



Rye College Policy

Policy Title:	Lost Property and Liability
Leadership Responsibility:	Academies Business Manager
Review Body:	Head Teacher
Date:	January 2024
Review:	January 2026

Statement of intent

Rye College understands that students and colleagues may bring their personal items onto the premises and in some circumstances these items may become lost, damaged or stolen.

Whilst the Academy strongly discourages bringing high-value items onto the premises, it is inevitable that some colleagues and students may wish to do so.

The Academy has developed this policy to:

- Provide a framework for any lost property.
- Clarify students' and colleagues' responsibility for the liability of their own items.
- Outline the Academy's policy on any damages incurred to Academy equipment and facilities.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Theft Act 1968
- Occupiers' Liability Act 1957

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Academy policies:

- Behaviour Management
- Complaints
- Security Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Surveillance and CCTV

Definitions

The policy defines:

- "Property" as any item belonging to a person, where that person has possession and control over it.
- "Lost property" as an item which the owner has lost but wishes to recover.
- "Mislaid property" as an item which the owner has inadvertently left in a location and wishes to recover.



- “Found property” as an item not belonging to the finder that has either been lost or mislaid by the owner or can be treated as abandoned property.
- “Abandoned property” as an item that the owner has seemingly abandoned and thereby may be deemed to have relinquished ownership of.
- “Non-returned item” as an item that is unidentifiable, unlawful or dangerous.
- “Damaged property” as an item that has been defiled so that there is impairment to its value, usefulness or normal function.
- “Stolen property” as an item that has been taken without the owner’s knowledge or consent by a person who does not own the item.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Teacher will be responsible for:

- Undertaking security risk assessments to protect people and their valuables, by delegation of the day to day assessments to the Academies Business Manager.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of this policy as required and at least annually.
- Delegating the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Academies Business Manager.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy is communicated to all colleagues, volunteers, parents and students.
- Enforcing sanctions on any individual found to be stealing or damaging property.

The Site Team will be responsible for:

- Handing in lost property to the school office.
- Ensuring the school site is secure to avoid theft of, or damage to, school and individuals’ property.
- Ensuring any lost or abandoned property is appropriately stored and removed from the vicinity of access and exit points.

The Student Hub will be responsible for:

- The administration of lost property.
- Ensuring lost property is held for a period of time (1 term) for collection.
- Informing individuals of found property, if it is known to be theirs.
- Ensuring items are returned to the rightful owner.
- Disposing of unclaimed abandoned property at the end of each term.

All colleagues, pupils, parents and visitors will be responsible for:

- The security of their own possessions.
- Handing in lost property to the school office when it is found.
- Labelling possessions where possible.
- Checking lost property, when they have lost an item.



Liability

The Academy will not take responsibility for items lost or handed in to us; however, we will endeavour to return items to their owner as quickly as possible.

Students, parents and colleagues are responsible for their personal property and possessions whilst on the premises, or when partaking in school activities such as trips and events.

The Academy will not be held responsible for any loss, damage or theft of personal property. Students, parents and colleagues bring items onto the premises at their own risk – this includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Jewellery
- Electronic devices, including mobile phones and tablets
- Air buds or any other type of listening devices
- Keys
- Money and /or debit credit cards etc
- Bicycles, scooters, skateboards or other

Students, parents, colleagues and visitors will be held accountable for any damage incurred to school property and facilities due to their negligence, reckless behaviour leading to damage and or vandalism.

Damage

If an individual damages Academy owned equipment or facilities, they will be charged the price of the repair. Where vandalism or damage due to reckless behaviour takes place which requires cleaning, repair or restoration, a £50 levy will be charged on top of the cost of the repair etc. The levy covers additional costs.

Where a student causes damage and the damage is inflicted due to negligence or misbehaviour, the Academy's Behaviour Management Policy will be followed, and the appropriate disciplinary measures adhered to. Malicious acts where significant damage is caused to Academy-owned equipment or facilities will be referred to the police as criminal damage. The age of criminal responsibility in England is 10.

Repeat offences may result in a fine, depending on the seriousness of the offence, typically, the cost of the damaged items plus the minimum levy to cover costs of additional workload and administration.

If a student causes damage to Academy-owned property or facilities, the Head Teacher will send a notification letter to the student's parents, which includes a payment notice. If an individual intentionally damages another person's property, the Academy **will not** be held accountable, and it will remain impartial.

Should an individual receive a demand for payment and disagree with the charge, they will follow the Academy's Complaints Policy, which can be found on our [website](#).



The Academy will have CCTV in place, to be used as evidence, as well as a protective measure. The Academy's Surveillance and CCTV Policy will be adhered to at all times.

