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| **THE SCHOOL AT THE HEART OF WALES** |  |



**ABSCONDING POLICY**

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| **Date adopted** | **February 2023** |
| **Signature of Headteacher** |  |
| **Signature of chair of governors** |  |
| **Review Date** | **February 2024** |

**POLICY CONTEXT**

**INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE**

This policy is written to guide staff in the event of a student going missing on the premises, going missing outside of the school or having absconded.

Staff are reminded to read the following school policies and practice guidelines in conjunction with this policy –

▪ Health and Safety Policy

▪ Safeguarding Policy

▪ Positive Behaviour Policy

The purpose of this policy 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.

It is important for us as a school to maintain a caring, welcoming ethos which establishes a safe, secure and stable environment to enable pupils to grow, develop and learn.

**PROCEDURES**

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

1. All staff responsible for complete class registers in the first 5 minutes of a lesson.
2. Member of staff to inform the behaviour team if a pupil is missing. Behaviour team organises search of buildings and known places that the pupil may have gone to. If the pupil returns to class, the class teacher must inform the office.
3. School office must phone the parents/carers to inform that their child is missing.
4. If the pupil is not found, SLT informed and available staff will complete a more thorough sweep of the school and check the perimeter of the grounds.
5. SLT to immediately contact parents/carers and inform them of the situation and when the Police have been informed. Always keep parents/carers updated.
6. 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, any active risk assessment and on what action is in the child’s best interests. Liaise with the police at all times.
7. Any staff who leave school grounds must take a school mobile phone, a walkie-talkie or personal mobile to contact school. Staff should, where possible, leave the site accompanied by another member of staff.
8. 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.

9. An incident report must be filed on the incident and saved to Tyfu.

10.Member of SLT or designated staff must brief police and parents/carers and Headteacher.

Where a pupil attempts or is seen to be leaving the school premises without authorisation the

following procedures must be followed:

1. Staff must follow the student to the perimeter fence or gate and must try to persuade the student to stay in the school.

2. De-escalation techniques must be attempted. In such stressful circumstances it is important

that staff remain as calm and collected as possible and follow procedures. (See Appendix 1)

3. At all times, staff must be aware that active pursuit may encourage the student to leave the

immediate vicinity of the school and may also cause the pupil to panic, possibly putting them at

risk by running onto a busy road, for example.

4. If the student has left the immediate vicinity of the school, the Headteacher or SLT

members must be contacted immediately and the Safeguarding Officer will direct the course of action.5. The office must immediately phone the parents/carers to inform that their child is missing or has left the school site.

5.SLT to immediately contact parents/carers and inform them the Police will be contacted.

6.If the student returns of their own volition, Parents/Carers and the Police will be informed as soon as possible.

7.Upon his or her return to school, and when the student is calm, the student 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.

8.An incident report will be filed on the incident on Tyfu.

9.It is important that following an incident the issues that arise are addressed and staff must:

• Consider an individual risk assessment for the student involved. If there is a second incident within

an academic year then a risk assessment must be completed.

• Where appropriate, talk through the incident with the student and Parents/Carers involved. Ensure that a record is kept of the discussion held with the student and Parents/Carers on Tyfu.

• Complete an incident report (a copy of which should be placed on Tyfu).

• Review procedures for the individual every half term to ensure appropriate control measures are in place.

**INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS/CARERS**

What happens if you / your child / go missing?

**What is meant by “missing”?**

You will be considered missing if members of staff do not know where you are.

**What is meant by “absconding”?**

You have absconded if you deliberately go away from where you should be without telling a member of staff or without a member of staff giving you permission.

**What will happen if you go missing?**

The people looking after you have a responsibility to know where you are and to make sure you are safe.

If you are ‘missing’ they will speak to your friends, teachers and family to see if they can help. If there is concern for your safety then staff will need to search for clues as to where you are. The Police may be informed that you are missing and they and the school staff will look for you.

