AYCLIFFE DRIVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Children who abscond from School Policy

Strategy Committee

February 2022
To be reviewed 2024

Staff Responsible

Mrs M Green   Headteacher
Mrs P Gent   Chair of Governors
Strategy Committee Governors

This is the policy for Aycliffe Drive Primary School which sets out the actions taken if a child absconds from School.

It reflects the school's values, philosophy and mission statement in relation to safeguarding children in our care.

Purpose of the policy.

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

Aim

In Aycliffe Drive Primary School 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 is likely then they should have a risk assessment.

Definition

To abscond is to 'leave without permission'. 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 remain within the care of the school at all times throughout the school day and during school led activities.

Where a pupil, present at registration, is found to be absent from school without authorisation the following procedures should be followed:

• Member of staff to inform Head Teacher or member of SLT, and main office.
• Head Teacher or member of SLT to organise a search of buildings and known places that the pupil may have gone to in the school environment.
• If the pupil is not found, then all available staff to complete a more thorough sweep of the school and check the perimeter of the grounds.
• School office to phone the police when area has been fully checked if the child is not found • School office to contact parents/carers and inform them of the situation.
• Consideration will be given to whether the search should be extended beyond the school perimeter. This decision will be based on staff's knowledge of the child and on the levels of risk, and on what action is in the child's best interests.
• Any staff who leave school grounds to take mobile phone to contact school.
• Once a pupil has been found then the HT will use their professional judgement to outline the response towards the pupil and the support the pupil will need in the future.
• A written report will be filed on the incident and added to CPOMS.
• Member of SLT to brief police and parents.

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 member of SLT, 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.

• 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 SLT lead 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 HT or a member of SLT 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 CPOMS.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Each incident will be monitored and evaluated. Risk management plans 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. Risk management plans will be shared and signed by parents/carers.

Appendix A

Report should include:

Absconding Pupil Incident Report

Name of pupil:

Date:

An outline of the incident (Please include time of day, staff involved and how the issue was resolved.)

What triggers led to this incident occurring?

What action will be taken to support the pupil to feel happy and safe in school?

Signed by Headteacher/ SLT:

Signed by Parent:

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. For my part, I will support this agreement by encouraging my child to comply.

Parent

Signed: _____ (Parent)