deputy.
- Search records will be monitored to identify patterns, repeated concerns and any disproportionality.

A search may also identify that a student is at risk of harm, exploitation, coercion, criminal involvement or child criminal exploitation. The outcome of a search should therefore be considered as part of the wider safeguarding picture, not only as a behaviour matter.

6. Items covered by this policy

6.1 Prohibited items

The Academy may search for the following prohibited items where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student may have them:

- Knives and weapons, including any item reasonably suspected to be a weapon
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Mobile phones (including devices capable of sending and receiving messages and calls)
- Any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, cause personal injury to any person, or cause damage to property

6.2 Academy banned items

In addition to prohibited items, the Academy identifies the following as banned or searchable under Academy rules because they are detrimental to maintaining a calm, safe and supportive environment:

- E-cigarettes, vapes, vaping liquids, powdered tobacco or nicotine pouches, lighters, matches and smoking paraphernalia
- Mobile phones, smart watches, earphones, headphones, earbuds and similar personal electronic or communication devices where possessed or used contrary to Academy rules
- Aerosol sprays, laser pens or other items that may cause disruption, harm or alarm
- Medication not handed in or managed in line with Academy medical procedures

- Any item banned under the Academy Behaviour Policy, Mobile Devices Policy or trip/event-specific rules
- Any item reasonably considered by the Principal or authorised staff to be detrimental to safety, good order, learning or safeguarding

Reasonable force must not be used to search for items that are banned only under Academy rules, such as mobile phones or non-uniform items. Reasonable force may only be considered for prohibited items, and only where necessary, proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances.

7. Searching students

7.1 Searching with consent

Under common law, school staff may search a student for any item if the student agrees. The member of staff should ensure that the student understands the reason for the search, how and where it will be conducted, and what will happen if an item is found. Agreement should be informed and should not rely on pressure, humiliation or threat.

Where the student agrees to a search, staff should still conduct the search with dignity, normally with another member of staff present and in a location away from other students where possible.

7.2 Searching without consent

The Principal and staff authorised by the Principal have a statutory power to search a student or their possessions without consent where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the student may have a prohibited item or an item identified in Academy rules as searchable.

Reasonable grounds may be based on direct observation, information from staff or students, CCTV, behaviour, context, smell, visible items, previous relevant incidents, or other reliable information. Staff must use professional judgement and should avoid assumptions or stereotyping.

Searches without consent must be conducted by authorised staff. A member of staff may be authorised to search for all items listed in this policy or for specific items only.

7.3 Before a search

Before a search takes place, the authorised member of staff should:

- Assess the urgency of the search and the risk to students, staff and others
- Consider whether the matter can be resolved through explanation, co-operation or asking the student to hand over the item
- Consider whether the student understands the instruction and whether any SEND, disability, language, medical or trauma-related need may affect their response
- Explain why the search is being conducted, how and where it will take place, and give the student an opportunity to ask questions where safe to do so
- Seek the student's co-operation wherever possible
- Seek advice from SLT, the DSL/deputy DSL or pastoral staff if a search is necessary but not urgent
- Supervise the student and keep them away from other students where there is a continuing risk while advice or support is being sought

If a student refuses to co-operate, staff should consider why this may be. The student may not understand the instruction, may not understand what the search involves, may have had a

previous distressing experience, or may be in possession of an item. The response should be calm and proportionate.

7.4 During a search

An appropriate location for the search should be found. Where possible, this should be away from other students. A search may only take place on Academy premises or where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the student, for example during an Academy trip or visit.

The law states that the member of staff conducting the search must be of the same sex as the student being searched and that another member of staff must be present as a witness. There is a limited exception where the member of staff reasonably believes there is a risk of serious harm if the search is not carried out urgently and it is not reasonably practicable to arrange a same-sex member of staff or witness in the time available.

Where a search takes place without a witness because of this urgent exception, the member of staff must report this to another member of staff immediately and ensure that a written record is made.

Staff must conduct searches calmly, respectfully and with regard to dignity. Staff should avoid unnecessary physical contact and should not use language or actions that shame, intimidate or humiliate the student.

7.5 Extent of the search

A member of staff may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desk, locker or bag. Staff must not require a student to remove clothing other than outer clothing. Staff should be sensitive to whether outer clothing is worn for religious, cultural, sensory, medical or personal reasons.

A student's possessions should only be searched in the presence of the student and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused if the search is not conducted immediately and it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.

