

iCollege

Alternative Education West Berkshire

Absconding from School Policy

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1: Key Contact list			
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2.Purpose	<p>Schools have a duty of care towards their staff and pupils. This duty of care requires that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that pupils are safe and remain in the care of the school at all times throughout the school day and during school led activities. The safety of all pupils will be given our highest priority. A pupil who absconds should be an extremely rare occurrence. We actively work to provide a secure and safe environment where children want to come to enjoy learning with others as part of a caring community.</p> <p>The purpose of this document is to set out the procedures for all stakeholders should a pupil leave the school without permission (abscond). This policy is designed to put into place swift and effective actions to locate any pupil who absconds and to notify and involve parents/carers and external organisations at every appropriate point. Pupils should never be allowed to leave the premises during school time without an adult's permission.</p>
3. Definition	<p>Internal absconding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Where a pupil leaves the care of a responsible person without permission but remains on the school site •Where a pupil leaves a lesson without permission but remains on the school site <p>External absconding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Where a pupil leaves the school site without permission •Where a pupil leaves an offsite provision without permissions. E.g. curriculum swimming, alternative education provision •Where a pupil leaves a defined area or supervision of the responsible adult without permission. E.g when undertaking fieldwork or an educational visit •Where a pupil leaves the designated transport provided for them without permission <p>Effective supervision is dependent on a number of factors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Age of the pupils •Ability of the pupils •Number of pupils •Activities being undertaken •Pupil behaviour •Site layout and security •Specific identified risks. E.g Pupils with a history of absconding, public rights of way through school grounds, building work etc.
4. Site Security	<p>The unit lead and H&S Co-ord, SBM and Management Committee ensures iCollege has adequate security arrangements for the grounds and buildings by ensuring that each building is securely locked and alarmed each night; that each building has a secure entrance with security arrangements as appropriate and; that the school's perimeters are secure.</p> <p>Information to pupils:</p> <p>School rules and expectations are clearly displayed and reinforced throughout the school year</p> <p>Individual pupil risk assessments:</p> <p>Where there is a foreseeable risk of absconding, there should be an Individual Pupil Risk Assessment in place which clearly details the control measures required to reduce the risk of absconding</p>
5. Internal Absconding	<p>In these circumstances, school staff will not pursue a pupil or force them back into the school building. The school gates will be monitored and staff may be placed in key viewpoints in order to gather information. School staff will use their judgement, knowledge of the pupil and assessment of the pupil's safety to manage the situation. This will include taking into account the pupil's age and vulnerability. The demeanor of the pupil will need to be taken into account. If the</p>

	<p>pupil is upset or angry, care should be taken in approaching the child. In all cases, staff should not place themselves in situations of potential danger of injury.</p> <p>Staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Inform the office immediately •Ask the office to inform Lead teacher, AHT or HT •Request radios/mobile phones for all staff involved
<p>6. External Absconding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A member of staff who knows the pupil well and has a good relationship with the pupil will follow the pupil to the perimeter fence or gate and will try to persuade the pupil to stay in the school •If a pupil is attempting to leave site and the adult is not at risk, the adult can provide a non-holding block in front of the exit/gate and should verbally advise the child to remain on site. If the adult is at risk of being hurt the child should be verbally directed to remain on site, but no blockage formed. A member of staff can use a safe hold if the child is in immediate danger of hurting themselves or putting themselves in a dangerous situation •The member of staff who witnesses the pupil leave must alert the school office immediately •The office must alert the Lead Teacher, Assistant Headteacher and/or the Headteacher immediately. The lead person will direct the course of action •The child's parents/carers should be contacted immediately. The parent/carer should attend situation and make contact with their child. If the parent/carer does not answer the phone, a message should be left that informs them of the situation and that the police will be contacted immediately if the parent/carer has not been in contact •If the parent/carer gets in contact they should be advised that they need to attend the situation immediately and locate the child. If parent/carer does NOT respond, then the police should be informed. As soon as the police have been called the Headteacher or assistant Headteacher from the school needs to be immediately informed •As active pursuit may encourage a child to leave the site and may also cause the pupil to panic; possibly putting him or herself at risk by running onto a busy road, staff will not chase but will try to keep a child in sight at a distance. The adult should call after the child or try and talk to the child to try and get them to come back. In this case, visual from a distance is preferable as long as the child does NOT run or panic as a result •The staff who follow the child should have a radio or mobile phone with them to contact the school. If they have no means of contact with the school, a member of staff will join them with a means of contact •The LT, AHT or HT may request additional staff to join the search, on foot or in a vehicle, taking a mobile phone to contact the school •The AHT or HT will contact the pupil's parents/carers. If parents cannot be contacted, the police will be called • If the searching staff member loses sight of the pupil they must contact the school office giving details of their location and a description of the pupil •If the pupil has left the immediate vicinity of the school grounds and is no longer visible then the AHT or HT will make a decision as to how to take matters further, which will take into account the age of the pupil, the nature of the incident which led to the pupil absconding, the pupils previous history of being involved in episodes of absconding and their outcomes •If the pupil returns of their own volition, parents/carers and the police will be informed •After the incident, the LT, AHT or HT and the parents/carers need to decide whether it is appropriate for the pupil to return to school for the remainder of the day or go home. •When the pupil returns to school, they will meet with the LT, AHT or HT so that the reasons for absconding may be discussed in detail. At this point a decision will be made as to the appropriateness of further actions •As soon as possible after the event, the parents/carers of the pupil will meet with the LT,AHT or HT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The incident will be recorded on the school's online reporting system (CPOMs) and a report made to the local authority using CREST (Incident reporting system) •If the pupil has a social worker, they will be informed •Actions during the incident will be evaluated by school staff, reflecting on the procedures and events
7. Pupils who return to school after absconding on the school grounds	Pupils who abscond will do so as a result of a specific incident which may have taken place at school, at home or on the way to school. For those pupils who return to school either by their own choice, with parental support or following intervention by a member of staff, thought should be given to their welfare. They are likely to be in need of support, understanding and perhaps some time apart from their peers.
8. Parents and Carers	Parents/carers of pupils are responsible for supporting the work of the school and encouraging their children to keep to all school procedures and policies. Once school has informed the parents/carers that their child has absconded, parents/carers are responsible for actively supporting the school with subsequent procedures and actions. This could include coming into school to help secure the safety of their child as well as meeting with the LT,AHT or HT in order to agree subsequent actions.
9. Monitoring and Evaluation	Following each incident, actions and events will be monitored and evaluated. Individual risk assessments for pupils may be generated or amended as appropriate
10. Associated Policies	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy Suspension and Permanent exclusion Policy Local Offer -SEND Policy

11: Change Record				
Version Number	Date Approved	MC Minute Reference	Description of Amendments	Review Date
1	07.05.24	SWBAC	New policy	March '24
1.1	20.05.25	MC	Reviewed by JF- admin changes only	May 25

Keeping Children Safe in Education

All staff at iCollege take seriously their responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in their care; this includes providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge; protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Sign:		Sign:	
Jacqueline Davies		Tim Pritchard	
Head Teacher		Chair of Governing Body	
Date:		Date:	