



ABSCONDING STUDENTS' PROCEDURE

The Skills Hub is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We ensure that consistent and effective safeguarding procedures and policies are in place to support students and staff at school.

It is always our expectation that students will choose to comply with policies and procedures whilst on school premises or under the direct supervision of staff during educational visits. There may be occasions however, where students choose to abscond from the school site or the supervision of staff whilst on educational visits. This policy is written to ensure that if a student chooses to abscond, staff and volunteers at The Skills Hub are ready to deal with that eventuality.

A student enrolled at/ attending The Skills Hub is considered to have 'absconded' if they intentionally/ knowingly leave the school site or any activity outside the school as part of their learning, without permission.

If a student absconds:

- **Staff at The Skills Hub should always bear in mind that students who have chosen to abscond may be upset or agitated and therefore it is important that the response of staff is to remain calm, maintain visual contact as far as possible and work to re-engage the student and return them safely to the school. If the student has not returned within 15 minutes, then the member of staff should contact the parents and inform them. At no point should staff run after students nor should they ask other students to assist in pursuing the absconding student**
 - **Active pursuit may encourage the student to leave the immediate vicinity and may also cause the student to panic, possibly putting themselves at risk, for example by running into a busy road**

The member of staff dealing with the incident should inform the DSL/ Deputy immediately about the situation:

- **Where possible, the member of staff following the student should remain in contact with the Attendance Officer/Designated Safeguarding Lead (AO/DSL) at school via a radio/mobile phone but should not proceed beyond where Providence Road meets Edgar Road and where it meets Maple Avenue.**

- The AO/DSL will also inform the student's parents/ or the referring institution and keep them updated as necessary
- The AO/DSL will inform a member of Senior Leadership Team (SLT) prior to contacting the police. If the parents/ guardians cannot be contacted, the DSL/SLT will take an appropriate decision depending on the response/ reaction of the student as well as the location/direction of the student's movement
- If the student has not made it home or returned to site within 30 minutes you would call the police to report them as missing
- The AO/DSL will provide the police with as precise a description of the student as possible, the last known whereabouts of the student and any other details they may require

It is important that following an incident, the issues that arise are addressed and staff should:

- Review the individual risk assessment for the student involved
- Where appropriate, talk through the incident with the student involved explaining the consequences of such action in terms of Health and Safety of the student and staff involved. Ensure that a record of such discussion with the student is logged on the school information management systems (SIMS) and that students' risk assessment is updated.
- Keep all members of staff informed and discuss the incident in staff meetings
- Review procedures for the individual every half term to ensure appropriate control measures are in place and that all staff is fully informed.

Student absconding whilst off-site on educational visits, trips or specialised one to one tutoring

1. In the event that a student from The Skills Hub absconds while on a trip, or offsite mentoring, the trip leader/member of staff must follow absconding procedures as laid out above. Staff are expected to be in the possession of a work mobile. Staff must try whenever possible to maintain visual contact with the student and inform the AO/DSL at the school immediately. A member of SLT must also be informed.
2. AO/DSL will ensure that the school informs the student's parents and records details as communicated by the trip leader. A record of the telephone call to parents must be logged on SIMS.

The Trip Leader/One to one Offsite tutor must provide the following Information when calling the school office to report a student who has absconding:

- **The precise location**
- **Who the absconding student was with**
- **When the student was last recorded as being seen**
- **How the student absconded**
- **The time that the student absconded**
- **Are they in any immediate danger (if so the police/fire ambulance service must be called)**

If the Police are to be informed, the following additional Information should be provided to the AO/DSL:

- **The height and build of the student**
- **The colour of the student's hair**
- **What the student was wearing including any distinguishing accessories, i.e. bags, sunglasses, etc.**