



# PHOENIX BAY

<b>Policy Focus</b>	<b>Absconding Students' Policy and Procedure</b>
<b>Lead Policy Holder</b>	R Banks - Principal
<b>Designated Advisory Board</b>	Ann Morrissey
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1.0	March 2023	R Banks/Ann Morrissey	New document

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Phoenix Bay School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of students. The school expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Phoenix Bay thrives to provide a safe and secure environment where students will want to come and enjoy learning.

It is always our expectation that students will choose to comply with policies and procedures whilst on school premises, or under the direct supervision of staff during educational visits. There may be 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, staff and volunteers at Phoenix Bay school are ready to deal with that eventuality. Staff are reminded to read the following policies and practice guidelines in conjunction with this policy:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Individual Risk Assessment

A student is considered to have absconded if they intentionally/knowingly leave the school site or an activity outside the school as part of their learning, without permission.

## **2. If a Student Absconds**

Staff at Phoenix Bay School should always bear in mind that students who have chosen to abscond may be upset or agitated and therefore it is important that the response of staff is to remain calm, maintain visual contact as far as possible, and work to re-engage the student and return them safely to school. Staff must always carry a radio to inform the DSL/DDSL of the situation. If the student has not returned within 15 minutes, a member of staff must inform the parent/carer to inform them. At no point should staff run after a student, nor should they ask another student in pursuing the absconding student.

- Active pursuit may encourage the student to leave the immediate vicinity and may also cause the student to panic, possibly putting themselves at risk by running onto a busy road.
- Staff will monitor the student from a safe distance whilst ensuring their safety. If contact is lost, the police must immediately be called.
- Where possible, the member of staff following the student should remain in contact with the DSL/DDSL via radio/mobile phone.
- The DSL/DDSL will then, if appropriate allocate additional staff to help return the student to school.
- The DSL/DDSL will inform the parent/carer and keep them updated as necessary.

If staff lose sight of the student, the police must be contacted, and parent/carer informed.

- The DSL/DDSL will provide the police with as precise a description of the student as possible, the last known whereabouts of the student and any other relevant details.

It is important that following an incident, the issues that arise are addressed and staff should:

- Review the individual risk assessment for the student involved.
- Where appropriate, talk through the incident with the student involved, explaining the consequences of such action in terms of Health and Safety. Ensure that a record of the discussion with the student is logged on CPOMS/Bromcom and a new assessment is carried out.
- Complete an online incident form.
- Keep all members of staff informed and discuss the incident in de-brief meeting.
- Review the individual risk assessments every half term to ensure appropriate control measures are in place and that all staff are fully informed.

### 3. Students absconding whilst off-site on educational visits or trips

- In the event that a student from Phoenix Bay absconds while on a trip or educational visit, the lead teacher must follow absconding procedures as laid out above. Staff must try wherever possible to maintain visual contact with the student and inform the DSL/DDSL immediately.
- The DSL/DDSL will ensure that the school informs parent/carer and records details as communicated from the lead teacher. All information will be uploaded into CPOMS/Bromcom.

The Lead Teacher must provide the following information when calling the school to report a student who has absconded:

- The precise location
- Who the absconding student was with
- When the student was last recorded as being seen
- The time the student absconded
- Are they in immediate danger? (if so, the police/fire/ambulance service must be called and the DSL/DDSL informed)

If the police are to be informed, the following additional information should be provided to the DSL/DDSL:

- The height and build of the student
- The colour of the student's hair
- What the student was wearing including any distinguishing accessories, i.e. bags, sunglasses etc.

### 4. Students walking off the premises during the school day

- Students are to be accompanied by staff at all times so if a student decides to walk off the school premises, it will be classed as absconding.
- Parents/carers will be notified as soon as the student leaves the premises. A member of staff will always follow the student, following the above procedures, and if deemed necessary, the police will be called.