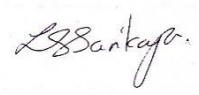
ST. BART'S
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Absconding Guidance

June 2024

St. Bart's Multi-Academy Trust

Absconding Guidance

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Approved by Trust Board:		**Lisa Sarikaya** Chief Executive Officer
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Date	Section Amended	Signature
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St. Bart's Mission

Our moral purpose is to ADVANCE EDUCATION and provide the best curriculum in all our schools, enabling every child to realise their full potential.

St. Bart's Vision and Values



We have a ***Passion*** for releasing potential in all our children and staff through the ***Encouragement*** and development of ***Ambition***, aspiration and excellence in all aspects of our work. Our commitment is to place children at the centre of everything we do. Working in ***Collaboration***, we strive to provide the highest quality of educational experiences and outcomes for young people in an inclusive environment. Through the **Enjoyment** of learning, we live life together in all its fullness through ***PEACE***.

We believe this vision empowers children with the skills to make a positive impact on the future of the communities they serve.

Our Trust Christian ethos is also captured by the ***PEACE*** values and all schools work in close partnership (whether C of E or community) to ensure that all children, adults and the communities they serve flourish just as Jesus encouraged us to do in John 10:10 –

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

St. Bart's Sustainability

We are committed to educating our pupils about environmental concerns and the importance of living sustainably. We recognise our responsibility to ensure that pupils are prepared for a world impacted by climate change through learning and practical experience.

We encourage both pupils and staff to think about the environment and how their actions will impact upon their local surroundings, as well as the global environment.

We will ensure pupils are taught about environmental sustainability, promote an eco-friendly attitude, and ensure that the Trust itself is as sustainable as it can be.

1. Introduction

Across St Bart's Multi-Academy Trust, we actively work to provide a secure, safe environment. Academies where children and young people want to come to enjoy learning with others as part of a caring community. We recognise that it is unlikely that a child / young person will try to abscond from on of our academies but this guidance is written to ensure we are ready to deal with this eventuality should it occur.

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 reason-able steps are taken to ensure that pupils are safe and always remain within the care of the school/centre throughout the school day and during school led activities.

2. Definition

To abscond is to **'leave without permission'**.

Internal Absconding	**External Absconding**
Where a pupil leaves the care of the responsible person without permission but remains on the academy site. (Leaving the building without permission)	Where a pupil leaves the academy site without permission. (Absconding from academy grounds)
Where a pupil leaves a lesson without permission but remains on the academy site. (Leaving the room without permission)	Where a pupil leaves an offsite provision without permission, e.g., curriculum swimming, alternative education provision, etc. (Absconding off-site)
	Where a pupil leaves a defined area or supervision of the responsible adult without permission, e.g., when undertaking fieldwork or on an educational visit. (Absconding off-site)
	Where a pupil leaves the designated transport provided for them without permission (Absconding from transport)

3. Control Measures and Procedures to Prevent Absconding

Site security

- The site should have a secure perimeter and gates, which can be locked if necessary.
- Gates/doors should be closed outside of your stated drop off and pick up times.
- Unsecured gates should be locked during break times if there is a significant risk of absconding.
- All doors into the academy should be locked from the outside with magna locks.

Effective supervision

Effective supervision is dependant on several factors including:

- Age of pupils

- Ability of the pupils
- Number of the pupils
- Activities being undertaken.
- Pupil behaviour
- Site layout and security

Specific identified risks e.g. pupils with history of absconding, public rights of way through school grounds, building work, etc.

Information to pupils.

- Academy rules and expectations are clearly displayed and reinforced throughout the school year.
- There is a clear and consistent system in school which covers absconding pupils.

4. Individual Pupil Risk Assessments (IPRA)

Where there is a foreseeable risk of absconding, there should be an IPRA in place. The IPRA should clearly detail the individual control measures required to reduce the risk of absconding.

5. Educational (Off Site) Visits

On an Educational Visit the security of the venue/location will be assessed, and supervision levels altered accordingly. Staff will ensure that there are robust systems in place so that each group has specified members and leaders, and regular head counts occur throughout the visit.

In the planning for an educational visit the risks of absconding must be clearly assessed, particularly in the case where known absconders are in attendance. This will include transport. Communication between the groups and robust emergency procedures should be in place.

When using staff cars to transport known absconders the risk assessment should specifically refer to the risk of absconding.

6. Procedures to be followed in the event of a child / young person absconding

a) A member of the SLT (or the Educational Visit Leader) and main office must be notified immediately.
b) Reporting staff member organises search of buildings / area and known places that the pupil may have gone to.
c) If the pupil is not found then all available staff to complete a more thorough sweep of the academy / area and check the perimeter of the grounds.
d) Reporting staff member to liaise with the office team to phone the police when area has been fully checked if the child is not found.
e) Reporting staff member to contact parents/carers and inform them of the situation and social worker if necessary.
f) Consideration will be given to whether the search should be extended beyond the academy 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.
g) Any staff who leave the academy grounds must take a mobile phone to contact the academy.
h) Once a pupil has been found then the lead SLT member will use their professional judgement to outline the response towards the pupil and the support the pupil will need in the future.
i) The absconding incident will be logged on CPOMS.
j) Member of the SLT to brief police and parents.

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

a) If a child leaves the building they are to be followed but only to the boundary of the academy premises.

b) The pupil is to be reminded, if appropriate, that if they leave the academy site and go out of staff sight the police and their parents/ carers will be informed.
c) Staff must continue to observe/ support as long as the pupil is in sight, perhaps moving back towards the building if the pupil begins to return.
d) If the pupil does go out of sight a phone call is to be made to parents/ carers and the police.
e) If the pupil is younger and/ or of higher risk as noted on their EHCP / Communication Chart / Personal Plan, a member of staff may follow after taking a mobile phone and informing a member of the SLT.
f) Once a pupil has been found then the lead SLT member will use their professional judgement to outline the response towards the pupil and the support the pupil will need in the future.
g) The absconding incident will be logged on CPOMS.
h) Member of SLT to brief police and parents

Upon their return to the academy, and when the pupil is calm, they must be seen by a member of the SLT so that the reasons for absconding may be discussed in detail. At this point a decision will be made as to the appropriateness of further actions.

If not already in place, a risk assessment will be completed detailing post incident learning and steps to reduce the risk of this happening again

7. Information to have ready when contacting the police

- Pupil name
- Pupil date of birth
- Pupil address
- Parent / Carer contact details
- Pupil level of need / method of communication / known triggers
- What they were wearing
- Last known location / direction in which they were heading

8. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers of pupils are responsible for supporting the work of the academy and encouraging their children to keep to all academy procedures and policies. Once the academy has informed the parents that their child has absconded, parents and carers are responsible for actively supporting the academy with subsequent procedures and actions. This could include coming into the academy to help secure the safety of their child as well as meeting with a Senior Leader in order to agree to subsequent actions. Risk assessments will be shared and signed by parents/carers.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Each incident will be monitored and evaluated. Risk assessments for any children believed to pose a risk of absconding will be created by the academy with the support of staff and parents/carers.



ST. BART'S

MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

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