



Red Hall Primary School Policy and Procedures for Pupils Absconding from School

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Appendix 1: Extract from Exclusions and Suspensions policy

Policy and Procedures for Absconding Pupils at Red Hall Primary School

1. Aim

The purpose of this procedure 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'**.

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.

Internal Absconding	External Absconding
Where the pupil leaves the care of the responsible person without permission but remains on the school site.	Where a pupil leaves the school site without permission.
Where a pupil leaves a lesson without permission but remains on the school site.	Where a pupil leaves an offsite provision without permission. E.g., curriculum swimming, alternate education provision, etc.
Where a pupil leaves a club run on behalf of the school without permission but remains on the site.	Where a pupil leaves a defined area or supervision of the responsible adult without permission. E.g. when on a school trip or undertaking fieldwork

2. Control measures and procedures to prevent absconding

Site security

The school site has a secure perimeter and gates.

Gates to access school premises and doors are closed and locked outside of our stated drop off and pick up times.

Doors into the school are locked from the outside with a fob system to open them. There are also several doors inside the school requiring access using a fob.

Effective supervision

Effective supervision is dependent on a number of factors including:

- Age of the pupils
- Ability of the pupils
- Number of the pupils
- Activities being undertaken
- Pupil behaviour
- Site layout and security
- Specific identified risks e.g. pupils with history of absconding

Individual Pupil Risk Assessments

Where there is a foreseeable risk of absconding, there should be a Risk Assessment in place drawn up with parent/carers. Risk Assessments should clearly detail the individual control measures required to reduce the risk of absconding.

3. Procedure for a child missing from class without authorisation

*Any action taken must be proportionate to the risk and in the best interest of the child

Where a pupil who leaves a lesson without permission but remains on site, the following procedures should be followed:

- **Member of staff to inform the Headteacher or member of SLT, DSL and main office.**
- **Headteacher or member of SLT organises search of buildings and known places that the pupil may have gone to.**
- **If pupil is found member of staff to remain with the child to support and regulate. Emotional support offered.**
- **Discussion with SLT to discuss whether the child will return to class or continue their learning elsewhere, to prevent further incidents and parents/carers informed.**
- **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 contact parents/carers and inform them of the situation.**
- **School office to phone the police when area has been fully checked if the child is not found.**

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 information regarding where the child has absconded to;**
- **Who the child might be with.**

Any staff (this must be a minimum of 2) who leave the school grounds need to take a mobile phone to maintain contact with the school.

Once a pupil has been found then the lead SLT member 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 recorded on CPOMS. Member of SLT to brief police and parents.

4. Procedure for a child seen leaving the school premises without authorisation

*Any action taken must be proportionate to the risk and in the best interest of the child

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

- **Staff must follow the pupil to the perimeter fence or gate and must try to persuade the pupil to stay in the school.**
- **If a pupil is deemed to be a high risk to himself or other people, then staff should adhere to the Positive Handling Procedures with reference to holding the student, if appropriate.**
- **At all times staff must be aware that active pursuit may encourage the pupil to leave the immediate vicinity of the school and may also cause the pupil to panic, possibly putting him or herself at risk by running onto a busy road, for example.**
- **If the pupil has left the immediate vicinity of the school, the DSL, Headteacher or SLT members must be contacted immediately and the lead person will direct the course of action.**
- **Staff (minimum of 2) will follow the pupil and engage in a local search, following the student at a safe distance if in view.**
- **SLT lead may direct additional staff to join the search in a vehicle, taking a mobile phone to contact school.**
- **The school office will contact the pupil's parents/carers**

If the searching staff lose sight of the pupil they must contact the school office giving details of their location and the clothes which the pupil is wearing, in order that they may call the police.

If the pupil(s) has left the immediate vicinity of the school grounds and is no longer visible then the SLT will make a decision as to how to take matters further, which will take into account the age of the pupil, the prevailing weather conditions, 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 as soon as possible

Upon his or her return to school, and when the pupil is calm, the pupil must be seen by the 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 in relation to the behaviour policy (see Appendix)

A written report will be recorded on CPOMS

5. 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 the school with the support of staff and parents/carers.

6. 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 rules. Once the 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 the school to help secure the safety of their child as well as meeting with a Senior Leadership Team member in order to agree subsequent actions which could result in suspension.

Appendix 1 – Reference within school’s suspension and exclusion policy

Illegal/No grounds	Reasonable Grounds	Strong Grounds
Failure to do homework	Breach of the school’s behaviour policy	Serious breach of the school’s behaviour policy
Poor academic performance	Serious harm to the education or welfare of the pupil or others	Bringing the school into disrepute through inappropriate or dangerous behaviour or seriously endangering the safety of others
Lateness	Persistently leaving school premises without authorisation	Supplying or using an illegal drug on school premises
Breaches of school uniform or rules on appearance, for example: wearing jewellery.	Bringing the school into disrepute at a public event	Carrying, threatening to use and or using an offensive weapon (including fireworks)
Failing to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act by excluding disabled pupils without due regard to their disability or treating them less favourably than others because of their disability	Persistent refusal to cooperate with school staff, verbal aggression towards staff, pupils or other members of the school community	Attempted arson on school grounds, destruction or serious damage of school property or buildings
Failing to meet the requirements of the Race Relations Act by excluding pupils or discriminating unfavourably on the grounds of race	Bullying, racial ,sexual or other harassment of staff, pupils or other members of the school community	Repeated threats and highly offensive and abusive language towards school staff, pupils or other members of the school community
		Repeated bullying, racial, sexual or other harassment of staff, pupils or other members of the school community

