

# Policy for Absconding pupils



## 2022-2023

Approved by:	Rachel Day	Date: <b>September 2022</b>
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Last reviewed on:	September 2022
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Next review due by:	September 2023
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This policy reflects the school's values in the way we safeguard children in our care.

### **Purpose of the policy.**

The purpose of this non-statutory policy is to set out clearly for all stakeholders, the process that will take place should a child abscond from school.

### **Aim**

We actively work to provide a secure, safe environment, a school where children want to come to enjoy learning with others as part of a caring community. We recognise that it is highly unlikely that a child will try to abscond from our school but this policy is written to ensure we are ready to deal with this eventuality should it occur. If a child has SEND needs and absconding is likely then they should have a risk assessment (see Appendix two).

### **Definition**

To abscond is to *'leave without permission'*.

Under Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and in Common Law, schools and other education settings owe a duty of care towards their pupils. This duty of care requires that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that pupils are safe and remain within the care of the school at all times throughout the school day and during school-led activities.

**Where a pupil, present at registration, is found to be absent from school without authorisation and was not seen leaving the premises the following procedures should be followed:**

- Member of staff to inform the Head Teacher or member of SLT, and main office.
- Head Teacher or member of SLT to organise a search of buildings and known places that the pupil may have gone to, in the school environment.
  - Office staff to check CCTV footage to see if the pupil has left the school grounds.
- If the pupil is not found, then all available staff to complete a more thorough sweep of the school and check the perimeter of the grounds.
- School office to phone the police when the area has been fully checked if the child is not found and issue them with a photo of the child and last known timed sighting.
- School office to contact parents/carers and inform them of the situation.
- Consideration will be given to whether the search should be extended beyond the school perimeter. This decision will be based on staff's knowledge of the child and on the levels of risk, and on what action is in the child's best interests.

*Any staff (a minimum of 2) who leave school grounds to take mobile phones to contact the school.*

**Once a pupil has been found then the HT will use their professional judgement to outline the response towards the pupil and the support the pupil will need in the future.**

A written report will be completed on CPOMS  
Headteacher or member of SLT to brief the Police and parents.

**Where a pupil attempts or is seen to be leaving the school premises without authorisation the following procedures should be followed:**

- Staff must follow the student to the perimeter fence or gate and must try to persuade the student to stay in the school.
  - If a student is deemed to be a high risk to himself or other people, then staff should adhere to the Use of reasonable Force Policy with reference to holding the student, if appropriate.
  - At all times staff must be aware that active pursuit may encourage the student to leave the immediate vicinity of the school and may also cause the pupil to panic, possibly putting him or herself at risk by running onto a busy road, for example.
  - If the student has left the immediate vicinity of the school, the DSL, Headteacher or SLT members must be contacted immediately and the lead person will direct the course of action.
  - Police will be notified and a photo of the child sent.
  - Staff (minimum of 2) will follow the student and engage in a local search, following the student at a safe distance if in view ensuring they have a mobile phone to keep in regular contact with school;
  - The office staff will contact the student's parents/carers.
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- If the searching staff lose sight of the student they must contact the school office giving details of their location and the clothes which the student is wearing, in order that they update the police.
  - If the pupil(s) has left the immediate vicinity of the school grounds and is no longer visible then the SLT will make a decision as to how to take matters further, which will take into account the age of the student, the prevailing weather conditions, the nature of the incident which led to the pupil absconding, the pupil's previous history of being involved in episodes of absconding and their outcomes.
  - If the student returns of their own volition, parents/carers and the police will be informed as soon as possible.

**Upon return to school the pupil must meet with the Headteacher and parents 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.**

A written report will be recorded on CPOMS

*Investigate the incident to determine how it happened and consider the effectiveness of the school's response. Take action to prevent recurrence and amend any risk assessments as necessary for specific children or areas of school site. .*

### **Forest school procedure Lost Child/abscond**

Wolf call to bring all learners to Base Camp

Head Count

Register to identify missing child

FS Leader searches Forest school area

Class Teacher stays with class at Base Camp

Class Teacher uses Walkie Talkie/mobile phone to alert school office and establish if child has been seen in school grounds.

FS leader and/or class teacher establishes:

-where child was last seen

-what they were wearing

To pass this info on to the school office.

School office contacts police

School office contacts parents

If deemed necessary, staff from school join Forest school session to support the search.

FS session can continue if it is deemed appropriate and FS leader is no longer needed in search.