The member of staff may use a metal detector to assist with a search where this is available and appropriate. The power to search does not allow school staff to conduct a strip search.

7.6 Use of reasonable force when searching

Reasonable force may only be used to search for prohibited items. It must not be used to search for items that are banned only under Academy rules, such as mobile phones, earphones or non-uniform items.

Any decision to use reasonable force must be made on a case-by-case basis and must be necessary, proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances. Staff must consider whether the search is required to prevent harm, prevent damage, prevent disorder or prevent a criminal offence. Staff must follow the Academy's Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions Policy.

8. Strip searching and police involvement

School staff must never conduct a strip search. A strip search is a search involving removal of more than outer clothing. Strip searches on Academy premises can only be carried out by police officers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and relevant PACE Codes.

Before calling the police into the Academy where a strip search may become a possibility, staff must assess and balance the risk of a potential strip search to the student's mental and

physical wellbeing against the risk of not recovering the suspected item. Less invasive approaches should be considered and exhausted wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so. Once the police are on Academy premises, the decision about whether to conduct a strip search is a police matter. The role of the Academy is to advocate for the safety, dignity and wellbeing of the student and to ensure safeguarding duties are followed.

Unless there is an immediate risk of harm and where reasonably possible, parents/carers should be informed before a strip search if a student is suspected of concealing an item. Parents/carers must always be informed by a member of staff once a strip search has taken place.

Where a strip search involves exposure of intimate body parts, police procedures require an appropriate adult except in urgent cases where there is risk of serious harm. If a parent/carer wishes to act as the appropriate adult, the Academy should facilitate this where possible. The Academy will record any strip search on CPOMS, ensure the DSL/deputy DSL is involved, and provide appropriate after-care regardless of whether an item is found.

9. After a search

After any search, staff must consider whether the reason for the search, the search itself, or the outcome gives cause to suspect that the student is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm. Where this may be the case, staff must follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and speak to the DSL or a deputy.

If a prohibited item is found, the member of staff should alert the DSL or a deputy and the student may be sanctioned in line with the Behaviour Policy. Support, safeguarding action and sanctions should be considered separately but in a joined-up way.

Recording requirements:

- Any search for a prohibited item and all searches conducted by police officers must be recorded on CPOMS, including where no item is found.
- The Academy will also record searches for Academy banned items where the search is significant, safeguarding-related, disputed, involves refusal, or results in confiscation or sanction.
- Behaviour consequences should also be recorded on the Academy's behaviour management system where appropriate.

Parents/carers must be informed as soon as practicable of any search for a prohibited item and the outcome of the search. Parents/carers should be told what, if anything, was confiscated and what action the Academy has taken, including any sanction or safeguarding follow-up. Parents/carers should also normally be informed of searches for Academy banned items where the matter is significant or where an item has been confiscated for a period of time providing there are no safeguarding implications of doing so.

10. Screening

Screening can provide reassurance that the Academy is taking reasonable measures to create a calm, safe and supportive environment. Screening means the use of a walk-through or hand-held metal detector to scan students for weapons before they enter the Academy premises.

The Academy does not operate routine screening unless this has been approved by the Principal and communicated to students and parents/carers in advance. Before introducing screening arrangements, the Principal should consider consultation with local police or relevant safety professionals, the proportionality of the measure, the impact on students, and

any reasonable adjustments required for students with disabilities or medical needs. Screening may also be introduced temporarily following a specific risk assessment where intelligence indicates an increased risk to the safety of students or staff.

If a student refuses to be screened, staff should consider why the student is not co-operating and assess whether it is necessary to carry out a search. Any sanction for refusal will be considered in line with the Behaviour Policy and the individual circumstances of the student.

11. Confiscation, retention and disposal

An authorised member of staff carrying out a search may confiscate any item where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that it poses a risk to staff or students, is prohibited or identified in Academy rules as searchable, or is evidence in relation to an offence.

Confiscated items should be handled safely, stored securely and dealt with promptly. Staff should not retain items informally in classrooms, offices, coat pockets, cars or personal bags. High-risk items should be handled as little as possible and SLT, the DSL/deputy DSL or police should be consulted where required.

