

Responsible body

Title of policy



Governing body

Abducting Policy

Our Vision



Astley School recognises that it is responsible for making plans that endeavour to keep all children, parents and staff safe, in accordance with our Christian vision and values. This is a policy which provides guidance in line with our Health and Safety and Safeguarding duties.

Ratified by the Governing Body: Monday 25th March 2019

Date for review: February 2021

Signed by:  Chair of governors Monday 25th March 2019

 Headteacher Monday 25th March 2019

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The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures to all stakeholders should a child leave the premises without permission. It is closely linked to the school's 'Safeguarding Policy'.

Under section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and in common law, schools 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.

Aim

We work actively to provide a secure, safe environment for the pupils at Astley Primary School. We want pupils to enjoy coming to school and being a part of our school community. We recognise that it is highly unlikely that a pupil should abscond from the school premises, but in the event that it should happen, the procedures detailed below, will ensure that we are ready to deal with this eventuality.

Definition

To abscond is to 'leave without permission'. This could mean a child leaves the school building, yet remains in the grounds, or leaves the school grounds. It includes during school time, on an educational visit and during 'Stay and Play', our before and after school care.

School grounds

The school site available to pupils during the day includes the top and bottom playgrounds, outdoor dining area and the school field. Children may only be on the school field if the duty staff member agrees the conditions are appropriate to do so. Pupils may not play to the rear of the school by the hall or around near Oak access door due to lack of visibility. Pupils may not access the vegetable garden or Forest School without an adult, as these are primarily outdoor learning areas. No children are allowed to leave the school grounds via the parish footpath unless directly observed by an adult.

The children know and understand these rules and staff regularly reinforce them in the course of their interactions with children. The risk assessment for the outdoor play area clearly states that two members of staff supervise outdoor play at all times and are appropriately positioned to ensure they maintain a view of the whole area, being especially mindful of the footpath and front entrance access and egress points. The top gates are locked during the lunchtime period as additional security.

External visits

The security of each visit location should be assessed and supervision levels altered accordingly. Our Education Visit policy and staff training ensures that there is an identified Visit Leader in charge of making a detailed risk assessment to include known risks of absconding pupils. The Visit Leader will deploy staff and volunteers to ensure close supervision of all pupils with regular head counts taking place.

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Parents will always be informed if their child absconds from the school. All incidents will be recorded on an 'Absconding Form' and attached to a school 'Safeguarding Form' (purple form). They will be reported to Worcestershire County Council via the online Health and Safety reporting system.

The safety and supervision of all children is of equal priority and safe staffing levels for all children will be maintained at all times.

Absent pupils

If a pupil, who has been marked as present at morning or afternoon registration, is found to be absent, the procedure will be as follows:

1. Teacher to inform Headteacher immediately.
2. Headteacher, with available staff, to organise a search of the buildings and grounds, as thoroughly as possible placing staff on exits.
3. In the event that the pupil is not found the Office Manager will be asked to phone parents and police. Every attempt to contact parents and police should be recorded.
4. The Headteacher will then make the decision as to whether the search should be extended beyond the school grounds. The decision may also be influenced by staff's knowledge of the child who has absconded.
5. Any staff who leave the school grounds should take a mobile phone with them and not put themselves or the child in danger at any point (see 1. below).
6. Once the child has been found, the member(s) of staff will use their professional judgement to inform how they respond to support the child.
7. A written report will be completed by the appropriate staff (see 'Absconding Form').
8. The Headteacher will brief parents and police, if necessary.
9. Upon his/her return into school, and when calm enough to do so, the pupil will meet with the Headteacher so that reasons for the absconding can be understood. A support plan for the individual may need to be considered along with sanctions appropriate for the pupil's needs.

Pupils who abscond from school, but remain within the school grounds.

In these circumstances, a pupil will not be pursued by staff or forced back into the school. Staff will remain at a safe distance, keeping the child in sight and the Headteacher should be informed. Interventions should be attempted by staff only if the pupil is a danger to themselves or others. Any damage to property may be charged to the child's parent(s) or carer(s). Staff will also consider the pupil's age, vulnerability and demeanour when considering decisions to be taken.

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Pupils who abscond from the school grounds.

Where a pupil is seen to leave the school premises without authorisation, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Active pursuit of the pupil should not be considered. This may make the pupil panic, possibly putting himself / herself into immediate danger. Staff will instead try to follow, keeping the pupil in sight and at a safe distance. Any staff who leave the school grounds must take a mobile phone with them and not put themselves or the child in danger at any point.
2. Staff must inform the Headteacher as soon as possible who will direct the course of action. Where appropriate at least two staff may join the search in a vehicle, with a mobile phone in order to remain in contact with school.
3. If the searching staff lose sight of the pupil, they must contact the Headteacher giving details of their location and the clothes the pupil was wearing. The Headteacher will make a decision as to how to take matters further based on a dynamic risk assessment of the age of the pupil, weather conditions, the pupil's previous history of absconding and outcomes and what led to the absconding in this instance.
4. The Office Manager will inform parents and police. Every attempt to contact parents and police should be recorded.
5. Once the child has been found, the member(s) of staff will use their professional judgement to inform how they respond to support the child.
6. A written report will be completed by the appropriate staff (see 'Absconding Form').
7. The Headteacher will brief parents and police, if necessary.
8. Upon his/her return to school, and when calm enough to do so, the pupil will meet with the headteacher so that reasons for the absconding can be understood. A support plan for the individual may need to be considered along with sanctions appropriate for the pupil's needs.
9. If the pupil returns to school of their own volition, parents and police will be phoned by the Office Manager.

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Astley Primary School
Absconding Form



Name of Pupil : Class:

Date & time of leaving premises	
Preceding circumstances	
Immediate actions	
Dress at time of absconding	
Staff member in charge	
Parent contacted, when by whom	
Police contacted, when by whom	
Timeline of events (continue overleaf)	

<p>Timeline of events</p> <p>(continue on additional sheets if necessary)</p>	
<p>Time returned to school</p>	
<p>Date of meeting with Head and pupil</p>	
<p>Date of meeting with Head and parents</p>	
<p>Final actions, including sanctions</p>	

