

Alfredton School

Board of Trustees Policy

NAG 5



SEARCH, SEIZURE AND SURRENDER

RATIONALE

Alfredton School is required to provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students and staff. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the use of surveillance, search and seizure techniques and processes in situations where school leadership has reasonable grounds to suspect that there is a risk to the School's safe and secure learning environment.

In exercising these powers, schools must act reasonably, in good faith and in the least intrusive manner to achieve a safe environment. This enables the School to be consistent with its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1993 to protect students from discrimination and under the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 to ensure there are guards against unreasonable search and seizure.

PURPOSE

To ensure that Alfredton School is a safe and secure learning environment for all students and staff, it is important to ensure that students are not in possession of items that are harmful, likely to endanger safety or will detrimentally affect the learning environment.

GENERAL PROCEDURE

Teachers will continue to use appropriate and usual behaviour management practices that enable them to teach and students to learn. This will deal with most cases that require teacher intervention; however, there are certain occasions that require a different response.

This includes physical items and cyber-bullying material stored on computers, USB memory sticks, cell phones and other electronic media.

If a teacher or authorised staff member believes on reasonable grounds that a student has an item that is harmful, likely to endanger safety or detrimentally affect the learning environment, then a student can be required to produce, reveal, surrender the item. This includes the device on which the item is stored

There is a "Schedule of words explained" section that explains the underlined items at the end of this policy.

If the item is not considered harmful

If it is surrendered, it may be retained, stored, disposed of, passed to another person or returned.

If it is not surrendered, the School's usual disciplinary or behaviour management practices should be used.

If the item is considered harmful:

If it is surrendered, it may be retained, stored, disposed of, passed to another person or returned. See the below section on what this means

If it is not surrendered, a teacher or authorised staff member may either:

1. Deal with it under the School's usual disciplinary or behaviour management practices or require a student to remove specified clothing or surrender the bag or container.
2. Before making the requirement to remove specified clothing or surrender the bag or container, the teacher or authorised staff member should attempt to obtain permission of another member of staff to witness the making of the requirement.
3. After making the requirement above in 2:
 1. If the requirement is complied with, the teacher or authorised staff member can search the removed clothing or the surrendered bag or container. A search must not be conducted while the item is being worn; or
 2. If the student refuses, the School's usual disciplinary or behaviour management practices should be used.
4. If the item is found as a result of 3a:
 1. It may be retained, stored, disposed of, passed to another person or returned; and
 2. The removed clothing or the surrendered bag or container should be returned.

Retaining the item, storing it, returning it passing it on or disposing of it

Once an item is in possession of a teacher or authorised staff member, taking all care with the item and as soon as practicable, it should be given to a member of the senior leadership team for a decision to be made as to what happens to it. Any further decisions concerning the item will be made by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

If a decision is made to retain it, it must be held in a secured place that can only be accessed by a member of the senior leadership team. A decision must then be made as soon as practicable to further retain it, pass it on, dispose of it or return it.

At any time, the item may be returned to the student, parent of the student, or where neither is the owner of the item, the owner of the item.

Where it is deemed appropriate, the item may be passed on the Police or other appropriate agency that has responsibility for the relevant item. This will depend upon whether the item is considered to continue to pose harm to the staff and/or students.

Where a decision is made to dispose of the item, it must not be sold. Disposal may include destruction or deletion, where it relates to an electronic image. An electronic device must not be disposed of.

A detailed record must be kept of every decision made to retain, store, return, pass on or dispose of an item surrendered or retained as a result of a search.

Schedule of words explained:

Authorised staff: a person that is an employee of the Board of Trustees, but not a teacher, that is given authorisation by the Board to exercise specified powers under this policy. The Principal will decide who can be authorised staff;

Harmful: poses an immediate threat to the physical or emotional safety of any person;

Endanger safety: considering the particular circumstances of the case, is that item or object more likely than not going to endanger safety?

Detrimentially affect the learning environment: has a negative or disruptive effect on learning or general discipline;

Require: a formal request by a teacher or authorised person to comply with an instruction

References:

1. National Administration Guideline 5.2
2. 'Guidelines for the surrender and retention of property and searches', MoE 2014

Related Documents

- Guidance for New Zealand Schools on Behaviour Management to Minimise Physical Restraint. (Ministry of Education – Oct 2016)
- Child Protection Policy
- Stand-downs, Suspensions and Exclusions Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Education Act 1989

Appendix: MOE Guidelines for the surrender and retention of property and searches.

This policy was adopted by the Alfredton School Board of Trustees in 2019

Board of Trustees Chairperson

Principal

To be Reviewed: 2021