

 SPRINGHILL HIGH SCHOOL	<h2>Absconsion Policy</h2>
Person(s) Responsible:	
Approval:	Governing Body
Head Teacher:	Gary Edmunds
Policy Originator:	Chris Delahaye
Date Approved:	September 2020
Date of Review	September 2021

To be read in conjunction with: The Care and Control Policy, Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy; The Attendance Policy, Student Behaviour on Home to School Transport Policy

1.0 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 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.

This policy should be followed where the staff members and the student were originally on school premises therefore the members of school staff have lawful control or charge of the student (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, including social workers and carers. Police may need to be called depending on the levels of risk in the community (see below). Some students may present significant risks and are under 24-hour supervision or have minimal unsupervised time in their home and community, it is therefore vital that the person(s) bringing the student to school, e.g. travel guide, carer, ensure that the student enters the school building and visual sighting of the student is seen at all times. When the student enters school they are under the legal control of Spring Hill High School.

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

authorisation the following procedures should be followed:

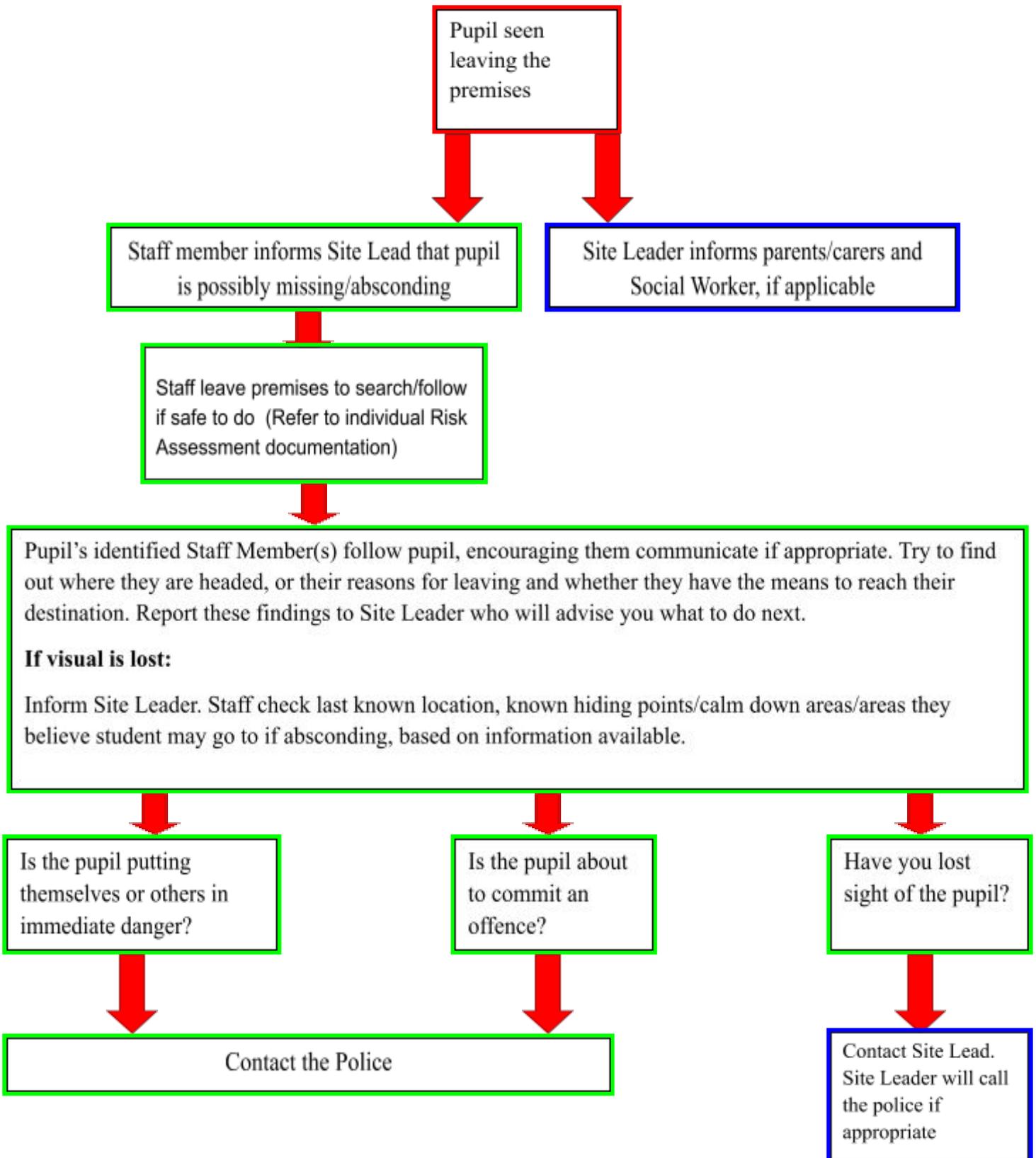
- Staff should follow the pupil to the door, perimeter fence or gate and try to encourage the pupil to communicate their needs or feelings. Staff should maintain an understanding of the pupil's Personal Behaviour Support Plan and their individual risk assessment so that staff can make use of the content and encourage the pupil to use its strategies
- Site Leader or Site Support to be informed as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure they make Site Leader aware if they do not have access to a phone. Site Leader shall contact the person with parental responsibility. At this point duty of care for the pupil shall pass to parent or carer. Social Worker, and other members of the Team Around the Child (e.g. Family Support Workers) shall also be notified
- Site Leader shall contact the pupil if possible
- If a pupil is deemed to be an immediate risk to themselves or other people then staff should follow care and control procedures, if appropriate. Staff must be mindful that physical intervention is a last resort and must only be used when immediate action is required under one of the 3 identified grounds identified in the [Care and Control Policy](#), section 6.9.
- If the pupil leaves the school building or grounds, staff must be aware that active pursuit may encourage the pupil to leave the immediate vicinity of the school and may also cause the pupil to panic, fight or flight, possibly putting him or herself at risk by running onto a busy road, for example
- If the pupil has left the immediate vicinity of the school staff should follow at a safe distance and maintain eye contact. If appropriate, encourage the pupil to communicate where they are going and find out if they have the means to get to their destination. Again, staff must remain mindful of what is outlined in the pupil's Personal Behaviour Support Plan. Staff should maintain regular contact with the Site Leader.
- Staff will follow the pupil, informing Site Leader immediately and engaging in a local search if sight is lost, following the pupil at a safe distance if in view. Staff should make use of information from the pupil's Risk Assessment and briefings to consider where they may be heading, if a local search is required.
- If the searching staff lose sight of the pupil or believe they are about to commit an offence, it may be required that the Police are called. In some circumstances, when children abscond from school, it may not be necessary to contact the Police. For example, if they are known to be able to keep themselves safe in the community and have communicated a means of contact. This decision shall be made by the Site Leader. Leaders should consider each pupils circumstances individually, taking into account age and vulnerability of the pupil, as well as other issues such as the nature of the incident which led to the pupil absconding, the pupil's risks, previous history of being involved in episodes of absconding, levels of supervision at home and in the community, the prevailing weather conditions and any other associated safeguarding risks (Such as vulnerability to child sexual exploitation (CSE) or child criminal exploitation

CCE).

Upon his or her return to school, and when the pupil is calm, the pupil will be seen by the Site Leader or a member of SLT 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.

A Significant Event - Negative shall be completed.

Procedure if a pupil is missing/absconds



Ratified by:

Name: Barbara Scrivens

Role: Chair of Governors

Date: 06/02/21