



Ripon Grammar School

Lost Property and Liability Policy

1. Introduction

Ripon Grammar School understands that students and staff may bring their personal items onto the premises and, in some circumstances, these items may become lost, damaged or stolen. Whilst the school strongly discourages bringing high-value (monetary) and invaluable (sentimental) items onto the premises, it is inevitable that some staff members and students may wish to do so.

The school has developed this policy to:

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

2. Policy

2.1 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 school policies:

- Positive Behaviour and Rewards Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- CCTV Policy
- Charging Policy

2.2 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.
- "Misplaced 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 the item.
- “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 an 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.

3. Procedures

3.1 Liability

The school 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, members of staff, parents, governors, visitors and contractors are responsible for their personal property and possessions whilst on the school premises, or when participating in school activities such as trips and school events.

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

- Jewellery
- Electronic devices, including mobile phones, Smart watches and tablets
- Keys
- Money
- Cars, bicycles, scooters, skateboards or other

Students, members of staff, parents, governors, visitors and contractors will be held accountable for any damage incurred to school property and facilities due to their negligence.

3.2 Damage

If an individual damages school-owned equipment or facilities, they may be charged the price of the repair in line with the Charging Policy.

All textbooks and exercise books remain the property of the school. Parents may be charged for lost or damaged goods.

Where a student causes damage, and the damage was inflicted due to negligence or misbehaviour, the school’s Positive Behaviour and Rewards Policy will be followed, and the appropriate disciplinary measures adhered to.

If a student causes damage (non-accidental) to school property or facilities, the headmaster will send a notification letter/email to the student’s parents, which includes a payment notice.

If an individual intentionally damages another person’s property, the school 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 school’s Complaints Procedures Policy, which can be found on the school’s website.

Where CCTV is in place the school may use it as evidence, as well as a protective measure. The school's CCTV Policy will be adhered to at all times.

3.3 High-value items

The school strongly discourages students, parents and staff members from bringing high-value (monetary) and invaluable (sentimental) items, such as electronic devices and jewellery, onto the school premises.

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

- Lockers within the staff room
- Student lockers

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

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

Students' and staffs' items are not covered by the school's insurance.

3.4 Safekeeping of valuables

3.4.1 Students

Students have the option of using a school locker to store their valuables.

3.4.2 Staff

Staff will not leave bags or other valuables on display in the classroom – these items will be locked in a cupboard in the classroom, or in the lockers in the staff room.

Any items of significant value will be placed in a secure area, such as a staff locker.

3.4.3

Parents

Parents are strongly encouraged to name property where appropriate for easier identification of lost and abandoned property.

3.5 Lost property

Lost property is to be reported to the school Reception as soon as possible and recorded in the Lost Property Book.

When a claimant comes to the school Reception, the staff will refer to the Lost Property Book.

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 and their name and address has been recorded in the Lost Property Book.

Returnable items of personal identification and non-returnable items will not be retained on the premises for any longer than five working days.

Cash or items containing cash that are handed in will be placed in a sealed envelope and recorded in the Lost Property Book.

3.6 Found property

All found property is to be handed into the school Reception and recorded in the Lost Property Book.

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

Handling and recording of found property is the responsibility of school Reception staff.

A separate record of abandoned property will be held within the school Reception.

An attempt will be made by school Reception staff to notify the owner of returnable items of personal identification and returnable high/low-value items either by telephone, email or text message.

If, by the end of the half 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 the RGS Development Fund.

For unidentifiable returnable high/low-value items where there is an expiry date, e.g. concert tickets, the school Reception staff will endeavour to send an email to all staff 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.

Whenever items are disposed of, the Lost Property Book will be updated accordingly and signed by a member of the school Reception staff.

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.

3.7 Reclaiming property

Claims for lost/mislaid property will be made to the school Reception in the first instance.

Claimants will produce valid identification and sign the Lost Property Book before property is released to them.

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

3.8 Theft

Whilst the school recognises that theft is rare, if a student believes an item has been stolen, they will report this as soon as possible to a member of staff, who will investigate the incident and endeavour to recover the item.

An up-to-date written record of incidents involving theft will be held by the School Welfare Officer.

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

If it is evident that a student or staff member has stolen an item, appropriate disciplinary measures will be actioned in accordance with the Positive Behaviour and Rewards Policy and Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

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

Date of last review: July 2025