



**THE DIOCESAN SCHOOL
FOR GIRLS**

SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY

Dates of Approval by the Relevant Committee Structures: - Management	March 2014
Implementation Date	May 2014
Revision History	
Review Cycles	At least every five years – next one 2019
Policy Applicability	All the girls and the staff of the DSG
Policy Owner	Deputy Head–Pupil Affairs

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1 INTRODUCTION

Parents, teachers and pupils generally agree that the school needs to be a safe place where the pupils can confidently pursue their day-to-day activities. Pupils and parents need to feel secure in the knowledge that the school will take reasonable precautions to protect their children from pupils who may have harmful intentions.

The school recognises the need to ensure that any form of substance use/abuse is identified. We believe that it is our responsibility to help to protect pupils from using prohibited substances themselves but also to protect the other pupils who will be affected by such behaviour. Pupils may either be encouraged to join in with the activity or they may be severely compromised; not wanting to be 'snitches', they are conflicted about what actions they should take.

Because we live in such a close-knit community, the element of trust is essential for an harmonious and congenial atmosphere. When a girl's possessions are stolen, trust breaks down; accusations are levelled and suspicion becomes a factor in the relationships. We believe that such situations must be dealt with decisively and constructively to restore harmony and well-being.

It is a factor of the world we live in that all pupils are exposed to social media and that electronic devices can be used in a most insidious way. It has been well-documented that cyber-bullying can have a profoundly negative effect on the recipients of such attacks. We believe that, as far as possible, we need to identify any pupil who uses an electronic device to transmit information that is contradictory to the school rules and to our Code of Conduct.

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

This policy explains what is prohibited at DSG and what procedures may/will be followed by school authorities when reasonable suspicion exists that a pupil has prohibited items in her possession or has used an electronic device to harm others.

3 BACKGROUND

This policy will consider four categories:

1. Possession of dangerous objects;
2. Possession of prohibited substances;
3. Possession of items removed without the permission of the owner;
4. The use of electronic devices to transmit material, images or video clips deemed to be offensive or bullying or pornographic.

3 APPLICABILITY

This policy will apply to the pupils of DSG, whether on the premises of the school or engaged in any school-sanctioned activity elsewhere.

5 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions will apply:

Alcohol	Any alcoholic beverage
Dangerous object	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any explosive material or device• Any firearm or gas weapon• Any article or object that may be used to cause bodily harm to a person or damage to property;• Any other object similar to the objects listed above.
Delegate	Any person that the Head deems to be in a position to act in her place with due authority.
DSG Handbook	The document that is given to every DSG pupil and which gives general information about the school, the school rules and the school policies. The DSG Handbook is available on the school's website.
Electronic Devices	Any device that can be used to distribute images, messages, video clips or pornography. This includes but is not limited to computers, tablets, smart phones and cell phones.
Head	The headmistress of the Diocesan School for Girls.
Illegal activity	Any activity that contravenes the laws of the country or the school rules as described in the DSG Handbook.
Illegal Drug	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any unlawful substance that has a psychological or physiological effect or any substance having such an effect that is possessed lawfully• Any substance deemed to enhance sporting performance• Any prescription drug used by a person other than for whom it was prescribed or the abuse of such drugs.
Pupil	A girl who is a bona fide pupil at the Diocesan School for Girls, Grahamstown.
School	The Diocesan School for Girls, Worcester Street, Grahamstown.
School Activity	Includes any educational, cultural, recreational, sporting or social activity of the school within or outside the school premises.

Stolen items	Any possession removed without the permission of the rightful owner.

6 POLICY

6.1 PROHIBITION

6.1.1 DANGEROUS OBJECTS

No person may:

- Allow any dangerous object to be brought onto school premises or to a school activity;
- Carry any dangerous object on the school premises or premises at which a school activity is carried out;
- Store any dangerous object on the school premises or premises at which a school activity is carried out.
(DSG Handbook, Serious Misconduct, Clause 21)

6.1.2 PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

No person may:

- a. Possess illegal drugs;
- b. Possess any alcohol;
- c. Possess any tobacco products;
- d. Possess any performance enhancing substances unless condoned by the Director of Sport;
- e. Have in her possession any prescription drug, unless with permission of the San Sister;
- f. Possess any prescription drug prescribed for another person.
 - a. (DSG Handbook, Serious Misconduct, Clause 22)

6.1.3 ITEMS DEEMED TO HAVE BEEN STOLEN

No person may:

- Possess any stolen item

An item will be deemed to have been stolen if it has been removed from the owner without specific permission from that person. This refers to personal items as well as school property. (DSG Handbook, Serious Misconduct, Clause 27)

6.1.4 DEVICES THAT HAVE BEEN UNLAWFULLY USED

No person may:

- a. Use an electronic device for any form of bullying, as per the Bullying Policy (to be found on the DSG website).

