

Principles and Procedures for Searching a Student's Belongings

- a) The extent and manner in conducting the search should be proportional to the circumstances by taking into account the age of the child and the seriousness of the matter;
- b) The human dignity of that student should be protected and any embarrassment caused should be avoided as far as possible;
- c) When a teacher searches the belongings of a student, the student should be informed of the reasons for the search unless it is impossible or impracticable;
- d) The search should be conducted in the presence of that student and should be witnessed by a third party;
- e) If a teacher discovers any evidence during the search which may lead to a criminal prosecution, e.g. drug, the teacher should call the police immediately. It is because teachers do not have the power to conduct crime investigation, and the evidence discovered may be tendered as evidence in court, therefore, such evidence should be handled with care; otherwise, it may be inadmissible in court. Furthermore, whether criminal prosecution should be instituted is a matter for the police and the Department of Justice to determine; and
- f) It is also advisable for a teacher to obtain co-operation from the student.