East Bierley CE (VC) Primary School

Absconding Pupil Policy

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Leeds

At East Bierley Primary School,
WE ARE KIND
KIND INSPIRED NURTURED DETERMINED

Our vision:
To be a vibrant and inclusive Christian School where everybody is known, valued and inspired to reach their full potential. We nurture curiosity, creativity and a love of learning, equipping our pupils with knowledge, skills and character to flourish in an ever-changing world.

Friendship, Courage, Kindness, Respect, Forgiveness, Faith

Absconding Pupil Policy

We actively work to provide a secure, safe environment, a school where children want to come to enjoy learning with others as part of a caring community. We recognise that it is highly unlikely that a child will try to abscond from our school but given the proximity at the rear of our building to the open moor and village pond this policy is written to ensure we are ready to deal with this eventuality should it occur. The purpose of this non-statutory policy is to set out clearly for all stakeholders, the process that will take place should a child abscond from school.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The Headteacher (or other SLT member in their absence) is responsible for all decisions made when a child absconds from school.

- The class teacher or the teaching assistant (if working independently with the pupil) is responsible for caring for the child (until the child leaves the premises). They will be responsible for seeking additional help if this is felt to be necessary.

- Parents / carers of pupils are responsible for supporting the work of the school. They are responsible for 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 the subsequent procedures and actions. This could include coming to school to help secure the safety of the child after he / she has absconded as well as meeting with the Headteacher in order to agree subsequent actions

Procedures
If a child is suspected of leaving the school building/site without permission, in an emotional state:

- A member of the school staff is to 'track' the child watching from a safe distance without engaging in conversation if the child is seen absconding.

- The member of staff will send a child with the red 'support' sign to alert the office and Headteacher or (in their absence) the Deputy Headteacher.

- Office staff will ring 5 bells/whistles to signal an invacuation (see invacuation/evacuation policy).

- If the child appears to be missing but there is no evidence that he/she has left the site, a quick but thorough search of the site should be conducted before the parents/police are informed.

- If the child is within an easy distance of the school, staff are not to engage in conversation as the child might be in a distressed state and unable to act in a controlled manner. This would mean there is still the potential for traffic accidents. However professional judgement will be deployed and consideration given to the age of the child, the given situation and the relationship between the child and adult.

- If there is no doubt that the child has absconded from the site, the school will contact the child's parent to inform them and call the police. Staff will not chase the child as this could lead to them wandering further afield, acting impetuously or causing a traffic accident.

- If the child returns of his/her own volition, parents and (if necessary) the police will be informed. Upon his or her return to school, and when the child is calm, he or she must be seen by the Headteacher so that the reasons for absconding may be discussed in detail. At this point a decision will be made as to any further appropriate actions. A written report will be filed on the incident.

- If possible the child who has absconded should be brought back to school the same day. The parent, child and Headteacher will then discuss the issues and any consequences. This policy will be discussed. An agreement will be written, giving details of the incident and agreed actions and a risk assessment completed. See appendix A.

- If the child absconds for a second time in the same academic year, the Headteacher may consider a fixed term exclusion. If the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher is aware

that a child is not acting emotionally but has left the school grounds by choice, the above procedures may be adapted.

Children who return to school after absconding

Most children who abscond will do so as a result of a specific incident which may have taken place either at school, at home or on the way to school. For those who return to school either by their own choice, with parental support or following intervention by a member of staff, thought should be given to their welfare. They are likely to be in need of support, understanding and perhaps some time apart from their peers.

Monitoring and evaluation

Each incident will be recorded monitored and evaluated. Individual Risk assessment for pupil amended if needed.

Appendix A: Parental Agreement (To be completed by the parent or carer)

I have read the record of the absconding incident. I wish to make the following comments relating to the incident (optional):

I understand that it is always unacceptable for my child to leave the school site without permission and a repeated action of this nature might result in the school following exclusion procedures.

I understand that the following actions have been agreed in order to help my child be happy and safe in school. I know my child needs to keep to the school rules and not leave the school grounds without permission.

1. School will:
2. Parent will:
3. Pupil will:

Signed: _____ Parent/Carer

Signed: _____ Pupil

Signed: _____School