BJT/JAE
13 November 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

At Portchester Community School, the safety and wellbeing of our pupils is our top priority. In order to maintain a secure environment, we want to inform you of updates to our *Search and Confiscation* procedure which forms part of our Behaviour Policy.

In relation to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance, Portchester Community School has a procedure for conducting searches when we have reason to believe a pupil is in possession of prohibited items, such as vapes, illegal substances, or dangerous objects. However, I am writing to you to inform you that the school has updated its procedure. **Trained staff may now use a metal-detection wand to support conducting a search**, with the intention to safeguard our school community.

Key points of the procedure:

- Searches will only be conducted when there are reasonable grounds for suspicion.
- Trained staff members may use a metal-detection wand to identify concealed metal objects, such as vaping devices, without physical contact.
- Where necessary, staff may also search pupils' clothing or bags, ensuring dignity and respect throughout the process.
- Any prohibited items found will be confiscated, and parents will be informed immediately about the search and the outcome.
- The school will maintain a detailed record of all searches to monitor and ensure fairness.

Portchester Community School is committed to working closely with you to ensure that all pupils understand the importance of following school rules and maintaining a safe environment. We will be holding assemblies to inform the pupils of this new procedure, but please also take a moment to discuss the importance of this update with your child.

If you have any questions or concerns about the updated procedure, or how searches are conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the school. A full version of the Behaviour Policy is available on our school website.

Thank you for your continued support in keeping our school safe.

Yours sincerely

B Toone

Mr B Toone
Assistant Headteacher