**What happens if you can’t be found?**

A meeting will be held between the school and the Police to plan how to search for you. Your name,

description and a photograph will be given to the Police in order to help them with their search.

**What happens when you are found?**

You will be returned to a safe place and will be asked about the reasons for you going missing. This is to try and find out if anything is troubling you and to see if anyone can help. You do not have to run away to talk to someone. If you want to talk to someone outside of the school, this can be arranged.

You may also be visited by a Police Officer who will check that you are back.

This is called a “Safe and Well Check”.

**Will anything else happen?**

If you are injured or unwell then you will be checked by a Doctor or Nurse.

Your teacher or keyworker will want to talk to you about going missing. If you have deliberately run away(absconded) then the people responsible for your safety will meet to discuss ways in which such incidents can be prevented by looking at the reasons for your actions.

The national ChildLine number is 0800 1111.

MEIC Cymru if you are worried about a bullying issue 08088 023456

**Your Safeguarding member of staff to talk to is:**

Safeguarding Lead, Llandrindod Campus: Miss Rhiannon Rhys-Jones

Deputy Safeguarding Officer, Llandrindod Campus: Mrs Vicky Phillips

Safeguarding Officer, Builth Campus: Mrs Laura Lewis

Deputy Safeguarding Officer, Builth Campus: Mr Lyndon Jones

Your Safeguarding Governor is Mrs Sharon Hammond

**POLICY REVIEW**

12.1 Individual School Review

This Policy will be reviewed annually as part of the overall Child Protection and Safeguarding policy review.

**Appendix 1**

De-escalation techniques

It may help to:

Use TEAM TEACH de-escalation techniques

Use Restorative Language (to avoid asking why they are doing something).

• move calmly

• make simple, clear statements to the pupil

• keep your voice quiet, firm and assured

• lessen the threat of your presence by sitting down or allowing the pupils space

• talk to the pupil all the time

• offer comfort, reassurance and security

• maintain eye contact

• when possible, have help at hand

• find a way to allow the pupil to ‘save face’

It is usually unhelpful to:

• give complex advice or instructions

• speak quickly and loudly

• corner a child or stand too close

• attempt to reason by asking questions

**Adroddiad Digwyddiad Dianc / Absconding Incident Report**

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| **ADRODDWYD GAN:**  **REPORTED BY:** |  |  | **DYDDIAD YR ADRODDIAD:**  **DATE OF REPORT:** |  |
| **RÔL / ROLE:** |  |  |  |  |

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| **GWYBODAETH AM Y DIGWYDDIAD / INCIDENT INFORMATION** | | | | | | |
| **ENW’R DISGYBL:**  **PUPIL NAME:** | |  | |  | **DYDDIAD Y DIGWYDDIAD:**  **DATE OF INCIDENT:** |  |
| **BLWYDDYN:**  **YEAR GROUP:** | |  | | | | |
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| **DISGRIFIAD O’R DIGWYDDIAD / INCIDENT DESCRIPTION** | | | | | | |
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| **ENW'R BOBL SY'N GYSYLLTIEDIG Â'R DIGWYDDIAD: NAME / ROLE / OF PARTIES INVOLVED:** | | | | | | |
| **1.** |  | | | | | |
| **2.** |  | | | | | |
| **3.** |  | | | | | |
| **ENWAU TYSTION : NAME / ROLE / OF WITNESSES:** | | | | | | |
| **1.** |  | | | | | |
| **2.** |  | | | | | |
| **3.** |  | | | | | |

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| **WEDI RIPORTIO I’R HEDDLU?**  **POLICE REPORT FILED?** | Y/N |  |
| **WEDI CYSYLLTU GYDA’R RHIENI?**  **PARENTS INFORMED?** | Y/N |  |

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| **CAMAU DILYNOL:**  **FOLLOW-UP ACTION :** | | | | | | |
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| **ARWYDDWYD STAFF SIGNATURE:** |  | **ENW STAFF (PRINTIO)**  **STAFF NAME (PRINT):** |  | **DYDDIAD:**  **DATE:** |  |