



HILL VIEW SCHOOL

Policy Name:

Abscinding Policy 2024

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Policy Statement

Under Section 3 of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, Section 175 of the Education and Inspections Act 2002, and in Common Law, schools and other educational settings owe a duty of care towards their learners. This duty of care requires that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that learners are safe and remain within the care of the school at all times throughout the school day and during school led activities.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Hill View School provides a safe and secure learning environment and puts safeguards in place to monitor learner attendance. Where a learner absconds staff will follow the procedures listed to assist in the safe recovery and return of the learner, and report all events for review of such incidents.

School Security and Monitoring

Hill View School will monitor learners' attendance throughout the school day and provide a secure site by:

- Recording learner attendance at morning class registration at 8:45
- Securing all designated security gates between the hours of 9:10 and 14:45
- Logging late arrivals at the office;
- Monitoring and supervising learners with the designated number of staff during play-time;
- Staff will report any missing learners during class time to the main office;
- Monitoring and supervising learners with the designated number of staff during lunch-time break;
- Recording learner attendance at the afternoon class registration at the end of the lunch break; and
- Ensuring all none teaching/activity area doors are closed and locked where these could be used as absconding routes or obscure hiding places.
- CCTV covers all corridors and around the main building. All gates are monitored by CCCTV and are fob controlled/monitored by the main office.

During out of school activities the responsible adult will register the class/group and monitor learner attendance. Any discrepancies will be reported to the main office.

School visits will have an individual risk and supervision assessment.

Absconding Procedures

Whilst Attending School

There are occasions when learners may leave the school grounds without permission for a variety of reasons, e.g. they have been unduly teased and/or bullied; they are angry and upset about some incident which has occurred, or they may leave the school grounds for seemingly trivial reasons. Whatever the circumstances the following points should be borne in mind:

- A. If a learner is seen to leave the school grounds without permission, staff must not run after them, nor should they ask any other learner or groups of learners to pursue them. Experience shows that this often exacerbates the situation since it is often the case that a learner will go no further than outside the school gates and after a short period of time will return of their own volition. Active pursuit may encourage the learner to leave the immediate vicinity of the school and may also cause the learner to panic and possibly put themselves at risk by, for example, running onto a busy road. Every effort, however, should be made to keep visual contact if this is possible.

If a learner is deemed to be a high risk to themselves or other people, staff should adhere to their CPI training (this does not mean that staff should chase after a learner in order to hold them).

- B. There may be occasions when a learner has left the immediate vicinity of the school and it is felt to be appropriate by the members of staff dealing with the situation to engage in a local search. If the learner, upon seeing the staff, continues to run away then active pursuit must not be undertaken since this course of action could also cause the learner to panic and put themselves at further risk.
- C. On all occasions whenever a learner(s) absconds from school then this should be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) immediately and it will be for them to decide the course of action to be undertaken. In making their decision, they will take into account a number of factors:
- ? Is the learner outside the school grounds but still within the immediate vicinity of the school and not showing signs of venturing any further?

In this circumstance the SLT member may decide to do nothing except to monitor the learner's whereabouts on a regular basis in the expectation that the learner will eventually return to school of their own volition. If the learner persists in remaining outside the immediate school grounds then the SLT (or a trusted adult) may eventually decide to approach the learner in a friendly manner to see if the learner can be persuaded to return to school. Obviously if the learner, upon the approach of that member of staff, starts to walk further away, then this approach must be abandoned at that time. Experience shows that in the majority of cases when a learner remains in the immediate vicinity of the school then they will normally return in due course.

- ? Is the learner(s) no longer visible and has left the immediate vicinity of the school grounds?

In this circumstance the SLT will need to make a decision as to how to take matters further which will have to take into account:

- the age of the learner(s);
- how vulnerable they are;
- the time of day and how long the learner has been off site;
- the prevailing weather conditions;
- the nature of the incident which led to the learner absconding; and
- the learner's previous history of being involved in episodes of absconding and their

outcomes.

Having taken such factors into account the SLT member will initiate the following course of action:

- Nominate a team of staff tasked with dealing with the absconding procedures;
- Check that the learner has not returned to school;
- Ensure the learner's parents/carers are informed that their child has absconded;
- If after reviewing the incident and there is no further notification of the learner's whereabouts, SLT will report the learner as missing to the Police;
- Undertake the completion of the School's Absconding form (Appendix A) in which relevant members of staff will be required to outline the nature of any incident (if known) which led to the learner absconding and a learner profile (dress, appearance, discerning features) and SLT dealing with the matter should log the steps that they have taken until the matter is finally resolved. This will be recorded on CPOMS and the form attached.