- b. Use an electronic device to download material deemed to be pornographic or harmful in any way.
- c. Download or use material that is age-restricted, if that pupil is under aged.
 - a. (DSG Handbook, Serious Misconduct, Clauses 4, 18, 19)

7 SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The Head or her delegate, in the presence of at least one other member of the DSG staff, may at random and without warrant, search any pupil or group of pupils (for body searches, see 7.1.3) for any prohibited items (as described above) if there is any suspicion that:

- the pupil or group of pupils may have such items in her/their possession
- that such items may be found on the premises or at a school activity.

The Head or her delegate, in the presence of at least one other member of the DSG staff, may without warrant seize any prohibited item found on any pupil who is on the school premises or engaged in a school activity.

The Head or her delegate, in the presence of at least one other member of the DSG staff, may at random and without warrant confiscate any device if there is reasonable suspicion that the device had been used for transmission of any prohibited material, as specified above.

The Head or her delegate, in the presence of at least one other member of the DSG staff, can require access to such devices if there is reasonable suspicion that the device has been used to transmit prohibited material, as specified above. The pupil will be required to give passwords to enable the material on the device to be accessed.

7.1 THE PROCEDURE FOR CONDUCTING A SEARCH

All searches contemplated in this policy will be conducted in a manner that is reasonable and proportional to the suspected illegal activity. There will always be at least two members of staff present during a search.

7.1.1 SECURITY CAMERAS

DSG reserves the right to install security cameras and to check the video footage thus obtained at any time.

No cameras will be installed whereby a girl's personal privacy may be compromised, such in dormitories or bathrooms.

The video footage may only be observed by the Head or her delegate.

7.1.2 SEARCH OF PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

Periodic inspection of a pupil's locker and/or cupboards may be conducted by the Head or her delegate, in the presence of at least one other member of staff, for any reason, at any time, without notice, without the pupil's consent and without a search warrant.

A pupil's person and/or personal effects (including, but not limited to, her book bag, blazer, locker, cupboard, and sports bag) may be searched if the Head or her delegate has reasonable suspicion to believe that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item.

A pupil's locker and/or cupboards are the property of the school and remain at all times under the control of the school. Pupils are, however, expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their possessions.

7.1.3 BODY SEARCHES

The following type of body search may be conducted:

A visual search and a 'pat down' body search.

- a. This may only be conducted by the Head or the Head's delegate. The search must be conducted by someone of the same gender as the person being searched.
- b. A second staff member who is the same gender as the person must be present at all times.
- c. The search will be conducted in a private area away from any other person.
- d. The pupil will be requested to place loose items from pockets and clothing on a table for inspection.
- e. The pupil will be requested to remove any extra outer clothing such as blazers, jerseys or tracksuits.
- f. The person conducting the search will use an open hand to pat down the primary layer of clothing of the pupil.
- g. Any such search will be carried out in a manner that is consistent with anything that may have been concealed.

7.1.4 ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- a. Any electronic device may be confiscated from a pupil if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the device has been used for prohibited activities, as described above.
- b. The Head or the Head's delegate may remove the device without warning and for any period of time deemed to be necessary for any investigation.
- c. The pupil will be required to co-operate with the Head or the Head's delegate in the investigation by revealing passwords to the device.
- d. If deemed to be necessary, experts may be consulted in discovering and identifying the content on the device.

8 PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IF PROHIBITED ITEMS ARE IDENTIFIED

8.1 SECURITY CAMERAS

If the video footage reveals a pupil to be in possession of a prohibited item, or in the act of acquiring a prohibited item, a disciplinary hearing will be conducted according to the school's Code of Conduct, which may be found on the DSG website.

8.2 SEARCHES

If any prohibited item is found in the pupil's possession it will be seized and labelled with full particulars including:

- a. The name of the pupil in whose possession it was found
- b. The time and date of the search and seizure
- c. An incident reference number
- d. The name of the witness present at the search
- e. Any other details that may be relevant

The disciplinary process will be conducted according to the school's Code of Conduct which may be found on the school's website.

8.3 ELECTRONIC DEVICES

If any material identified under 6.1.4 above is discovered on an electronic device, the date and time of the search and seizure will be recorded and a note made of the exact content of the material.

The disciplinary process will be conducted according to the school's Code of Conduct which may be found on the school's website.

9 GOVERNANCE

In the case of disciplinary action arising out of a search and seizure operation, the following action will be taken:

The parents of the pupil will be contacted. They will be told the reasons for why the search was conducted and be informed of any item that was seized. They will be informed of any further action that may take place.

Any disciplinary procedure will be recorded and a record placed in the pupil's file.

Any electronic device that may have been confiscated will be returned to the pupil once the investigation has been completed.

10 REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed at least every five years and more regularly, if required.