

Damage / Vandalism to the Academy Policy

Status	Optional
Reviewed by	Local governing body/Principal
Frequency of Review	Bi-annually
Date of Approval	September 2026
Date of review	September 2028
Author	Principal/School Business Manager

Damage / Vandalism to the Academy Policy (2026) Review Date: Autumn Term 2028

1. Rationale and Scope This policy applies to all pupils enrolled at Etonbury Academy (ETA). It outlines the expectations, investigative procedures, and outcomes in the event of damage to academy property, including books, IT equipment, PE equipment, furniture, and the academy premises.

ETA expects all pupils to treat the school building, its grounds, and all equipment with respect at all times. This policy also covers damage caused to third-party property during school visits, educational trips, or on school-provided transport.

2. Policy & Procedures

Accidental Damage vs. Intentional Vandalism ETA distinguishes between genuine accidents and deliberate or reckless misconduct:

- **Accidental Damage:** General wear and tear or minor genuine accidents occurring during supervised, reasonable activity will not attract financial penalties or behavioral sanctions.
- **Intentional or Reckless Damage:** Damage resulting from deliberate vandalism, negligence, misuse, or dangerous behavior will trigger investigation, formal sanctions, and full cost recovery.

Investigations and Standard of Proof Any pupil who causes damage, or is reasonably suspected of causing damage, will be referred to the appropriate Head of Year (HOY).

- The HOY will conduct a fair investigation, taking into account statements from the pupil, staff, and any witnesses.
- Findings of responsibility will be established on the **balance of probabilities**.
- Sanctions will be applied in line with ETA's Behaviour Policy and, where appropriate, the Exclusion and Suspension Policy.
- ETA reserves the right to involve external authorities (e.g., the Police) where a serious criminal offense may have occurred.

Cost Recovery, Charging, and Repair Where a pupil is found responsible for deliberate or negligent damage:

1. **Evidence Gathering:** The damage will be assessed and documented/photographed.
2. **Invoice & Notification:** A formal report and photograph will be sent to parents/carers alongside an invoice detailing the repair or replacement cost.
3. **Outside Contractors:** Where specialist external contractors or specific technical repairs are required, the actual cost charged to the academy will be billed to the parent/carer.
4. **Shared Responsibility:** If damage is caused by multiple pupils acting together, the total cost of repair or replacement will be divided equally among the pupils involved.

Financial Hardship and Alternative Resolution In cases where paying for repairs would cause severe financial hardship, parents/carers should contact the academy. At the academy's discretion, the pupil may be given the opportunity to undertake supervised community service or refurbishment tasks around the academy as an alternative resolution.



Non-Payment and Appeals

- **Disputes:** Parents/carers wishing to dispute a finding of responsibility or the invoiced amount must contact the Head of Year within 5 working days of receiving the invoice. Unresolved disputes may be escalated via the Academy Complaints Policy.
- **Non-Payment:** Where liability is established and no financial hardship application has been made, failure to settle the account will result in the matter being escalated to the Trust Finance Director.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation The effectiveness and consistent application of this policy will be regularly monitored by the Principal and the Finance Team.

4. Implementation and Review This policy is published on the academy website for parent/carer access and shared with all staff. It is reviewed every two years.

5. Links to Other Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Exclusion and Suspension Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- Finance and Lettings Policy