**Wribbenhall School**

**Absconding Policy**



Written: Spring Term 2020

Date of Next review: Autumn Term 2021

**To be read in conjunction with:**

Attendance Policy

Safeguarding Policy

**Approved by:**

Proprietor: Ellis Wells

18th February 2020

**Absconding Policy**

The purpose of this document is to set out the procedures to all stakeholders should a child leave the premises without permission. It is closely linked to the school’s ‘Safeguarding Policy’.

Aim

We work actively to provide a secure, safe environment for the pupils at Wribbenhall School. We want pupils to enjoy coming to school and being a part of our small community. We recognise that it is highly unlikely that a pupil should abscond from the school premises, but in the event that it should happen, the procedures detailed below, will ensure that we are ready to deal with this eventuality.

Definition

To abscond is to ‘leave without permission’. This could mean a child leaves the school building, yet remains in the grounds, or leaves the school grounds.

School Grounds

The school site available to pupils during the day is fully fenced in and locked with due regard to Fire and evacuation procedures and safety. Regular checks of the fencing and gates are carried out by the proprietor who has responsibility for the physical premises also as part of safeguarding.

Absent Pupils

If a pupil, who has previously been known as present, is found to be absent, the procedure will be as follows:

1. Teacher to inform the proprietor straight away.

2. Proprietor to initiate a sweep of the school premises, followed by the domestic second story of the building.

3. If the child is found then they will be returned to the classroom. At an appropriate time an investigation into their absence will be conducted by an appointed member of staff.

4. If pupil is not found, gather as many staff as possible to re-search the grounds as quickly and as thoroughly as possible.

5. School staff to phone parents and police. Every attempt to contact parents and police should be recorded.

5. Senior member of staff will then make the decision as to whether the search should be extended beyond the school grounds. The decision may also be influenced by staff’s knowledge of the child who has absconded.

6. Any staff who leave the school grounds should take a mobile phone with them and not put themselves or the child in danger at any point (see below).

7. Once the child has been found, the member(s) of staff will use their professional judgement to inform how they respond to support the child.

8. A written report will be logged with the proprietor (see ‘Absconding Form’).

9. The proprietor will brief parents and police, if necessary.

10. Upon their return into school, and when calm enough to do so, the pupil will meet with an appropriate adult so that reasons for the absconding can be understood. A support plan for the individual may need to be considered along with sanctions appropriate for the pupil’s needs.

## Pupils who are Seen to Abscond from School, but Remain Within the School Grounds

In these circumstances, a pupil will not be pursued by staff or forced back into the school. Staff will remain at a safe distance, keeping the child in sight. Interventions should only be attempted by staff only if the pupil is a danger to themselves or others. Any damage to property may be charged to the child’s parent(s) / carer(s).

Staff will also consider the pupil’s age, vulnerability and demeanour when considering decisions to be taken. Staff will support each other in care and decisions to be made.

## Pupils who are Seen to Abscond from the School Grounds

Where a pupil is seen to leave the school premises without authorisation, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Active pursuit of the pupil should not be considered. This may make the pupil panic possibly putting himself / herself into immediate danger. Staff will instead try to follow, keeping the pupil in sight and at a safe distance. Any staff who leave the school grounds should take a mobile phone with them and not put themselves or the child in danger at any point.

2. Teacher to inform proprietor straight away.

3. Consider if there is a member of staff who has a good connection with the pupil, who can support the absconding pupil.

4. School office to phone parents and police. Every attempt to contact parents and police should be recorded.

5. Once the child has been found, the member(s) of staff will use their professional judgement to inform how they respond to support the child.

6. A written report will be logged with the proprietor (see ‘Absconding Form’).

7. The proprietor will brief parents and police, if necessary.

8. Upon their return to school, and when calm enough to do so, the pupil will meet with an appropriate member of staff, so that reasons for the absconding can be understood. A support plan for the individual may need to be considered along with sanctions appropriate for the pupil’s needs.

9. If the pupil returns to school of their own volition, parents and police to be phoned.

Parents will always be informed if their child absconds from the school.

All incidents will be recorded on an ‘Absconding Form’ and attached to a school ‘Safeguarding Concern Form’.

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| Abscondence Record | | | | |
| Pupil |  | | Age |  |
| Date and time of incident |  | | | |
| Dress, appearance &  distinguishing marks |  | | | |
| Last seen |  | | | |
| First actions |  | | | |
| Parent contacted |  | | | |
| Police contacted |  | | | |
| Timeline of events  (continue on the back of this  form if necessary) | Time |  | | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Timeline of events  (continue on the back of this  form if necessary) | Time |  |