



Absconding Policy



Document Control

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Date of next review	April 2019
Policy status	Statutory
Owner	Chair of Governors/Board of Directors
Lead	Dillon Yates

1. Status: Non-statutory

2. Aim: 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. To abscond is to 'leave without permission'.

We at Coal Clough Academy actively work to provide a secure, safe environment in our academy so that we are 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.

3. Policy Statement: a) Each academy publishes to parents the time at which pupils can be on the school premises under the supervision of a member of staff before registration is taken in class. Once pupils are in the care of staff on the school premises, they are to remain on the school premises until 2.00pm (or until their club has finished) unless authorised to leave the premises as part of an organised activity. b) How we maintain a secure environment. The playground exits not visible by the school office are locked during the normal school day (when not in use) and when feasible, during club sessions. We recognise that for safety reasons, the main exit route from the school will not be locked, although it is restricted by a latch. We also make it clear to any student vulnerable to strong emotional outbursts that there are 'time out' places on the academy site where it is safe for them to go.

4. Roles and Responsibilities: a) The Head (or deputising teacher in her absence) is responsible for all decisions made when a child absconds from school. b) The class teacher or the teaching assistant (if working independently with the pupil) is responsible for caring for the child (until the child leaves the premises). They will be responsible for seeking additional help if this is felt to be necessary. c) Parents / carers of pupils are responsible for supporting the work of the school. They are responsible for encouraging their children to keep to all school procedures and policies. d) Once school has informed the parents that their child has absconded, parents and carers are responsible for actively supporting the school with the subsequent procedures and actions. This could include coming to school to help secure the safety of the child after he / she has absconded as well as meeting with the Head (or other staff member) in order to agree subsequent actions.

5. Procedures: If a pupil is suspected of leaving the school site without permission, in an emotional state: 1. The member of staff will alert the relevant member of Senior Leadership Team (the Head, or the deputising teacher). 2. If the child appears to be missing but there is no evidence that he / she has left the site, a quick but thorough search of the site should be conducted before the parents / police are informed. 3. If there is no doubt that the pupil has absconded, the school office will contact the pupil's parent to inform them and call the police. Staff will not chase or follow the pupil as this could lead to the pupil wandering further afield, acting impetuously or causing a traffic accident.

- 4.** If the child is within an easy distance of the school, staff are not to engage in conversation as the child might be in a distressed state and unable to act in a controlled manner. This would mean there is still the potential for traffic accidents.
- 5.** If the pupil returns of his / her own volition, parents and (if necessary) the police will be informed.
- 6.** If possible the pupil who has absconded should be brought back to school the same day.
- 7.** When the pupil is back in school and is in a calm state, the parent, child and relevant member of staff will discuss the issues and any consequences. This policy will be discussed. An agreement will be written, giving details of the incident and agreed actions. See appendices A, B and C.
- 8.** If the child absconds for a second time in the same academic year, a range of measures will be put in place in collaboration with the child's parents. This might include an Internal Exclusion or a Fixed Term Exclusion. If the Principal / deputising teacher is aware that a pupil is not acting emotionally but has left the school grounds (e.g. by mistake), the above procedures may be adapted.

Appendix A:

Agreement following a pupil absconding from school (to be completed by the Headteacher or deputising teacher and attached to appendix B and C) Child: _____ Date: _____

Record of incident:

An agreement has been reached following this absconding incident. Actions have been agreed in order to help this pupil feel happy and safe in school (Appendices A, B and C).

School will support this agreement by: School

1.

2.

Signed: _____ (Headteacher / deputising member of staff)

Appendix B:Parental Agreement

(to be completed by the parent or carer)

I have read the record of the absconding incident (Appendix A).I wish to make the following comments relating to the incident (optional):

I understand that it is always unacceptable for my child to leave the school site without permission and a repeated action of this nature might result in the school following exclusion procedures.

I understand that the following actions have been agreed in order to help my child be happy and safe in school. I know my child needs to keep to the school rules and not leave the school grounds without permission. I understand that there are agreed actions for all parties involved (see below).

For my part, I will support this agreement by: Parent

- 1.
- 2.

Signed: _____ (Parent) _____ (date)

Appendix C: Pupil Agreement (to be completed by the pupil or by an adult on behalf of the pupil)

I have read or listened to the record of the absconding incident (Appendix A). I wish to make the following comment about the incident (optional):

I understand that it is always unacceptable for me to leave the school site without permission and a repeated action of this nature might result in the school following exclusion procedures. I understand that the following actions have been agreed in order to help me to be happy and safe in school.

I know I need to keep to the school rules and not leave the school grounds without permission. I understand that there are actions too for the school and my parents (listed below).

I will support this agreement by: Pupil

- 1.
- 2.

Signed: _____ (Pupil) _____ (date)