



Absconding Policy and Procedures

The wellbeing of our school community is at the heart of all that we do and is linked to our Core Values of Belief, Effort, Kindness and Community. These values help us to better understand and improve the wellbeing of our school community with this policy, and all others, being consistent in promoting those values.

Ratified by the Governing body on	13 October 2026
Next Review Date	Autumn 2029
Signed (on behalf of the Governing Body)	Signed:
	Print name:

1. Purpose and Legal Framework The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly for all stakeholders the procedures followed should a pupil abscond from school premises. To abscond is defined as leaving school grounds without permission.

Under Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Section 550A of the Education Act 1996, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and under Common Law, the school owes a statutory duty of care towards its pupils. This policy reflects the Welsh Government Reducing Restrictive Practices Framework and the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation Programme (Wales).

2. Preventive Security and Perimeter Measures

Outer doors and boundary gates remain secured throughout the school day.

If a pupil approaches a boundary and attempts to leave, staff members will man key exit points to offer diversion, reassurance, and verbal de-escalation without cornering the child.

Pupils identified as being at risk of absconding will have an Individual Absconding Risk Assessment and, where appropriate, provisions outlined in their Individual Development Plan (IDP) or Positive Behaviour Support Plan.

3. Procedure: Pupil Unaccounted For or Missing on Site Where a pupil present at formal registration is subsequently found to be absent without authorisation:

Staff member immediately alerts the Headteacher / DSP (Mr Paul Oliver), the Deputy DSP (Mr Andy Griffith), or the School Office. The School Office verifies that all perimeter gates and doors are secure. SLT or Inclusion staff coordinate an immediate search of known hiding places, calm-down areas, and sensory spaces. If the pupil is not located, available staff execute a thorough sweep of the school grounds and perimeter. If the pupil is not found following the full sweep: The School Office calls the Police via 999 (providing the pupil name, date of birth, address, description, and dynamic risk factors). Mr Paul Oliver or Mr Andy Griffith immediately contacts the parents/carers to inform them of the emergency situation. The incident is logged on CPOMS.

4. Procedure: Pupil Seen Leaving or Actively Absconding Where a pupil attempts to, or is observed, actively leaving the premises:

Staff use low-arousal verbal de-escalation, familiar staff, and distraction techniques to encourage the child to remain on site. Staff alert the School Office, Mr Paul Oliver, or Mr Andy Griffith immediately. Gates are checked and secured where possible without trapping or cornering the child. Designated staff will follow the pupil outside the perimeter at a safe distance to maintain visual line-of-sight. Staff will not actively chase or pursue the pupil closely, as rapid pursuit can cause panic, turn the event into a game, or increase the risk of the child running directly into hazard zones such as busy roads. Staff leaving the grounds must carry a school mobile phone to maintain live communication with Mr Paul Oliver or Mr Andy Griffith. In line with Welsh Government guidance on Reducing Restrictive Practices, physical intervention is strictly a last resort. Staff may only physically intervene if it is necessary, proportionate, and the least restrictive option to prevent immediate, severe physical harm, such as stopping a child from stepping in front of traffic. If searching staff lose sight of the pupil, or if the child enters an environment of immediate danger, staff must call 999 immediately. The

School Office, Mr Paul Oliver, or Mr Andy Griffith will contact parents/carers straight away to advise them of the child direction of travel and police involvement.

5. Post-Incident Actions and Reporting

Once the pupil is located or safely returns:

The child is brought to a calm environment and supported by familiar staff, Mr Paul Oliver, or Mr Andy Griffith. Mr Paul Oliver or Mr Andy Griffith contacts parents/carers and police (if dispatched) to confirm the child is safe. The incident is logged in detail on CPOMS on the same day. If restrictive physical intervention was used, a formal Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) form must be completed. Mr Paul Oliver, Mr Andy Griffith, and the ALNCo or Inclusion Team will review the pupil Individual Risk Assessment and Behaviour Support Plan alongside parents, making any necessary operational adjustments to prevent recurrence.

6. Summary Emergency Action Steps

Unaccounted For On Site Inform Mr Paul Oliver (DSP), Mr Andy Griffith (DDSP), and Office. Check and secure outer perimeter gates. Search internal spaces, known hiding spots, and grounds. If not found, call Police via 999 and inform Parents immediately. Log incident on CPOMS.

Seen Leaving Premises Inform Mr Paul Oliver (DSP), Mr Andy Griffith (DDSP), and Office immediately. Deploy familiar staff to offer verbal de-escalation. Follow outside perimeter at a safe distance to maintain line-of-sight without close pursuit. Do not chase closely to avoid pushing the pupil into traffic risks or reinforcing a chase dynamic. Use physical restraint only as a last resort if immediate physical harm is present. If sight is lost or immediate danger arises, call Police via 999 and alert Parents. Once returned, debrief pupil, log on CPOMS, and review Risk Assessment / IDP.