High-value items

The Academy strongly discourages students, parents and colleagues from bringing high-value items, such as electronic devices, jewellery and bicycles, into school.

If high-value property is brought onto the premises, it is the owner's responsibility to ensure that the property is safe and secure.

The Academy will provide the following arrangements for individuals to safely store their personal items:

- Secure arrangements within the Student Hub/Reception.

Whilst the Academy provides secure arrangements for individuals to store their personal items, the Academy is not liable for any loss, damage or theft of any item once stored.

Wherever possible, the Academy encourages parents to make online payments via ParentPay – e.g., to pay for a trip - rather than cash as a safer alternative. In the event that parents are unable to access ParentPay, parents or students will ensure that any cash brought onto school premises is handed to the relevant teacher, or the office, as soon as possible.

Students and colleagues are encouraged to implement appropriate insurance arrangements for their high-value items, should they become damaged, lost or stolen.

Students' and colleagues' items are not covered by the Academy's insurance.

Safe-keeping of valuables

Students

Students may take their item to the Student Hub where it will be locked in a filing cabinet. Students are responsible for collecting the item at the end of the day and the Academy takes no responsibility for the item. There is no requirement for students to hand in valuables: this is on a voluntary basis only.

Valuables that cannot be handed into the Student Hub, such as bicycles, will be stored using alternative secure arrangements, such as bicycle locks, which should be provided by the student. Cycle and scooter storage is provided for this purpose.

Colleagues

Colleagues will not leave bags or other valuables on display in classrooms – these items will be locked in a cupboard in the classroom or any other suitable location.

Colleagues will lock classroom doors when leaving the room unattended.

Any items of significant value should be locked away. Valuables that cannot be stored in a secure area, such as bicycles, should be stored using alternative secure arrangements, such as bicycle locks, which should be provided by the colleague.



Lost property

Lost property will be reported to the Student Hub immediately via email. When a claimant comes to the Student Hub, they will refer to the email.

Additional details may be sought where necessary to ascertain whether the item is the claimants, e.g., checking knowledge of a screensaver on a mobile phone.

If the item has been handed in, it will be returned to the claimant once their identity has been ascertained, unless they are non-returnable items, as outlined in the Behaviour Management Policy.

Student Hub colleagues will return items of personal identification and non-returnable items will be disposed of. Cash or items containing cash that are handed in will be placed in a sealed envelope and placed in the safe in Reception.

Found property

All found property will be handed into the Student Hub.

Property not reclaimed within five working days will be treated as abandoned property.

An attempt will be made by Student Hub colleagues to notify the owner of returnable items of personal identification and returnable high/low-value items.

If the owner does not respond within five working days, the returnable value items of personal identification will be disposed of at the end of the term.

If, by the end of the term following notification, returnable high/low-value items remain unclaimed, the item will be treated as abandoned property and will be disposed of.

In the case of cash, unclaimed monies may be donated to a charitable project chosen by the Student Leadership.

For unidentifiable returnable high/low-value items where there is an expiry date, e.g., concert tickets, office colleagues will endeavour to send an email to all colleagues and students advertising the found property without divulging details.

If, after 14 working days following the notification, the item remains unclaimed, it will be treated as abandoned property and disposed of.

Abandoned property will be handed over to a charity, placed in the general waste, recycled, or securely disposed of, depending on the nature of the item.

Reclaiming property

Claims for lost/mislaid property will be made to the Student Hub in the first instance.

For cash or items containing cash to be released, the sealed envelope will be opened by the claimant and witnessed by a member of the Student Hub and one other person.



Theft

Whilst the Academy recognises that theft is rare, if a student believes an item has been stolen, they will report this immediately to a teacher, who will investigate the incident and endeavour to recover the item.

The Head Teacher will be informed of the incident and will investigate it further.

If it is evident that a student or colleague has stolen an item, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken in accordance with the Behaviour Management Policy or Staff Disciplinary Policy.

The Academy will not accept liability for any items that are stolen, regardless of whether colleagues assist with attempting to recover the item.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis by the Academies Business Manager.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all colleagues, parents and students.

DATA PROTECTION

Rye College [The Academy] processes personal data in accordance with the data protection principles embodied in the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. The Academy complies with the requirements of the data protection legislation as detailed in the Trust Data Protection Policy.

All colleagues are aware of the principles of data protection and will not process personal data unless necessary. The Academy safeguards the personal data it collects through the operation of the Trust's data protection policy and processes and the IT policy. In addition, the Academy has taken steps to ensure that all its contracts that process data have the GDPR compliant provisions.
