



# The Braybrook Centre

## Absconding Guidance 2022-2023

### Introduction:

For the purpose of this staff guidance, the term 'absconding' is used to cover incidents of young people leaving the Centre unaccompanied and without the prior knowledge of staff.

### Principles and Purpose:

- To abscond is to 'leave without permission' Under Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and in Common Law, schools and other education settings owe a duty of care towards their young people.
- This duty of care requires that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that young people are safe and remain within the care of the Centre at all times throughout the day and during Centre led activities.
- The safety strategies will be dependent on school phases (ages) and vulnerability of specific individuals.
- Everyone who comes into contact with young people and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children.
- Young people who go missing are potentially at risk of harm, and a significant number, because of their circumstances, may face the risk of sexual, criminal or economic exploitation.
- Young people absconding or go missing from care, home and education is a key risk factor in safeguarding children.
- All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which young people can learn. (Keeping Children Safe in Education & Working Together to Safeguard Children)
- This guidance sets out the procedures for maintaining safety and dealing with event of a young people going missing from Centre and Lawnswood Campus site promptly and efficiently.
- It is the Centre's responsibility to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of young people whilst in our care.
- This guidance is to assist you with our existing safeguarding policies and should complement and enhance the following policies already in place – i.e. Safeguarding Policy, Positive Behaviour and Relationships policy, Whistleblowing procedures, Data Protection, SEND policy, Health and Safety policy and First Aid policy.
- Many young people have special educational needs or are vulnerable in terms of lack of understanding of their own safety and the significance of Centre expectations relating to attending and absconding.

- As a direct result of this, the Centre places high importance on awareness for staff regarding matters of safety, security and support for young people.
- Staff work with young people to raise their understanding of safe behaviours both in Centre and in the community and provide each young person with purposeful educational and community experiences which are engaging, creative and suitable to their individual need, interest and ability.
- Where a young person is known to present a high risk of absconding and placing themselves or others in danger the Centre will create an individual assessment of risk reflecting those needs and how to address these in a positive way.
- In the event of a young people absconding from a Centre, a member of available staff will become the lead person.

## **Staff Awareness:**

It is the responsibility of all staff:

- To ensure that they follow security and safety procedures to maintain the safest possible environment for the young person.
- Familiarise themselves with the Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy and the individual strategies for support within each young person's Behaviour Support Plans and Risk Assessments.
- Required to be vigilant in their recording of all young people's attendance.

## **Risk Assessments:**

The safety and welfare of our young people is paramount. In order to ensure the continued safety of all young people in our Centre, individual environmental and activity risk assessments are carried out and maintained by the member of staff in charge. The risk assessment will detail measures and controls, which are in place to safeguard individual young people. Teachers and TAs should have 'eyes on' to ensure their young people are in sight at all times where possible.

In the event that a young person absconds staff must activate the following procedure:

From a Lesson:

- Subject TA to alert staff on TEAMS channel – Out of lesson and send TEAMS chat message to alert the Leadership Team, Safeguarding Officer and Attendance Officer
- Safeguarding Officer and Attendance Officer will organise a search of the building and grounds, calling on available staff to support.
- The Teacher and TA must ensure that the rest of the young people are safe and appropriately supervised in the classroom.
- Safeguarding Officer or Attendance Officer must inform Executive Headteacher and the Leadership Team if a young person is not located within a reasonable timeframe (20 minutes).
- The Safeguarding Officer or Attendance Officer will contact Parents/Carers to inform them of the situation.

- If the young person is deemed to be at significant risk and not located within a reasonable timeframe (30 minutes), the Safeguarding Officer or Attendance Officer must contact police using 101 and advise that a young person is missing, providing a full description, including the clothes they were wearing when last seen.
- Once a young person has been found the Safeguarding Officer or Attendance Officer will brief the Police, Parents/Carers and staff as necessary.
- Safeguarding Officer or Attendance Officer complete a full and detailed report of the incident must be completed on CPOMS; this must include times, date, significant decisions made, actions taken, when and by whom i.e. police contact, Parents/Carers informed etc.
- A restorative meeting should take place with the young person and the Leadership Team before they leave at the end of the day or the next morning if appropriate.

## **From the Site:**

Where a young person is seen to leave the Lawnswood Campus site without permission or support, the following procedures should be followed:

- Subject TA to alert staff on TEAMS channel – Out of lesson and send TEAMS chat message to alert the Leadership Team, Safeguarding Officer and Attendance Officer
- Safeguarding Officer and Attendance Officer will organise a search of the building and grounds, calling on available staff to support.
- The Teacher and TA must ensure that the rest of the young people are safe and appropriately supervised in the classroom.
- The member of staff should follow the young person and try to persuade them to return to site.
- At all times the member of staff must be aware that active pursuit may encourage the young person to panic placing themselves in further danger e.g. risk of running into a busy road.
- The member of staff should follow the young person at a safe distance keeping them in sight where possible.
- The member of staff may request additional staff to join the search in a vehicle, taking a mobile phone with them to ensure contact with the Centre.
- The member of staff take account of the young person's vulnerability, the weather conditions, the time of day, what they are wearing etc.
- Safeguarding Officer or Attendance Officer must inform Executive Headteacher and the Leadership Team if a young person is not located within a reasonable timeframe (20 minutes).
- The Safeguarding Officer or Attendance Officer will contact Parents/Carers to inform them of the situation.
- If the young person is deemed to be at significant risk and not located within a reasonable timeframe (30 minutes), the lead person must contact police using 101 and advise that a young person is missing, providing a full description, including the clothes they were wearing when last seen.
- Once a young person has been found the Safeguarding Officer or Attendance Officer will brief the Police, Parents/Carers and staff as necessary.

- Safeguarding Officer or Attendance Officer complete a full and detailed report of the incident must be completed on CPOMS; this must include times, date, significant decisions made, actions taken, when and by whom i.e. Police contact, Parents/Carers informed etc.
- If the young person returns of their own volition the Safeguarding Officer or Attendance Officer will inform Parents/Carers, Police and staff.
- A restorative meeting should take place with the young person and the Leadership Team before they leave at the end of the day or the next morning if appropriate.