



# Hill Top Primary Academy

A Member of Leodis Academies Trust



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## Absconding Policy

Plan administration	
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Person responsible for review	SLT
Signed and dated Principal	
Signed and dated and in Govs minutes Chair of Governors	

Hill Top Primary Academy is an inclusive school; we believe that every child has a right to a broad, balanced and effective education regardless of race, gender, age, sexuality or special need. Please refer to our Equal Opportunities Policy for further details of this.

The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly for all stakeholders, the process that will take place should a child abscond from the academy.

**To abscond is to 'leave without permission'.**

Internal Absconding	External Absconding
Internal absconding - where the pupil leaves the care of the responsible person without permission but remains on the academy site.	External absconding - where a pupil leaves the academy site without permission.
Where a pupil leaves a lesson without permission but remains on the academy site.	Where a pupil leaves an offsite provision without permission.  E.g. curriculum swimming, alternate education provision, etc.

Where a pupil leaves a club without permission but remains on the site.	Where a pupil leaves a defined area or supervision of the responsible adult without permission.  E.g. when undertaking fieldwork or on an educational visit.
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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.

**Where a pupil, present at formal registration, is found to be absent from the academy without authorisation the following procedures should be followed:**

- Member of staff to inform a member of SLMT, and main office.
- This person to organise search of buildings and known places that the pupil may have gone to.
- If the pupil is not found then all available staff to complete a more thorough sweep of the academy and check the perimeter of the grounds.
- Academy office to contact parents/carers and inform them of the situation.
- Consideration will be given to whether the search should be extended beyond the academy perimeter. This decision will be based on staff's knowledge of the child and on the levels of risk, and on what action is in the child's best interests.
- Any staff who leave academy grounds should take a mobile phone to contact the academy.
- Once a pupil has been found then the lead SLMT member will use their professional judgement to outline the response towards the pupil and the support the pupil will need in the future.
- A written report will be filed on the incident.
- Member of SLMT to brief parents.

**Where a pupil attempts or is seen to be leaving the academy premises without authorisation the following procedures should 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 academy.
2. If a student is deemed to be a high risk to himself or other people then staff should adhere to the Care and Control Policy with reference to holding the student, if appropriate.
3. At all times staff must be aware that active pursuit may encourage the student to leave the immediate vicinity of the academy and may also cause the pupil to panic, possibly putting him or herself at risk by running onto a busy road, for example.
4. If the student has left the immediate vicinity of the academy, the academy office and SLMT members must be contacted immediately and the lead person will direct the course of action.
5. Staff will follow the student and engage in a local search, following the student at a safe distance if in view.
6. The SLMT lead may direct additional staff to join the search in a vehicle, taking a mobile phone to contact the academy.
7. The academy office will contact the student's parents/carers.
8. If the searching staff lose sight of the student they must contact the academy office giving details of their location and the clothes which the student is wearing.
9. If the pupil(s) has left the immediate vicinity of the academy grounds and is no longer visible then the SLMT will make a decision as to how to take matters further which will take into account the age of the student, the prevailing weather conditions, the nature of the incident which led to the pupil absconding, the pupil's previous history of being involved in episodes of absconding and their outcomes. If the student returns of their own volition, parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible.
10. Upon his or her return to the academy, and when the student is calm, the student must be seen by the SLMT 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.
11. A written report will be filed on the incident.

**Control measures and procedures to prevent absconding.**

### Site security

- The site should have a secure perimeter and gates which can be closed.
- Gates/doors should be secured outside of our stated drop off and pick up times.
- Doors into and out of the academy to remain closed.
- There may be a need to have high bolts/closures on doors/gates to restrict unauthorised egress by younger pupils.

### Effective supervision

- Effective supervision is dependent on a number of factors including
  - Age of the pupils
  - Ability of the pupils
  - Number of the pupils
  - Activities being undertaken
  - Pupil behaviour
  - Site layout and security
- Specific identified risks e.g. pupils with history of absconding, public rights of way through academy grounds, building work, etc.
- There is a robust system in place for pupils to be handed over to their parents/carers or other named person in Early Years, KS1 and lower KS2.
- Pupils who need to leave the academy grounds with permission during the academy day should leave and return through the main entrance only and only when collected by an adult.

### Individual Pupil Risk Assessments.

- Where there is a foreseeable risk of absconding, there should be an IPRA in place for that child in the prescribed format.
- The IPRA should clearly detail the individual control measures required to reduce the risk of absconding.

### External visits/sites.

- On an Educational Visit the security of the venue/location should be assessed and supervision levels altered accordingly.
- Ensure that there are robust systems in place so that each group has specified members and leaders, and regular head counts occur throughout the visit.
- In the planning for an educational visit the risks of absconding must be clearly assessed, particularly in the case where known absconders are in attendance. This should include transport.
- Communication between the groups and robust emergency procedures should be in place.
- All risk assessments for the visit must be read, understood and signed by all participating adults.