If the learner returns of their own volition, following the steps outlined above having been taken, then the parent carers and the Police will need to be informed as soon as possible of the learner's return to school.

Upon their return to school the learner must be seen by SLT or a member of the Success Team so that the reasons for absconding may be discussed in detail. At that point a decision will need to be taken regarding next steps and support required.

In all circumstances of absconding, parent carers will be informed unless SLT recognise, through consultation with the DSL, that this would lead to risk of harm.

All incidents of absconding must be recorded on CPOMS. The incident must be reviewed to decide upon further action in keeping with school's Relational Behaviour policy.

School Visits

A full risk assessment will be undertaken for each school visit and this, together with any learner behaviour or absconding record, will assist in determining any measures required for specific learners.

Where it is considered the risks and histories of absconding are too hazardous for taking an identified learner on a visit, the learner will initially be withdrawn from the visit and a discussion held with parent carers informing them of the school's decision and reasons. The parent carers have a right to appeal against this decision and attend an arranged meeting with the relevant school staff to discuss any alternative/additional arrangements that would eliminate or reduce the risks associated with the learner attending the visit e.g. a family member accompanying the learner on the visit.

For the purpose of this Policy, school visits are categorised into three levels and have appropriate management and assessment criteria. The following chart will be used to assess and manage school visits and provide the appropriate procedures to be adhered to.

Category of Visit	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Description			
Examples of school visit	Outside activities including (distance): Water based Water close proximity General public spaces	Internal Site Specific activities including: Museums Galleries Theatres	Local visits including: Post Office Church Library

Learner Absconding Risk Assessment

As part of the School Visit Planning an absconding risk assessment will be undertaken with regard to the learners attending the arranged visit. This will assist in identifying specific absconding risks associated with the visit.

Category of Visit	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
Site Visit Risk Assessment (after measures taken)	High	3	High	3	High	3
	Medium	2	Medium	2	Medium	2
	Low	1	Low	1	Low	1
Potential Learner(s) Behaviour/absconding history	High	3	High	3	High	3
	Medium	2	Medium	2	Medium	2
	Low	1	Low	1	Low	1
	Total		Total		Total	

Overall Potential Learner/Visit Rating	High	7-9	High	7-9	High	7-9
	Medium	4-6	Medium	4-6	Medium	4-6
	Low	1-3	Low	1-3	Low	1-3
Risk Outcome Level	High - Not Attend		High - Not Attend		High - Measures	
	Medium - Not Attend		Medium - Measures		Medium - Measures	
	Low - Measures Req'd		Low - Measures		Low:1to1 Supervision	
Absconding Procedures	As Below		As Below		As Below	
Reporting Protocol	School Head/SLT Police/ Parent Carer		School Head/SLT Police/ Parent Carer		School Head/SLT Police/ Parent Carer	

Absconding On Visit

Absconding will initially be treated in the same manner as an event of a lost/missing learner and the following procedure will immediately be followed:

- The Trip Leader is informed immediately;
- If a learner is seen to abscond from the school group without permission then in no way should staff run after them, nor should they ask any other learner or groups of learners to pursue them but keep visual contact if possible;
- Ensure that all other learners are safe with appropriate adults;
- If a learner is not seen absconding but becomes unaccounted for, start a systematic search, based on where the learner was last seen and with whom, making sure all areas are covered;
- The Trip Leader will inform the venue staff so exits and entrances can be secured and monitored;
- The Trip Leader will immediately inform the school office who will contact a member of SLT;
- A member of SLT will become the Incident Manager or nominate a senior member of staff to manage the situation;
- Contact will be held continuously between the Trip Leader and Incident Manager;
- SLT and/or the Incident Manager will review all factors regarding the location/learner, and then inform Parent Carers if they are not on the visit, within an appropriate time, dependent upon the circumstances and location.
- SLT and/or Incident Manager will review the information available regarding contacting the police authority responsible for the visit location.
- If the learner is unable to be found SLT/Incident Manager would then implement the LA emergency guidelines.
- The Chair of Governors will be informed of the incident.
- A full review of the incident will take place and outcomes will inform future practice.

Appendix A



Learner Absconding Form

Completed by	
Date	
Time	
Name of learner	
Nature of incident if known (including events leading up to it)	
What is the learner wearing?	
Any additional information about appearance/features	

