



Eardisley CE Primary School

Policy on children absconding

Agreed September 2023

Aim:

At Eardisley CE Primary School 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 this policy is written to ensure we are ready to deal with this eventuality should it occur.

Policy Statement:

Pupils can be brought to school from 8.40am to stay on the playground from 0 when there will be a member of staff on duty to supervise the playground until school starts at 8.55 am. Once pupils are on the playground, they are to remain on the school premises until 3.15pm (or until their club has finished) unless authorised to leave the premises as part of an organised activity etc.

School will maintain a secure environment. The playground exits and external access doors will be locked during the normal school day and the doors are locked, during club sessions. We recognise that for safety reasons, the main exit route from the school will not be locked, although it is restricted by a door latch. All attempts will be made to support all children so that they feel happy, supported and safe at school.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The head teacher (or deputising teacher in her 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 children in their class and is 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.

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

1. The member of staff will alert the headteacher or (in her absence) the deputising teacher.
2. If there is no doubt that the pupil has absconded, the school will contact the pupil's parent to inform them and call the police. Staff will not chase or follow the pupil as this could lead to the pupil wandering further afield, acting impetuously or causing a traffic accident.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. If the pupil returns of his / her own volition, parents and (if necessary) the police will be informed.
6. If possible the pupil who has absconded should be brought back to school the same day. The parent, child and head teacher will then discuss the issues and any consequences. This policy will be discussed.

7. If the child absconds, or attempts to abscond, the head teacher may consider a fixed term exclusion.

If the head teacher / deputising teacher is aware that a pupil is not acting emotionally but has left the school grounds (e.g. by mistake), the above procedures may be adapted.

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 head teacher in order to agree subsequent actions.

Please also refer to the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and the Health and Safety Policy.

Arrangements of monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be reviewed in three years.