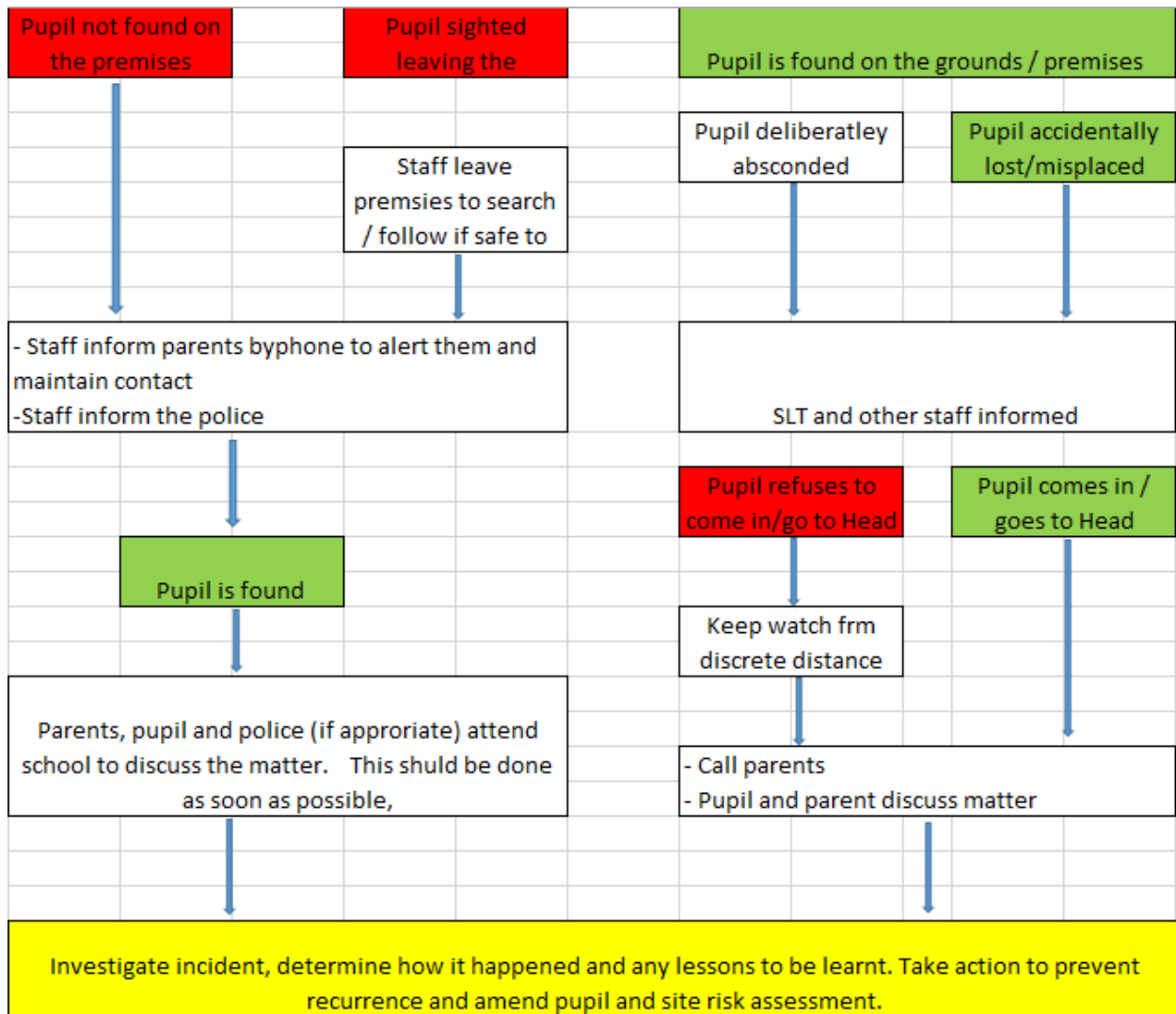
See main Absconding Policy for actions.

Appendix one - School Procedure if a child is missing/absconds

Staff member informs SLT/Headteacher that a pupil is possibly missing/absconding from school premises.

Staff to check location of pupil / if pupil is still on premises by:

- Staff to check last known location, known hiding/safe spaces, any areas pupil may have frequented previously in this situation.
- Staff members to man any point of easy exit from school ground, whilst others sweep buildings and grounds systematically, including the top field



Appendix two (Risk assessment template)



# Risk Assessment

SCHOOL: Grendon Underwood Combined School NAME OF ASSESSOR(S):

DATE OF ASSESSMENT:

JOB TYPE:

<b>What are the hazards?</b>	<b>Who might be harmed and how? (Who is at special risk?)</b>	<b>What are you already doing? (Current control measures, including those for people at special risk)</b>	<b>What further action is necessary? (Further control measures)</b>	<b>Action by whom</b>	<b>Action by when</b>	<b>Done</b>

Signed:

(Headteacher)

Signed: