



# Brompton Hall School

## Abstronding Pupils Policy



1	Summary	Absconding Pupils Policy	
2	Responsible person	Pat Dubas	
3	Accountable SLT member	Pat Dubas	
4	Applies to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All staff <input type="checkbox"/> Support staff <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching staff	
5	Who has overseen development of this policy	Pat Dubas	
6	Who has been consulted and recommended policy for approval		
7	Approved by and date		
8	Version number	1	
9	Available on	Trust website Academy website SharePoint	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
10	Related documents (if applicable)		
11	Disseminated to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trustees/governors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All staff <input type="checkbox"/> Support staff <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching staff	
12	Date of implementation (when shared)		
13	Consulted with recognised trade unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	



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### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly for all staff and other 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 educational settings have 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, which includes extended day and residential.

This policy should be followed where the staff members and the pupils were originally on school premises therefore the members of school staff have lawful control or charge of the pupil (*loco parentis*). If a student has not entered school but has been made aware of absconsion during travel to school then those with parental responsibility will be informed.

### 2. Procedures

We recognise at Brompton Hall School that some pupils may present significant risks related to a) wanting/choosing to abscond so as not to be in school or b) choosing to abscond when unable to self-regulate. When the pupil enters school, they are under the legal control of Brompton Hall School. Where a pupil attempts or is seen to be leaving the school premises without permission then the following procedures should be followed

- Staff should initially follow the pupil to the door, perimeter fence/wall or gate and try to encourage the pupil to communicate their needs or feelings and make the choice to return to school. While they remain on the school site the staff member should maintain an understanding of the pupil’s personal risks, which may specifically include reference to risks and strategies related to absconsion, so that staff can make use of the content and encourage the pupil to use the identified strategies. Should they require a ‘change of face’ or support then they should contact the Behaviour Team. Where such strategies are not identified or known then the member of staff should use their skills in working in an SEMH school to support the pupil in making the right choices or being able to overcome their issues, worries or dysregulated feelings.



- Where a pupils' progresses to leave site and does not appear to be remaining near the school site then the member of staff is required to keep eyes on the pupil, following from a distance, if the pupil leaves the premises. Staff need to do this to ensure they know the pupil is safe, but they must not chase or frighten the pupil as this may cause the pupil to panic, fight or flight, possibly putting him or herself at risk by running onto a busy road, for example. If appropriate, encourage the pupil to communicate where they are going and find out if they have the means to get to their destination or know where they are but give them some space and check on them.
- Staff members should ensure they keep an accurate record of the time of different stages of the absconsion and make themselves aware of key clothing the pupil is wearing, to help locate the pupil is needed
- As soon as possible, where it is thought that the pupil is moving beyond the school and is not likely to return into school soon, then the Wellbeing Lead or Behaviour Lead must be informed as soon as possible, with precise information regarding location. To enable this, it is important that staff who track pupils likely to abscond have access to a phone and relevant school numbers or a walkie talkie. The Wellbeing or Behaviour Leader will provide additional support and guidance
- The Wellbeing Lead and/or Behaviour Leader will be responsible for gathering up to date information about the absconsion which will then lead to one or more of the following, depending on the assessed risks of the situation.
  - Additional staff being sent out to support the situation on foot
  - Additional staff being sent out to support the situation by car or school vehicle, including tracking where the pupil may be
  - Informing the police – in such cases this decision will depend on the length of time missing and the assessed safety needs of the individual pupil, which will include the age and SEND needs of the pupilIn all cases parents/carers will be informed.
- In some cases, the pupil is considered to be high risk regarding absconsion but low risk regarding safeguarding then a risk assessment will be put in place with parents/carers regarding agreed arrangements when the pupil leaves school eg an older pupil who absconds and catches a bus home. In such cases it will be agreed with parents when the responsibility for the pupil returns to the parent/carer
- If a pupil is deemed to be an immediate risk to themselves or other people then staff should follow Team Teach procedures, if appropriate and possible, to keep the pupil safe. In doing so staff should be mindful that physical intervention is a last resort and must only be used when de-escalation techniques and specifically identified pupil strategies have been used.
- At each stage parent/ carers will be regularly updated by the Wellbeing or Behaviour Lead



- Upon his return to school, and when the pupil is calm, the pupil will be seen by the Wellbeing Lead or Behaviour Lead or a member of the Senior Leadership Team so that their reasons for absconding may be discussed in detail. At this point a decision will be made as to the appropriateness of further actions. These will include a range of actions appropriate to the individual case including support including awareness of the dangers of absconding, reviewed risk assessment, specific agreed risk assessments with parents, or a sanction. These will be reflective of the individual pupil.

### **3. Monitoring**

There will be ongoing monitoring of absconsions, including number and individual pupils and the information will be used to inform decision making regarding provision and readiness for free movement around school. In some cases where a pupil is new to the school, or where a recent in-school transition is in place, there may be a period of 'settling in' before longer term plans are put in place, due to the need to often establish boundaries and understand anxiety needs.

### **4. Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers of pupils are responsible for supporting the work of the school and encouraging their children to keep to all school procedures and policies. Once school has informed the parents 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 school to help secure the safety of their child as well as meeting with a Senior Leader in order to agree subsequent actions. Risk management plans will be shared with parents/carers.

## **5. INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU / YOUR CHILD GOES 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 off site or 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 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". You will be able to speak to the Police Officer without any member of staff present if you wish to do so.

**Will anything else happen?** If you are injured or unwell then you will be checked by a Doctor or Nurse. Your class tutor 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.

**Remember** - You have the right to use a telephone to talk to someone. If you are worried about something or just want to talk, the school counsellor or a wellbeing support worker may be available.

The national ChildLine number is 0800 1111.

## 6. Appendix A – Report

Report should include:

- Absconding Pupil
- Incident Report
- Name of pupil: Date: An outline of the incident (Please include time of day, staff involved and how the issue was resolved.)
- What triggers led to this incident occurring?
- What action will be taken to support the pupil to feel happy and safe in school?