



The Blyth School

Policy: Confiscation

The rights of staff to confiscate items:

In this school the headteacher has delegated to all teaching staff the authority to confiscate items from pupils as a lawful disciplinary penalty. The use of confiscation as a sanction should be accompanied by a clear indication of when and where the item will be returned, and by whom. Often an item will be confiscated by the class teacher who will return the item at the end of the school week. However, some items may be retained for longer.

The secure storage of confiscated items:

Pupils have a right to expect that confiscated items, especially those of monetary or emotional value, will be stored safely until they can be returned. Confiscated items of obvious value will be taken to the school finance office for safe storage. If similar items have been confiscated from several pupils, such as mobile phones or personal music-players for example, finance office staff should ensure that they are clear which item belongs to which pupil. Some items, e.g. a cigarette lighter, will only be returned when a responsible family adult can come to retrieve them.

Instances when the school chooses not to return an item to the pupil:

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- Items which the pupil should not have had in their possession, e.g. an unlawful or hazardous substance may be given by the school to an external agency for disposal or further action as necessary. Parents will be informed if this is necessary.

Reasons for confiscation may include:

- An item poses a threat to others: for example, a laser pen is being used to distract and possibly harm other pupils or staff.
- An item poses a threat to good order for learning: for example, a pupil uses a personal music-player in class.
- An item is against school uniform rules: for example, a pupil refuses to take off a baseball cap on entering a classroom.
- An item poses a health or safety threat: for example, a pupil wearing large ornate rings in PE may present a safety threat to other pupils.
- An item which is counter to the ethos of the school: for example, material which might cause tension between one community and another.
- An item which is illegal for a child to have: for example, racist or pornographic material.

Searching for inappropriate material:

The legal power for school staff to search pupils currently only extends to weapons. A pupil might reasonably be asked to turn out their pockets or to hand over an item such as a personal music-player that is causing disruption, and the school might use its legal power to discipline if the pupil unreasonably refuses to cooperate. However, if it is felt

necessary for a pupil to be searched for (say) illegal drugs or stolen property, that will be done by the police rather than school staff using the appropriate powers available to them. Pupils may volunteer to empty their own pockets or bag during an investigation.

Unclaimed Property:

In the event of confiscated property remaining unclaimed for three months it will be transferred to lost property and given to charity