



ABSCONDING PUPIL POLICY

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SIGNED:	ROLE: CHAIR OF GOVERNORS
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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 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.

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

1. School Security and Monitoring

The School will monitor pupils' attendance throughout the school day and provide a secure site by:

- Recording pupil attendance at morning class registration at 9am;
- Securing all designated security gates between the hours of 9am-11.15am, 11.30am-12.15pm, 12.30pm and 3.15pm;
- Logging late arrivals at the office;
- Monitoring and supervising pupils with the designated number of staff during play-time;
- Teachers or staff will report any missing pupils during class time to the main office;
- Monitoring and supervising pupils with the designated number of staff during lunch-time break;
- Recording pupil 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.

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

School visits will have an individual risk and supervision assessment.

2. Absconding Procedures

Whilst attending school

There are occasions when pupils 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 totally trivial reasons. Whatever the circumstances the following points should be borne in mind:

If a pupil is deemed to be a high risk to him/herself or other people, staff should adhere to the Positive Handling Policy (this does not mean that staff should chase after a child in order to hold him/her).

On all occasions whenever a pupil(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 his/her decision, they will take into account a number of factors:

- a) Is the pupil outside the school grounds but still within the immediate vicinity of the school and not showing signs of venturing any further?
- b) Is the pupil(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 pupil(s);
- how vulnerable he/she is;
- the time of day and how long the child has been off site;
- the prevailing weather conditions;
- the nature of the incident which led to the pupil absconding; and
- the pupil'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; The remaining children will be supervised, in the care of school staff. All other available staff will conduct a thorough search of the child's classroom, play areas, storage areas, toilets, the school building and the school grounds;
- The Nursery Staff and the Junior School will be contacted and made aware of the situation;
- Members of staff, who are not supervising children, will be sent to search the area in the immediate vicinity of the school and further afield by car;
- Check that the pupil has not returned to school;
- Ensure the pupil's parents/carers are informed that their son/daughter has absconded;
- If after reviewing the incident and there is no further notification of the pupil's whereabouts, the SLT (at their discretion) will report the pupil as missing to the

Police Community Support Officer and notify the Local Education Authority of their actions;

- Undertake the completion of the School's Absconding form in which relevant members of staff will be required to outline the nature of any incident (if known) which led to the pupil absconding and a pupil profile (dress, appearance, discerning features) and the SLT dealing with the matter should log the steps that they have taken until the matter is finally resolved.

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

Upon their return to school the pupil must be seen by the SLT so that the reasons for the absconsion may be discussed in detail. At that point a decision will need to be taken as to whether it is appropriate or not for the pupil to be sanctioned for their actions.

In all circumstances of absconding, parents/carers will be informed unless the SLT recognise, through consultation with the Designated Member of Staff for Safeguarding, that this would lead to risk of harm.

All incidents of absconding must be recorded on a Safeguarding Concern Form and filed on the school's electronic data base. The incident must be reviewed to decide upon further action in keeping with school's behaviour policy.

School Visits

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

Where it is considered the risks and histories of absconding are too hazardous for taking an identified pupil on a visit, the pupil will initially be excluded from the visit and a letter sent to the parent/carer informing them of the school's decision and reasons. The parents/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 pupil attending the visit e.g. a family member accompanying the child 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: Water based Water close proximity General public spaces	Internal Site Specific activities including: Museums/Galleries Theatres	Local visits including: Post Office Church Library

Pupil Absconding Risk Assessment

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

Category of Visit	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
a) 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
b) Potential Pupil(s) Behaviour/absconding history	High	3	High	3	High	3
	Medium	2	Medium	2	Medium	2
	Low	1	Low	1	Low	1
Overall Potential Pupil/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
Behaviour issues Rating guide	High – Not Attend Medium – Not Attend Low – Measures Req'd		High – Not Attend Medium – Measures Low - Measures		High – Measures Medium –Measures Low –1to1 Supervision.	
Absconsion Procedures	As Below		As Below		As Below	
Reporting Protocol	School Head/SLT Police Parent/Carer Local Authority		School Head/SLT Parent/Carer Police Local Authority		School Head/SLT Parent/Carer Police Local Authority	

Absconding on visit

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

- The party leader is informed immediately;
- Ensure that all other children are safe with appropriate adults;
- If a child is not seen absconding but becomes unaccounted for, start a systematic search, based on where the child was last seen and with whom, making sure all areas are covered;
- The Party Leader will inform the venue staff so exits and entrances can be secured and monitored;
- The Party Leader will immediately inform the school office who will contact a member of the SLT;
- A member of the SLT will become the Incident Manager or nominate a senior member of staff to manage the situation;
- Contact will be held continuously between the Party Leader and Incident Manager;
- The SLT and/or the Incident Manager will review all factors regarding the location/pupil, and then inform parents/carers if he/she is not on the visit within an appropriate time, dependent upon the circumstances and location.
- The SLT and/or Incident Manager will review the information available regarding contacting the police authority responsible for the visit location and the Local Education Authority.
- If the child is unable to be found the SLT/Incident Manager would then implement the Local Authority emergency guidelines.
- The Chair of Governors will be informed of the incident.

The Headteacher will undertake a full review of the incident and it will be entered onto CPOMS.