11.1 Prohibited and illegal items

The following arrangements apply:

Item type	Required or expected action
Controlled drugs or suspected controlled drugs	Deliver to the police as soon as possible unless there is a good reason not to do so. If unsure about the legal status or safe disposal, treat the substance as controlled and contact police.
Other harmful substances	Deliver to police or dispose of safely where appropriate, following advice from SLT/DSL where needed.
Alcohol, tobacco, cigarette papers, vapes, nicotine products, fireworks	Retain or dispose of as appropriate. These items must not be returned to the student. Parent/carers communication should be considered.
Pornographic images	Dispose of unless there are grounds to suspect an offence, including extreme pornography or indecent images of a child, in which case the item/device must be passed to police.
Stolen items	Deliver to police as soon as reasonably practicable unless there is good reason to return the item to the owner, retain it or dispose of it safely.
Weapons or evidence of a suspected offence	Pass to police as soon as possible. Handle minimally and prioritise safety.
Items used or likely to be used to commit an offence or cause injury/damage	Deliver to police, retain, return to owner or dispose of, depending on risk, safety and evidential considerations.

11.2 Electronic devices and online safety concerns

Electronic devices, including mobile phones, can contain files or data relating to an offence or that may cause harm to another person. This may include indecent images of children, pornography, abusive messages, images or videos, or evidence of suspected criminal behaviour.

Staff may examine data or files on an electronic device confiscated as a result of a search only where there is good reason to do so. Good reason may include a reasonable suspicion that the data or file has been, or could be, used to cause harm, undermine the safe environment of the Academy, disrupt teaching or commit an offence.

If staff suspect that an incident may involve nude or semi-nude images of a child, staff must not intentionally view the image and must never copy, print, share, store or save such images. The device should be confiscated, staff should avoid looking at it, and the matter should be referred to the DSL or a deputy immediately. The DSL will manage the incident in line with KCSIE, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and UKCIS guidance.

Where data or files may constitute evidence of an offence, they must not be deleted and the device should be handed to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. Where material is not suspected to be evidence of an offence, staff may delete data or files only where the continued existence of the data or file is likely to cause harm and the student and/or parent/carer refuses to delete it themselves.

11.3 Mobile phones and similar devices

Mobile phones, smart watches, earphones, earbuds and similar devices may be confiscated as a disciplinary penalty where the Academy's mobile device expectations have been breached and confiscation is reasonable and proportionate. This should be applied in line with the Academy Behaviour Policy, Mobile Devices Policy and DfE mobile phones guidance.

The Academy may retain a device for a proportionate period where this is required to support the disciplinary purpose of the sanction, prevent further disruption, protect safeguarding, or allow a parent/carer to collect the item. Staff should consider the student's individual circumstances, including age, SEND, medical needs, safeguarding concerns, travel arrangements and whether there are reasonable adjustments that apply.

Reasonable force must not be used to search for a mobile phone or similar device where the device is banned only under Academy rules. If there are safeguarding or criminal concerns connected to a device, staff should seek advice from the DSL/deputy DSL, SLT and, where required, police.

11.4 Confiscation as a disciplinary penalty

The Academy's general power to discipline enables staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a student's property as a disciplinary penalty where it is reasonable to do so. Staff are protected from liability for loss or damage to confiscated items where they have acted lawfully.

When deciding whether to return, retain or dispose of an item, staff should consider:

- The nature and value of the item
- Whether the item is prohibited, illegal, unsafe or banned by Academy rules
- Whether returning the item to the student or parent/carer may place any person at risk of harm
- Whether the item is likely to continue to disrupt learning or the calm and safe environment of the Academy
- Whether the item may be evidence of an offence
- Whether it can be disposed of safely

12. SEND, equality and reasonable adjustments

The Academy will consider the age and needs of students being searched, screened or subject to confiscation. This includes SEND, disability, communication needs, medical conditions, mental health needs, trauma, language barriers and other vulnerabilities.

Reasonable adjustments may include using clear and accessible language, allowing additional processing time, involving a trusted adult, adapting the location or communication approach, considering sensory needs, or seeking advice from the SENCO, DSL or pastoral team before the search where this is safe and appropriate.

Reasonable adjustments do not remove the Academy's ability to search lawfully where there are reasonable grounds and a safety or safeguarding need. However, they must shape how the search is planned, explained and carried out so that the student's dignity and welfare are protected.

