

CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

PROTECTION OF PERSONAL PROPERTY AND DEALING WITH THEFTS IN SCHOOL POLICY

This policy was approved by Board of Governors in 2002, was revised in June 2014 and will go back to the board for approval in October 2014. To be next reviewed by June 2017.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- Thefts can occur in any community and from time to time, regrettably, they do occur at CLSG.
- All members of the school community have a responsibility to be vigilant and also to take good care of their personal property.
- All girls should observe the rules for care of personal property set out in the school's Code of Conduct and Form Tutors should make a point of reminding girls of these at regular intervals. The key points of these rules are set out in summary below.
- Large sums of money and items of high value should not be brought into school. If for some exceptional reason they have to be brought in, they should be given in to the Finance Office or the Deputy Head's Office at the beginning of the school day and collected at the end of the day. Obviously, interpretation of what constitutes a large sum of money will vary, but as a rule of thumb, anything over £10 in cash should be handed in for safe keeping.
- Mobile phones are intended for emergency use on the journey to and from school and should be locked in the girls' lockable lockers or kept on her person during the school day, not left in desks, bags, unlocked lockers etc. It has been made clear to parents that the school can accept no liability for loss or damage to mobile phones at school.
- All items of clothing including shoes and trainers should be clearly named. Other items of property should also be named as far as is practically possible
- When a loss or suspected theft of a girl's property occurs, she should report it to her Form Tutor or another member of staff immediately.
- If the theft has only just occurred and there is reason to suppose that the missing property is still in the vicinity the member of staff to whom the theft has been reported will keep back all girls where they currently are.
- Before launching an investigation into the theft, the teacher to whom the theft has been reported will alert a member of the School's Senior Management Team. A member of the SMT will join them to assist with the investigation.
- A pupil may be questioned and her belongings may be searched in appropriate circumstances.
- All reasonable care will be taken to protect the Pupil's human rights and freedoms and to ensure that her Parents are informed as soon as reasonably practicable after it becomes clear that the Pupil will face formal disciplinary action, and also to make arrangements for the Pupil to be accompanied and assisted by a Parent, education guardian or a teacher of the Pupil's choice..
- Teachers may ask a student to empty out their bag, desk or locker during the investigation of a theft at school.

- If a student does agree to empty out their bag or locker, teachers may look at the contents but should avoid touching students' personal property.
- Another teacher should always be present during any such search.
- If a student refuses to empty out their bag or locker, but the teacher has reasonable grounds for believing that they are the culprit, then the school has the right to search the student and her belongings without consent. In this case, the following steps will be taken:
 - The teacher will contact the head teacher or another member of staff who is authorised to conduct compulsory searches before a search is undertaken.
 - The person conducting the search should be the same sex as the student and a witness should be present, if at all possible also of the same sex.
 - There must be reasonable grounds for suspecting the student is in possession of the stolen item.
 - The student can be required to remove outer clothing only.
 - The student must be present when searching her belongings.
 - The school may also decide to contact the student's parents and/or the police.
- The school regards theft as a very serious breach of discipline and any girl caught stealing will be subject to severe penalties, which may include temporary or permanent exclusion from the school.
- It is the school's usual policy to inform the police of any breaches of the law.
- If a member of staff finds that items of their property have gone missing, they should inform the Deputy Head and the Bursar immediately.
- Staff are advised to be vigilant and to take care over their personal property.
- Valuable items of personal and school property should not be left unattended in the staff room or elsewhere at any time and should be locked up overnight, over weekends and during the school holidays.

References

- The Pupil Code of Conduct
- Parental Terms and Conditions
- The Senior School and Prep Parents' Handbook
- The School Policy on Pastoral Care, Discipline and Exclusions