

**St. Maddern’s Church of England Primary School**

**Absconding child policy**

The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly for all stakeholders, the process that will take place should a child abscond from school.

# 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 pupils.

This duty of care requires that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that pupils are safe and remain within the care of the school at all times throughout the school day and during school led activities.

# Where a pupil, present at formal registration, is found to be absent from school without authorization the following procedures should be followed:

A member of staff will inform the Head Teacher and the office.

Head Teacher organises search of buildings and known places that the pupil may have gone to.

If the pupil is not found then all available staff to complete a more thorough sweep of the school and check the perimeter of the grounds.

School office to phone the police when area has been fully-checked if the child is not found.

School office to contact parents/carers and inform them of the situation.

Consideration will be given to whether the search should be extended beyond the school perimeter. This decision will be based on staff’s knowledge of the child and on the levels of risk, and on what action is in the child’s best interests.

Any staff who leave school grounds to take mobile phone to contact school.

Once a pupil has been found then the staff member will use their professional judgment to outline the response towards the pupil and the support the pupil will need in the future.

A written report will be filed on the incident.

Staff member to brief police and parents.

# Where a pupil attempts or is seen to be leaving the school premises without authorisation the following procedures should be followed:

Staff must follow the student to the perimeter fence or gate and must try to persuade the student to stay in the school.

If a student is deemed to be a high risk to himself or other people then staff should adhere to the school policy with reference to holding the student, if appropriate.

At all times staff must be aware that active pursuit may encourage the student to leave the immediate vicinity of the school and may also cause the pupil to panic, possibly putting him or herself at risk by running onto a busy road, for example.

If the student has left the immediate vicinity of the school the school office and Head Teacher must be contacted immediately and the lead person will direct the course of action.

Staff will follow the student and engage in a local search, following the student at a safe distance if in view.

The Head Teacher may direct additional staff to join the search in a vehicle, taking a mobile phone to contact school.

Staff member will contact the student’s parents/carers.