



St Chad's College

Durham

Key Policy

Updated: Epiphany 2025
Review Due: Epiphany 2026

Policy Statement

It is the policy of St Chad's College to provide keys to its staff to enable them to carry out their work. Other keys are made available under supervision to external contractors requiring access to parts of the College estate. All keys issued are to be managed in such a way as to protect the security of the College buildings, individuals and other assets.

Background

The College's residential and administrative buildings currently have a range of locks and keys fitted, ranging from security keys and number pads to latch and mortice locks. This necessitates a large number of keys being in circulation. The College has developed a universal key management policy. This is intended to reduce unauthorised access to sensitive areas, lessen the likelihood of theft, and maintain security.

Terms and Definitions

People:

3.1 Lock and Key Manager (LKM)

The Finance and Operations Director is the designated LKM and is responsible for the overall management of locks and keys for the College.

3.2 Departmental Key Manager (DKM)

The DKM is the single point of contact for the administration of departmental keys.

3.3 Key-holder

Key-holders are individuals who have been authorised temporary ownership of a College key or keys.

Types of Keys:

3.4 Basic: The unique key that opens a single door, these low-level keys are known as Basic Keys, or Operating Keys. For example, a building key that opens one office.

3.5 Section Keys: Keys that typically open 5 – 24 doors. For example, a key that opens all the doors in a particular building.

3.6 Master Keys: – High level keys that open all the doors in the entire College. Holders of such keys are limited to College Officers, section heads and others requiring such access as part of their role.

Rules of Key Issue

Staff **should not routinely** have College keys in their possession which they do not need for their immediate duties. The only keys that should be taken home or away from the premises are those keys which are needed to gain immediate access to initial places of work e.g. a building or office.

By possessing a key, the key-holder agrees not to compromise the security of any area or building and further agrees to secure each door upon leaving the area unattended. **It is every individual's responsibility** to ensure that keys in their possession giving access to College buildings and locations are kept secure at all times. Receipt of a College key carries these implied responsibilities. The following acts are examples of violations of the Key Policy and are prohibited; staff found in violation of any of the acts listed below may be subject to the relevant disciplinary procedure.

1. Unauthorised loaning of keys – the loan of a master key, to anyone (including students) for any period (however brief) will be considered to amount to gross misconduct
2. Transfer of keys without authorization
3. Unauthorised duplication of keys
4. Altering keys, lock or mechanisms
5. Damaging tampering or vandalising any College lock or hardware
6. Propping open secure doors
7. Admitting unauthorised persons into the building
8. Failure to return a key when requested by College, or upon leaving the employment of the College
9. Failure to report lost keys

Overall Responsibility for Key Management

The strategic management of the College's keys and locks will be the responsibility of the Lock and Key Manager. They will manage the fitting of all locks and the supply and issue of keys to Departments.

Departmental Responsibilities

Department staff may only obtain keys to College facilities and spaces from Heads of Departments, who are responsible for keys issued for buildings, areas and spaces within their control.

The Departmental key Managers are also responsible for:

- a. Developing a departmental key control procedure in consultation with the LKM
- b. Acting as Departmental Key Manager (DKM) to administer the departmental key control policy. He/she is individually responsible for:
 - Requesting keys
 - Issuing keys within the department
 - Collecting keys on the departure of their staff
 - Internal departmental key audits
 - Reporting lost keys
 - Returning unused keys to the LKM

- d. Maintaining records of keys received and issued
- e. Periodically auditing all key records by comparing with the master key roll
- f. Reporting all lost keys to the Estates & Facilities Services Division

Reception responsibilities

Bedroom keys, and spare keys, are kept in a key cabinet in reception. The nominated Reception Key Manager has the same responsibilities as Department Key Managers (see 6 above) and is responsible for compiling and updating the master key roll. The key cabinet must be kept secure at all times.

Key Issue

A key issue log will be maintained with each individual key number noted. A signature and date will be recorded against each entry on issue of that key. All keys must be signed for without exception – including by staff, students, College Officers. Keys that are issued to an individual department must remain tightly controlled by the DKM, with managers taking responsibility for their circulation to others.

Masters and Sub Masters

Master and Sub Master keys will be restricted in number as they permit access to so many locations. Since Master Keys provide access to students' and visitors' bedrooms, Master Key holders will be required to provide a basic DBS disclosure and complete a personal declaration with details of any previous convictions. Additional staff may occasionally be given authorised access to a Master Key, but not day-to-day ownership, they are to be returned to secure storage immediately after use.

Return of Keys

The DKM will be responsible for signing keys out to staff on initial issue where they require personal keys. They are also to ensure that, on leaving the College, individuals return all their keys so they can be signed back in and re-issued or destroyed. Staff who do not adhere to this may be subject to the relevant Disciplinary procedure.

Office/Building Transfer of Staff

Individuals moving to another office or building must return all relevant keys to the DKM within one working day of transferring to the new location. Employees shall not exchange keys, including file cabinet or desk keys, with any other employee. To obtain keys for a new office, the proper issuing procedure must be followed.

Termination of Employment

All staff that leave the College (or who have temporarily been issued with College keys) must return all keys to their DKM prior to their departure, and the key database amended accordingly. The Finance and Operations Director will ask the individual to return their keys (in the official 'leaver letter'). The same applies to employees who are dismissed.

Lost, Missing or Stolen Keys

Staff: Any stolen, lost or missing keys must be reported to the DKM immediately who should investigate the circumstances surrounding the loss. A summary of his/her findings should then be given to the Lock and Key Manager (LKM). An assessment based on the circumstances will then be made as to the necessity for remedial measures. In many such circumstances, individuals will be required to pay for any lost missing or stolen keys. This may include lock replacement if the security risk makes it necessary to replace any locks.

Students: Any stolen, lost or missing keys must be reported to the Reception Key Manager immediately. There is a £30 charge for lost keys. Students must return their room keys at the end of their occupancy of College accommodation.

Contractors, Vendors and other Visitors

DKMs must ensure that keys for outside contractors and other authorised visitors are signed out in the usual way. The DKM will be responsible for ensuring no breaches to the College's short-term or long-term security occur through these visits. No staff should be expected to lend keys for which they are responsible, to other parties to gain access to the College's buildings and facilities unless specifically authorised by their DKM.