

LOST PROPERTY POLICY

Responsibility: Senior Deputy

Date: February 2025

Review period: Annual

Nowadays many young people have more, and more valuable, possessions than they had years ago which causes them, their parents and their teachers some concerns! However, we operate a comprehensive lost property service and rarely if ever fail to find something that has gone missing.

Almost all lost property finds its way to Mrs Sarah Lockwood in the Spinney Centre. Occasionally, clothing sometimes ends up being laundered in which case it might be kept in a different place, and valuable items sometimes get held by House Staff or Senior Staff for reasons of security.

PROCEDURE

1. Lost property is taken to Mrs Lockwood in the Spinney Centre.
2. Items that are named are returned to Houses, usually via the matron. We will seek to identify the owner of all unnamed items and if we can do so will return them via the house matron too. When we cannot identify an owner the item will continue to be held by Mrs Lockwood.
3. We will advertise on Google Classroom and/or Daily Notice when we have items someone needs to come to claim.
4. Items that are not claimed after 6 months will be disposed of but if they may contain sensitive data, e.g. phones, they will be destroyed.

PARENTS / STUDENTS – HOW TO REDUCE THE CHANCES OF LOSING SOMETHING

1. NAME EVERYTHING. REALLY EVERYTHING, including chargers, mouse, headphones, calculator, clothing. EVERYTHING.
2. Switch on location-finding software on anything that offers this facility – phones / tablets / laptops etc. It really works.
3. Don't choose a plain black school bag like everyone else has.
4. Store your stuff in sensible places e.g. the bag rack or your locker. Don't leave it lying around.

STUDENTS - WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE LOST SOMETHING

1. Don't panic and don't assume something is stolen. Almost certainly it is lying somewhere waiting for you.

2. BUT do act straightaway to find it. Don't delay, at all.
3. Have a good look for it. Print off your timetable and physically go to every place you have been since the day before you last remember having it. Don't just look where you think you left it – it won't be there. It will be where you haven't looked!
4. Have you been to chapel, the theatre, assembly in the social centre or United Nations?
5. Bags – try to know whether anyone else has the same kind of bag as you. If they do, it might be useful to make contact with them early. They might have taken your bag by accident and it might be in their house not yours.
6. Think about your friends. Could one of them have taken it back to house for you? Or be playing a silly prank on you?
7. Get someone else to have a look for it with you. If you are worried about the item get a member of staff to help you. Speak to your House Staff or to one of the Deputy Heads in the first instance and they will help.
8. If the item is not found by any of the above then email dailynotice@clayesmore.com with a clear statement of what you have lost or speak to Mrs Lockwood and she will help you write the right kind of email. Wait 24 hours and then look in all the places you looked before.
9. If none of this works then speak to Mr Carpenter who will advise on what to do next.

PARENTS – ADVICE

1. Please ensure that everything brought to school is named clearly. Valuable items, including clothing, should be named in two places, one hidden.
2. Ensure that all valuable items are insured. The school's insurance will NOT cover you for the loss of goods, nor will the school. In the past we have paid out once or twice to replace lost or "stolen" items and they have always turned up some time later. Insurance / replacement is I am afraid your responsibility.
3. Phone or email Sarah Lockwood as soon as you know something has been lost in school and House Staff if the item is thought to have been lost / stolen in House. It is helpful to have a photograph of the item. The quicker we can act the better. As soon as you phone we will get your son/daughter, with help if necessary, to work through the list of things to do above. We will contact you within 48 hours if we have not found the item and will discuss with you how best to proceed.
4. Please do not assume the item has been stolen. Boys and girls, but mostly boys, are often afraid of telling parents they have lost their laptop / phone and so will often say it has been stolen. This is rarely, if ever, the case.
5. The only items, generally, that get stolen are cash and items of clothing. This is a shame but it is important to be realistic about it: the boarding houses are homely but not home. And more than once recently we have found that goods reported stolen have been borrowed by a sibling. So,

- Students should NOT carry more than a few pounds at any one time, and all amounts more than this should be deposited for safe-keeping with House Staff or locked in a locker. Money that is stolen is rarely recovered.
- Occasionally, t-shirts / jeans / clothing are stolen, often for quite complex reasons. Clothing that might attract the interest or envy of others should be named in at least two places. Clothing that is “borrowed” is almost always recovered if it is named.

SEARCHES

1. Parents sometimes ask us to conduct searches for lost or stolen items. Please understand we will not conduct searches of whole boarding houses unless there really are exceptional reasons for doing so. This is partly because such searches are ineffective, partly because such a search is a humiliating intrusion into the lives of lots of innocent young people and partly because invariably the item has been lost not stolen.
2. However, we will from time to time search an individual’s room and property when we have good grounds to do so – if we suspect possession of drugs or alcohol, for example. This will be done by a senior member of staff, with an adult witness and whenever possible in the presence of the individual. More details are available in the Search and Confiscation Policy.

DISPOSAL OF LOST PROPERTY

All named property will be returned to its owner via the House Matron.

Unnamed and uncollected lost property will be disposed of one week after the end of each term as follows:

1. Unnamed items of school uniform will be given to a House Matron for further use in school.
2. Unnamed non-uniform clothing may be sent to one of the local charity shops or to the local recycling centre.
3. Unnamed sports equipment will either be used by the games / PE staff or sent to the recycling centre.
4. Phones and other items which may contain personal data will be destroyed.
5. All other recyclable items will be sent for re-cycling.
6. All other items will be sent to land-fill.