

be yourself.

Pupil Absconding Policy

1. Purpose

At Be Yourself, the safety and wellbeing of our pupils is our highest priority. This policy explains how we work to prevent pupils from absconding and what staff must do if a pupil leaves the provision without permission.

Absconding is treated as a **safeguarding concern**.

2. What Is Absconding?

Absconding is when a pupil:

- Leaves the Be Yourself premises without permission
- Fails to return from an activity, break, or agreed off-site session
- Runs away from staff supervision

3. Prevention

We aim to reduce the risk of absconding by:

- Building strong, trusting relationships with pupils
- Providing clear routines, boundaries, and expectations
- Completing risk assessments where absconding is a concern
- Creating individual support and safety plans
- Offering emotional and wellbeing support

- Ensuring appropriate staffing and supervision at all times

4. Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Know where pupils are at all times
- Follow agreed supervision arrangements
- Act immediately if a pupil is missing
- Report concerns to the Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Record incidents clearly and accurately

5. What To Do If a Pupil Absconds

If a pupil is believed to have absconded, staff must:

1. **Act Immediately**
 - Inform the Manager or DSL straight away
 - Check the building and immediate area
 - Confirm the pupil is not with another staff member
2. **Assess Risk**
 - Consider the pupil's age, needs, and vulnerabilities
 - Decide how urgent the situation is
3. **Next Steps**
 - If safe, staff may check nearby areas
 - Parents/carers will be informed by the Manager or DSL
 - If there is concern for the pupil's safety, the **police will be contacted immediately**

Staff must **not**:

- Put themselves at risk
- Use physical restraint unless there is an immediate risk of serious harm (in line with policy)

6. When the Pupil Returns

- Check the pupil is safe and well
- Offer calm reassurance and support
- Inform the Manager/DSL and parents/carers
- Record what happened
- Review the pupil's support or risk plan if needed

7. Recording and Review

All absconding incidents will be:

- Recorded as an incident
- Treated as a safeguarding concern where appropriate
- Reviewed to identify triggers or patterns
- Used to improve support and reduce future risk

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Every year
- After a serious incident
- If guidance or legislation changes

Approved by: Gemma Carey Clarke

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