

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School



Lost Property & Liability Policy

Signed by:

L.J. Atkinson

Headteacher

Date: [Updated June 2023]

July 2022

M. McDonagh

Chair of

July 2022

Governors

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Vision Statement

At St Joseph's we can do anything through Christ who gives us strength to nurture a school where we respect each other through feeling safe and supported. In Christ we live and learn together providing inspiring opportunities to be the best we can be. To take pride in our school and where we come from. Just as Jesus worked side by side with St Joseph the worker, we will work together to:

- Provide a welcoming environment based on trust and mutual respect.
- Be ready to learn at all times
- Be inclusive and understanding
- Celebrate success
- Commit to having high expectations



Statement of intent

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School understands that pupils 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 items onto the premises, it is inevitable that some staff members and pupils may wish to do so.

The school has developed this policy to:

- Provide a framework for any lost property
- Clarify the pupils' 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.

1. Legal framework

1.1. 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**

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- **Behavioural Policy**
- **Complaints Procedures Policy**

2. Definitions

2.1. 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 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. Liability

- 3.1. 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.
- 3.2. Pupils, parents and staff members are responsible for their personal property and possessions whilst on the school premises, or when partaking in school activities such as trips and school events.
- 3.3. The school will not be held responsible for any loss, damage or theft of personal property. Pupils, parents and staff members 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**
 - **Keys**
 - **Money**
 - **Bicycles, scooters, skateboards or other**
- 3.4. Pupils, parents, staff members and visitors will be held accountable for any damage incurred to school property and facilities due to their negligence.

4. Damage

- 4.1. If an individual damages school-owned equipment or facilities, they will be charged the price of the repair.
- 4.2. Where a pupil causes damage, and the damage was inflicted due to negligence or misbehaviour, the school's **Behavioural Policy** will be followed, and the appropriate disciplinary measures adhered to.
- 4.3. If a pupil causes damage to school property or facilities, the **headteacher** will send a notification letter to the pupil's parents, which includes a payment notice.
- 4.4. If an individual intentionally damages another person's property, the school **will not** be held accountable, and it will remain impartial.
- 4.5. 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.

5. High-value items



- 5.1. The school strongly discourages pupils, parents and staff members from bringing high-value items, such as electronic devices, jewellery and bicycles, onto the school premises.
- 5.2. If high-value property is brought onto the premises, it is the owner's responsibility to ensure that the property is safe and secure.
- 5.3. The school will provide the following arrangements for individuals to safely store their personal items:
 - **Assigned lockers for pupils**
 - **Locked cupboards within classroom for staff use**
 - **[updated] Lockers within staff room for staff use**
 - **A Bicycle storage area (pupils may provide their own locks)**
- 5.4. 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.
- 5.5. Wherever possible, parents are encouraged to make payments online rather than cash as a safer alternative.
- 5.6. Pupils and staff are encouraged to implement appropriate insurance arrangements for their high-value items, should they become damaged, lost or stolen.
- 5.7. Pupils' and staffs' personal items are not covered by the school's insurance.

6. Safe-keeping of valuables

Pupils

- 6.1. Pupils will take their item to the **school office** where it will be placed in an envelope and labelled with child's name and placed in the school safe.
- 6.2. Pupils can collect their item **at the end of the school day**.
- 6.3. Valuables that cannot be handed into the **school office**, such as bicycles, will be stored using alternative secure arrangements, such as **bicycle locks**, which must be provided by individual pupils for their own personal use.

Staff

- 6.4. **[updated]** Staff will not leave bags or other valuables on display in the classroom – these items will be locked **in a store cupboard in the classroom** or support assistants will use their lockers in the staff room. Personal handbags must not be carried around school when working with children.



- 6.5. Staff will keep classroom stock cupboard doors locked at all times.
- 6.6. Any items of significant value will be placed in a secure area, such as the staff room or metal store cupboard.
- 6.7. Valuables that cannot be stored in the **staff room**, such as bicycles, should be stored using alternative secure arrangements, such as bicycle locks, which must be provided by the individual who requires them.
- 6.8. **[updated]** A small number of spare bicycle locks are available to loan from the School Office on request and are available on a first come first served basis and should be returned at the end of the day.

7. Lost property

- 7.1. Lost property will be reported to the school office immediately.
- 7.2. School office staff will:
 - Notify parents via email and social media of lost property to alert parents to check missing uniform or smaller items that may have been misplaced between children.
 - Notify the police of any returnable value items of personal identification if unclaimed after five working days.
 - Ensure that returnable value items of personal identification or non-returnable items are retained securely and safely until collected by the police.
- 7.3. Returnable items of personal identification and non-returnable items will not be retained on the premises for any longer than **five working days**.
- 7.4. Cash or items containing cash that are handed in will be placed in a sealed envelope and kept in the safe until reclaimed..

8. Found property

- 8.1. All found property will be handed into the school office.
- 8.2. Property not reclaimed within **five working days** will be treated as abandoned property.
- 8.3. Handling and recording found property is the responsibility of **school office staff**.
- 8.4. An attempt will be made by **school office staff** to notify the owner of returnable items of personal identification and returnable high/low-value items either by email, letter or text message.
- 8.5. If the owner does not respond within **five working days**, the returnable value items of personal identification will be handed to the police, to whom any subsequent claim will be made.



- 8.6. 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.
- 8.7. In the case of cash, unclaimed monies may be donated to a charitable project chosen by the **governing board**.
- 8.8. For unidentifiable returnable high/low-value items where there is an expiry date, e.g. concert tickets, the school office staff will endeavour to send an email to all staff and pupils advertising the found property without divulging details.
- 8.9. If, after **14 working days** following the notification, the item remains unclaimed, it will be treated as abandoned property and disposed of.
- 8.10. Abandoned property will be handed over to a charity, placed in the general waste, recycled, through the pre-loved uniform stall or securely disposed of, depending on the nature of the item.

9. Reclaiming property

- 9.1. Claims for lost/mislaid property will be made to the **school office** in the first instance.
- 9.2. 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 office staff** and **one** other person.

10. Theft

- 10.1. Whilst the school recognises that theft is rare, if a pupil believes an item has been stolen, they will report this immediately to a member of staff, who will investigate the incident and endeavour to recover the item.
- 10.2. An up-to-date written record of incidents involving theft will be held by the **Finance Officer**.
- 10.3. The **headteacher** will be informed of the incident and will investigate it further.
- 10.4. If it is evident that a pupil or staff member has stolen an item, appropriate disciplinary measures will be actioned in accordance with the **Behavioural Policy** and **Disciplinary Policy and Procedure**.
- 10.5. The school will not accept liability for any items that are stolen, regardless of whether staff members assist with attempting to recover the item.

11. Monitoring and review

- 11.1. This policy will be reviewed on an **annual** basis by the **Governing Body and Headteacher**
- 11.2. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **June 2024**.
- 11.3. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff, parents and pupils.

