Rationale:
At times, it may be necessary to conduct searches of school and student property and to seize particular items so as to ensure the safety of students and staff and compliance with the law.

Aims:
- To ensure the ongoing safety of students and staff members.
- To ensure that the laws are consistently upheld.
- To ensure all student’s rights are protected and preserved.

Implementation:
- Teachers owe students a duty of care to protect them from reasonably foreseeable injury during the time they are in their care and control, and while they remain in a teacher pupil relationship. This may include the search and seizure of items without notice.
- The principal will be kept informed of all searches or plans to search.

Permissible Searches:
- Desks being school property can be searched without notice.
- Lockers can be searched without notice, provided that they are school property, and providing parents and students have been made aware that this is a condition of their use and that students may be instructed to open them by a teacher.
- A consensual search of a student’s property; where prior parental consent has been obtained for students too immature to provide informed consent, and otherwise with the student’s consent when mature enough (normally at 15 years of age unless impaired), or over 18 years of age, unless impaired.
- A search of external clothing of a student where a teacher has a reasonable suspicion that there is imminent danger of the student using a weapon to injure themselves or others, and the search is necessary.

Non-permissible Searches:
- Searches of student’s external clothing except as stated above.
- Strip searches of students or internal body cavity searches.
- Searches of personal possessions of students such as bags, purses and containers are not permitted without appropriate informed consent. Students can be instructed, but not forced to empty out their pockets, bags and containers.

Dangerous Situations:
- In situations where there is a reasonable suspicion that a student is concealing a weapon, illegal drug or other dangerous item on themselves or in their bags, desks or lockers, then:
  - If it is unlikely that they will imminently use the weapon or substance, the student should be separated from the others and the police called to undertake a search. Parents should be immediately notified of the action taken.
If the belief is formed that the student, other students or staff are in imminent danger, then immediate action may need to be taken to prevent injury to the student or others before the arrival of the police. In this situation, the student may be restrained as a last resort.

- Under no circumstances should teachers undertake a strip search of a student or randomly search personal containers, such as bags, that are not with the student.

- Confiscated items are the responsibility of the teacher/principal, and are to be returned to students at the end of each school day, parents or police as soon as practicable, depending upon their nature and circumstances.

**Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school renewal process.

This policy was last ratified by the School Leadership Team in March 2014.