

Process for Pupils Absconding from School

These processes provide a guide for staff. Senior members of staff will use their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupil circumstances to make dynamic risk assessments, which may mean these processes are used flexibly. For example, there may be prior agreement with a parent about processes because of circumstances at home or a child may have an individual risk reduction plan, requiring certain actions to be carried out. In the same way, if a pupil has absconded but has been located by a member of staff and is engaging constructively with them, then staff may extend time frames because they know a child is safe and are working to support them. These processes become very important when staff cannot see a pupil who has absconded and the school is in loco parentis and has a duty to keep that child safe

All incidents involving a pupil absconding will be logged on My Concern, the school's online safeguarding reporting system. There will be logical and protective consequences for pupils who abscond from the school site, which will be appropriate to individual circumstances, equitable and in keeping with NeneGate School's therapeutic approach to behaviour and relationships.

Has the pupil been seen leaving the school site?

Yes – follow [Process A1](#)

No – follow [Process A2](#)

Is the pupil visibly distressed / are there current significant concerns about mental health or safeguarding?

Yes – [Process A3](#)

No – [Process A1](#)

Is the child in Key Stage 2?

Yes – [Process A4](#)

No – [Process A1](#) / [A2](#) / [A3](#)

Is the child on a school trip?

Yes – [Process A5](#)

No – [Processes A1](#) / [A2](#) / [A3](#) / [A4](#)

Process A1

- Reception staff will log time of notification of pupil missing
- Member of SLT notified, who allocates a member of staff to monitor the front of school for 10 minutes
- Members of staff will not routinely follow pupils who walk off site. If a pupil remains in sight, a dynamic risk assessment will be carried out as to whether it is safe to approach the child and whether to approach the child will help or hinder a situation
- After 10 minutes, home to be contacted and parent / carer advised that pupil has left the school grounds, been allowed time to return and has not done so. Parent should be advised whether pupil is in sight and the time at which they left the premises and / or left sight of staff. Reception staff will log time of call
- Request for parent to attend school to support and discussion with parent around emergency services.
- As a rule, once a pupil has been gone for 20 minutes the emergency services will be called. Reception staff will log time of call to emergency services.

Process A2

- SLT will be notified, who will direct staff to carry out a quick search of building and grounds and also check CCTV, including footage the front gates and fences.
- SLT will establish whether pupil has cause to be distressed and whether there are current mental health or safeguarding concerns
- If there is no sign of the pupil in school the parent / carer will be contacted immediately and no later than 10 minutes after the child has been identified as missing
- Reception will log the time of the report of the pupil missing and the time of any phone calls being made
- The emergency services will be contacted once a pupil has been missing for 20 minutes.

Process A3

- Member of SLT and DSL to be notified immediately.
- Reception to log timing of pupil going missing
- Parents / carers to be contacted immediately and notified that emergency services will be called immediately
- DSL or DDSL will contact police to ensure that important safeguarding information is conveyed accurately
- If pupil is in sight, a dynamic risk assessment will be carried out as to whether it is safe to approach the child. If a child is distressed then adults may cause a fight / flight response which can place the child at further risk

Process A4

- If a child in KS2 absconds from the school site, staff will always follow
- If the child remains nearby, for example outside the school gates or just around the corner, staff will offer support and encouragement to return
- If a child runs out of sight, a designated member of staff will attempt to follow and parent / carer will be contacted immediately. Parent will be notified of next steps. If the school does not know where the child has gone, the emergency services will be contacted immediately.
- If a younger child is unsafe and at risk of coming to harm on the road, school staff will use any means necessary to safeguard them, which may include the use of a Restrictive Physical Intervention

Process A5

- All off site activities will have their own risk assessment, which will include actions in the event of a child going missing
- If a child is known to abscond then an individual risk assessment will have been carried out to determine whether it is safe to take a child off site and what additional mitigations are needed to support them
- As a general rule, if a child absconds, staff will search the area quickly. They will contact school reception no later than 5 minutes after the child has gone out of sight.
- Reception will log the time of the call and the time the child went missing and will notify a senior member of staff.
- The senior member of staff will contact staff on the visit to give advice, depending on the circumstances, and also contact the parent to discuss next steps.

Appendix A: Process Charts



