

EASTHAMPSTEAD PARK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Absconding Policy



Easthampstead Park Community School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of students and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Aim of policy

Easthampstead Park Community School strives to provide a secure and safe environment where students will want to come and enjoy learning with others. It is always our expectation that students will choose to comply with policies and procedures whilst on the school premises or under the direct supervision of staff whilst on educational visits. There are 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 then we are ready to deal with that eventuality.

To abscond and leave without permission

- Staff should always bear in mind that students who have chosen to abscond may be upset and, as such, they may not be thinking rationally. It is important that the response of staff is to remain calm, maintain visual contact and work to re-engage the student and return them to safety to their school. 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 of the school and may also cause the student to panic and possibly put themselves at risk, for example by running into a busy road. If, however, the student is deemed to be a high risk to himself and/or other people then staff should adhere to the use of the restraint policy with reference to holding the student. This does not mean that staff should run after a student in order to hold them.
- In all instances of absconding a senior member of staff, ideally the Headteacher, should be informed as well as the Child Protection Team and the Assistant Headteacher (SENCO) if the child has special educational needs.
- The date and time of the incident should be recorded in the absconding book held in the Administration Office by the staff member dealing with the student.
- Where staff visual contact with a student is lost then the parents/carers should be telephoned and informed. A record of this call including the time and any agreements should be recorded in the student's file. (*See students posted missing – collation of information form.*)
- In circumstances where there are concerns for a student who has absconded and the parents or carers cannot be contacted, then the police should be contacted and the necessary details passed on. If the parents cannot be contacted the police will make the decision to become involved or not.
- If a student returns, the time of return should be noted in the absconding book and parents/carers informed. In instances where the police have been called, they should be informed by telephone of the student's return.
- A record of return time and telephone call to home and the police is to be made in the student's file. (*See Copy of students' posted missing form.*)

Absconding while off site on educational visits and trips

- In the event that a student chooses to abscond, the trip leader must follow absconding procedures as laid out above, directing staff to maintain visual contact with the student if possible and informing the school Administration Office immediately.
- Office staff will inform the Senior Leadership Team and the student's parents/carers and record details as communicated by the trip leader in the absconding book. A record of the telephone call to parents must be made in the student's file.
- Emergency procedures as set out in the risk assessment must be followed. The necessary details required are on the reverse of the emergency procedures card.

INFORMATION WHEN CALLING THE OFFICE

Exact details:

- **The precise location**
- **Who was the absconding student with?**
- **When was the student last recorded as being seen?**
- **How did the student abscond?**
- **What time did the student abscond?**

IF ASKING THE OFFICE TO INFORM THE POLICE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS REQUIRED

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

SIMS can be used to support this process. In the event that the student returns to the group then the school Administration Office must be informed immediately and details recorded in the absconding book. Calls home must be made and details recorded in the student's file and the senior staff on duty informed.

Parents and carers of students are responsible for supporting the work of the school. Once the school has informed a parent/carer 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 the child/young person as well as meeting with senior staff to agree subsequent actions.

This policy has been informed by The Safeguarding Policy and the advice given by the Local Authority with regard to education off site.

Reviewed:	March 2020
Responsibility for Implementation and Review:	Headteacher and Student Support Committee
Date of Next Review:	March 2021

Students posted missing – collation of information

(Sheet to be handed to the person responsible for managing incident until resolution)

Name of student	Name of others involved	Staff member	Time and date of incident
Antecedents (<i>what happened before?</i>)			
Decision to post student missing	By whom:		Time
Police informed	By whom:	To whom:	
Bracknell Forest Council protocols followed			Time
Missing persons book entry made			
Parents/carers informed			
Social Services informed			
Others (specify)			
On-going information		Incident number:	

When a student is known to be safe, all parties to be informed of his/her whereabouts

Name of student	Date of incident	Staff member	Time
	By whom	To whom	Time
Time student returned to school			
Police informed			
Parents/carers informed			
Social Services informed			
Others (specify) Resolution (including any possible Safeguarding and Child Protection issues)			
Seen by Year/Child Officer	Head of Protection		