

# CAMBRIDGE HOUSE GRAMMAR SCHOOL



## ABSCONDERS POLICY: 2024

Absconding is when a pupil goes missing either within or outside boundaries of the school without permission. There are different reasons why pupils may abscond from school such as:

- becoming overwhelmed due to serious social anxiety or other emotional reason
- attention seeking
- being involved in a confrontation with another pupil or member of staff
- truanting class

The Absconders Policy will be followed by all staff to ensure that pupils are safeguarded at all times.

The policy will also apply in the case of a pupil who goes missing during an educational visit or off-site activity.

### **Procedure to follow if a pupil absconds**

Registers are taken every morning and in every lesson. It is vital that accurate attendance records are maintained. Upon discovering a pupil is missing, the class teacher should:

- Inform all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) via email.
- Determine if the missing pupil is with another member of staff, and then inform all colleagues that the pupil is safe and has not absconded.
- Immediately inform a member of SLT if the pupil is not with another member of staff, \* a sweep of the buildings should then be carried out to try and locate the child.
- If they cannot be found, it must be assumed that they have absconded. In this situation, parents/ carers/ social workers (if appropriate) are to be informed by SLT or admin immediately and kept up to date with the process.
- If the pupil is missing for 50 minutes without being sighted, or the situation becomes unsafe, the police are to be informed. This may vary depending on the circumstances and individual needs of the pupil (see below). The Head of Key Stage of the absconding pupil should be informed. If the Head of Key Stage is not available, a Vice Principal or the Principal should be contacted.
- Where possible, members of staff should follow the pupil/ pupils, attempting to persuade them to come back to school/ class or continue to assess the situation.

- 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 them to panic, possibly putting themselves at greater risk.

### **Individual Circumstances:**

The above response must be determined by the circumstances involved, determining the pupil's developmental level (age and maturity) and their emotional state; for example, if a pupil is deemed to be a danger to themselves or others. If a pupil has an individual PLP this should be consulted.

### **Post Incident Procedure**

- A report detailing the incident should be logged and stored in the pupil's file.
- On return to school the pupil should meet with a pastoral leader either, Head of Year, Head of Key Stage, Vice Principal or Principal, depending on the circumstances. Parents may also be invited to attend.
- This meeting should focus on the reasons for the pupil absconding, the impact upon staff and parents/ carers, and should explore possible strategies and procedures to prevent future occurrences.
- Depending on the circumstances, the pupil may be offered extra pastoral support or intervention from other agencies, if relevant. If warranted, the pupil may face sanctions in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed:



Chair of Board of Governors

Signed:



Principal

Date

14.05.24