



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Children who abscond from school policy

"Loving to learn; learning to love"

"A new command I give you, Love one another.

As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

John 13;3

RATIFIED BY FULL BOARD OF GOVERNORS: 8TH JULY 2025

REVIEW DATE: JULY 2028

Equality Act Statement:

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.
2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Our Christian Vision

“A new command I give you, Love one another.

As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”

John 13;3

All Saints' Church of England Primary School will be a place where all are encouraged to search for signs of God's glory and, in so doing, people's faith will be increased, and they will have the grace to follow Jesus' commandment to love one another.

Our School Values

Our Christian values permeate all aspects of school life, and we encourage the children to live these out in all that they do, with all children having the opportunity to flourish as children of God.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures for staff should a pupil leave the school premises without permission.

2.0 AIM

2.1 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 Christian community.

2.2 We recognise that it is highly unlikely that a pupil will try to abscond from our school but these procedures are in place to ensure we are ready to deal with this eventuality should it occur.

3.0 TO ABSCOND IS TO 'LEAVE WITHOUT PERMISSION'

3.1 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 always remain within the care of the school throughout the school day and during school led activities.

3.2 Although the perimeter of the site is fenced, the gates are locked during the school day and the main entrance has an electronic release system, we recognise that it is possible to circumvent these barriers.

4.0 WHERE A PUPIL PRESENT AT REGISTRATION IS FOUND TO BE ABSENT FROM SCHOOL

4.1 Where a pupil present at registration is found to be absent from school without authorisation the procedures should be as follows:

1. Class Teacher to inform the Headteacher, or a member of the SLT **and** the school office.
2. Headteacher or member of the SLT to organise a search of the building and known places that the pupil may have gone to.

3. If the pupil is not found, then all available staff to complete a more thorough sweep of the school and grounds.
4. School office to contact parents/carers and inform them of the situation. Every attempt to contact parents to be recorded.
5. School office to phone the police when the school and grounds have been fully checked and the child is not found (Office member to start compiling Appendix A- Record of calls sheet).
6. Consideration will be given to whether the search should be extended beyond the school buildings and grounds. This decision will be based on staff knowledge of the child and levels of risk and on what action is in the child's best interests. The age of the pupil will also be considered. A member of staff will NEVER leave the grounds on their own- there will always be two members of staff.
7. Any staff who leave the school grounds **MUST** take a mobile phone to contact school.
8. Once a pupil has been found the lead member of the SLT will use their professional judgement to outline the response towards the pupil and the support the pupil will need in the future.
9. The lead SLT member will brief parents and the police.
10. The staff members involved will be given time immediately to write a full report of the incident. This will be shared with parents/carers, staff members involved and the Headteacher, who will all sign the report and a copy will be placed in the child's personal pupil file.
11. Upon his or her return to school and when the pupil is calm, the pupil will meet with a member of the SLT so that the reasons for absconding may be discussed in detail; parents/carers will need to be present. At this point a decision will be made as to the appropriateness of further actions, including any sanction that may be put in place. This meeting will be minuted and all present will sign the minutes, and a copy will be placed in the child's personal pupil file.

5.0 PUPILS WHO ABSCOND FROM THE SCHOOL BUILDING BUT REMAIN ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

5.1 In these circumstances, school staff will not pursue a pupil or force him/her back into the school building.

5.2 School staff will use their judgement, knowledge of the pupil and assessment of the pupil's safety in deciding what to do. This will include taking into account the pupil's age and vulnerability.

5.3 The demeanour of the pupil will need to be taken into account. If the pupil is upset or angry, care should be taken in approaching the child. The age of the pupil will also be taken into account.

5.4 In all cases, staff should not place themselves in situations of potential danger of injury.

6.0 PUPILS SEEN ATTEMPTING TO OR ACTUALLY LEAVING SCHOOL PREMISES WITHOUT AUTHORISATION

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

1. A member of staff will alert the Headteacher. In their absence, this would be the Deputy Headteacher or the deputising Senior Leader; this lead person will direct the course of action.
2. 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, exit or gate and will try to persuade the pupil to stay in the school. Another member of staff will be present but standing back and observing.
3. 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. Two members of staff will observe the child at a distance and will NEVER leave the premises on their own, unless not doing so may place the child at further risk of harm.
4. The lead member of the SLT may request additional staff to join the search in a vehicle, taking a mobile phone to contact the school.
5. A member of staff will contact the pupil's parents/carers to inform them. The call or attempted calls will be recorded (Appendix A). A member of the administration team will also call the police to log the incident and make a log of the call.
6. If the searching staff members lose sight of the pupil, they must contact the school office giving details of their location and the clothes that the pupil is wearing.
7. If the pupil has left the immediate vicinity of the school grounds and is no longer visible, then the lead SLT member will decide how to take matters further. This will consider the age of the pupil, 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 pupil returns of their own volition, parents/carers and the police will be informed.
8. Upon his or her return to school, and when the pupil is calm, the pupil will meet with a member of the SLT so that the reasons for absconding may be discussed in detail, with the parent/carer present. At this point a decision will be made as to the appropriateness of further actions, including any sanction that may be put in place. A member of staff will take minutes of the meeting which will be signed by all involved and a copy kept on the child's school pupil file.

7.0 PUPILS WHO RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER ABSCONDING

7.1 Pupils who abscond will do so because of a specific incident which may have taken place at school, at home or on the way to school.

7.2 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 need support, understanding and perhaps some time apart from their peers.

8.0 PARENTS AND CARERS

8.1 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.

8.2 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.

9.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

9.1 Each incident will be monitored and evaluated. Individual risk assessments for pupils may be appropriate.

This is not a blanket procedure and every situation will be risk assessed on an individual basis based on the incident and the pupil in question.

Record of calls made when a child has absconded the school premises

Child who has absconded school: _____

Date of incident: _____

Time school became aware child had absconded: _____

Time child returned back safely to school premises:

[illegible]