



Absconding Pupil Policy

Reviewed: July 2023

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Absconding Pupil Policy

Navigators endeavour to actively create and maintain a secure, safe environment where students want to come to learn, whether in the college setting or 121 programme.

We recognise that there are circumstances when some student's behaviours may escalate and as such the student may choose to leave their learning environment. This aspect of the policy sets out clear guidelines for this occurrence.

ALL students will have a Navigators Support Plan (NSP), an Individual Risk Assessment (RA) in place and a 121 risk assessment covering the venues each student will access. The NSP & RA will detail types of behaviour that can be expected when the student is in crisis and strategies for de-escalating a situation. These strategies should be employed at the soonest opportunity. The NSP will also indicate any strategies including positive handling/physical intervention that may help keep the student safe in times of crisis, as per our positive handling/physical intervention policy.

Absconding from a session :

1. Identifying a safe place with the student prior to embarking on the session is essential – be clear that should they feel overwhelmed or if you notice any pre – curser behaviours are occurring, as per the students NSP – they can go to this place and you can direct them to this place for their own safety.
2. Any student attempting to abscond from a mentor must be prevented from doing so, where possible – following the students NSP, RA and Risk Assessment of the environment – distraction, de-escalation techniques and identifying a safe place are good things to have in place.
3. Prevention may include physical intervention, although staff do not legally need to be trained as outlined in DfE guidance '**Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2013**'. Staff will determine via dynamic risk assessment whether physical intervention is necessary. Staff **will not** place themselves or the student at risk.
4. No student should typically be followed or chased. Following or chasing a student, particularly if they are in a state of crisis, could result in them wandering further afield, making impetuous decisions and could result in a Road Traffic Accident. However, try to ensure the pupil is always in view but cannot see you if safe to do so.
5. The DSL or DDSL should be alerted to the situation as soon as possible, please provide details of the exact location where the child absconded along with a description of the student (height, hair colour, skin colour and clothing).
6. You should then contact the student's emergency contact and host school and explain that we will contact 101 as per our policy.
7. The DSL/DDSL will contact the police, using 101 once the student has absconded from sight. If the student poses a risk to themselves or the public 999 should be called. The mentor is also able to do this.

Absconding from a session when aged 18 years +

1. Any student who has difficulty self-regulating and may show escalated behaviours should have a place of 'safety' that they can go to if in a state of crisis – this should be identified and highlighted to the student once they start at the provision.
2. If a student is in crisis and poses a risk to themselves or others, physical intervention may be used by members of staff for the safety of everyone. The physical intervention will be for the minimum time possible and will be followed up with a de-brief as part of the NSP & RA process. All interventions will be recorded in explicit detail in both the Daily Log and safeguarding log.
3. No student should be followed or chased. Following or chasing a student, particularly if they are in a state of crisis, could result in them wandering further afield, making impetuous decisions and could result in a Road Traffic Accident. However, try to ensure the pupil is always in view but cannot see you.
4. The student's risk assessments will then determine how an incident of absconding is approached dependent on the student's need, ability and vulnerability this should also be added to their student snapshot by the mentor.
5. If a student has absconded the emergency contact for the student must be informed along with the DSL/DDSL.
6. The police will only be contacted if the student poses a risk to the community or themselves.

Any incident of a student absconding from a session will require a de-brief led by the DSL/DDSL.

Documents that support this policy are:

Positive Handling/Physical Intervention Policy
Supporting Behaviour Policy

'Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2013' (Department of Education)