



Absconding Policy

“Everyone who works with children should do what is in the best interests of the child.”

Article 3 United Nations Rights of the Child

Purpose of the policy.

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

Aim

At Trinity 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, it is likely then they should have an individual risk assessment.

Definition: To abscond is to ‘leave without permission’. 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 attempts or is seen to be leaving the school premises without authorisation the following procedures should be followed:

- Member of staff to inform Head Teacher or Deputy Head teacher and main office
- Staff must follow the child to the school fence or gate and must try to persuade the child to stay in the school
- If by leaving the school the child is known to be putting themselves in danger, adults must exercise their duty of care and stop the child, physically if necessary
- As active pursuit may encourage a child to leave the site and may also cause the child 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 Headteacher/ Deputy headteacher will contact the child’s parents/carers
- If the child has left the immediate vicinity of the school grounds and is no longer visible then the Police must be informed
- If the child returns of their own volition, parents/carers and the police will be informed as soon as possible
- Upon his or her return to school, and when the child is calm, the child must be seen by the Headteacher 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 meeting with parents/carers will be arranged
- A written report will be filed on the incident and recorded on My Concern

Monitoring and Evaluation

Each incident will be monitored and evaluated. Individual Risk Assessments for any children believed to pose a risk of absconding will be created by school with the support of staff and parents/carers.

Parents and Carers

Parents and 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 that their child has absconded, parents and 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 a Senior Leader in order to agree subsequent actions.

Individual Risk Assessments will be shared and signed by parents/carers.

Reviewed:

November 2023 – Sally Sleath

April 2025 – Sally Sleath