13. Local implementation details

Area	BOA Digital implementation
Authorised staff	The Principal, members of SLT, DSL/deputy DSLs, pastoral leaders and other named staff authorised by the Principal. Authorisation may be for all items or specific items only.
Recording system	Searches for prohibited items, police searches, safeguarding concerns and significant confiscation matters will be recorded on CPOMS. Behaviour consequences will also be recorded on the Academy behaviour management system where appropriate.
Confiscated item storage	Items will be stored securely in the designated Academy location, normally via the pastoral, safeguarding or reception process. High-risk items will be escalated to SLT/DSL and police where required.
Parent/carers communication	Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as practicable following searches for prohibited items and where significant Academy banned items are confiscated. Communication may be by phone, email, Bromcom/Class Charts or letter depending on the circumstances.
Policy links	This policy links directly to the Behaviour Policy, Mobile Devices Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions Policy.

14. Monitoring and review

The Academy will regularly review search and confiscation records to identify patterns and strengthen safeguarding and behaviour practice. Monitoring will consider:

- Frequency, type and reason for searches
- Items found and actions taken
- Locations, times, year groups and repeat patterns
- Whether searches or confiscations disproportionately affect any group of students
- SEND, SEMH, safeguarding, race, sex, disability or other equality considerations
- Quality of recording and parent/carers communication
- Training needs and staff support needs

- Whether amendments are required to the Behaviour Policy or banned items list

This policy will be reviewed by the Principal and Governing Body annually, or sooner where statutory guidance, legal duties or Academy procedures change.

15. Complaints and allegations

Any concerns or complaints about searching, screening or confiscation will be handled in line with the Academy's Complaints Procedures Policy. Any allegation against a member of staff will be managed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The Academy will consider concerns carefully and fairly, while recognising that the Principal and authorised staff have legal powers to search, screen and confiscate items where this is done lawfully, proportionately and in line with this policy.

Appendix A: Search record checklist

This checklist supports staff and leaders to ensure that search records are clear, consistent and useful for safeguarding and monitoring.

Area to record	Prompt
Student details	Name, year group, SEND status, medical needs, known vulnerabilities and relevant support plan or risk assessment.
Search details	Date, time, location and whether the search was with consent or without consent.
Reason for search	What was being searched for and what reasonable grounds existed?
Staff/adults present	Who conducted the search, who witnessed it and any other adults present.
Pre-search actions	What explanation was given, whether co-operation was sought, and any adjustments or de-escalation used.
Extent of search	Outer clothing, pockets, bag, possessions, desk, locker or other space.
Outcome	Whether anything was found, what was found, and whether the item was confiscated.
Safeguarding response	Whether DSL/deputy DSL was informed and any follow-up, early help, social care or police action.
Parent/carer communication	When and how parents/carers were informed, or why this was not appropriate at that time.
Sanction/support	Any behaviour sanction, pastoral support, restorative work or plan review.
Monitoring	Any equality, disproportionality or repeated-pattern issue identified for review.

Appendix B: Confiscated items decision guide

This guide supports consistent decision-making. Staff should seek advice from SLT, the DSL/deputy DSL or police where there is any uncertainty or safety concern.

Question	Action
Is the item a weapon, suspected weapon, or evidence of an offence?	Do not handle unnecessarily. Secure the area and pass to police as soon as possible. Record on CPOMS and inform DSL/SLT.
Is the item a controlled drug or suspected controlled drug?	Treat as controlled if unsure. Deliver to police unless there is a good reason and safe method for disposal. Record and escalate to DSL/SLT.
Is the item alcohol, tobacco, cigarettes, vape, nicotine product, lighter or firework?	Retain or dispose of as appropriate. Do not return to the student. Record and contact parents/carers as appropriate.
Is the item stolen?	Normally pass to police. Consider return to owner, retention or disposal only where there is good reason and it is safe and lawful.
Is the item an electronic device with possible safeguarding or criminal content?	Confiscate and avoid viewing suspected nude/semi-nude or indecent images. Refer to DSL/deputy DSL immediately. Do not copy, save, print or share images.
Is the item a mobile phone or similar device used contrary to Academy rules only?	Confiscate as a disciplinary penalty where proportionate. Store securely and return in line with Academy procedures. Do not use force to search for it.
Is the item a low-risk banned item that disrupts learning?	Retain, return to student/parent or dispose of based on value, risk, likelihood of further disruption and Academy rules.
Could returning or retaining the item create risk?	Seek SLT/DSL advice. Consider police involvement, parent/carer collection or safe disposal.
Could the item be evidence?	Do not delete, dispose of or return. Preserve where safe and seek police advice.