

~~Children and Young People Who Abscond~~ **Children and Young People Leaving Site Without Permission (Absconding) Policy and Procedure**

From Alternative Provision - Core Creative Education (CoRE)

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

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 young people in their setting. This duty of care requires that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that young people and the staff working with them are safe.

Therefore all staff and students should remain within the care of the setting at all times throughout their agreed session time at CoRE, unless leaving the site for an off-site visit.

CoRE recognises that many young people attending Alternative Provision may be vulnerable due to SEND, trauma, mental health needs, exploitation, self-harm, criminal or sexual exploitation, or other safeguarding concerns. These factors will always inform decision-making should a student leave the site without permission.

Aim of this policy:

The aim of this policy is to keep young people and staff working at CoRE safe.

- We actively work to provide a secure, safe environment. A therapeutic, restorative space, a sanctuary where children and young people want to come to enjoy a range of therapeutic activities to engage them in learning, socialising and communicating as part of a caring community.
- As part of students' induction at CoRE, it is always made clear to parents and schools, that it is the students' choice to access the provision at CoRE.
- CoRE is on 10 acre site with 22 acres of woodland behind the site. So students have a lot of space to get away should they feel dysregulated.
- Our staff are trained as SEMH Practitioners, trained in PACE and Team Teach techniques in De-escalation to ensure that a young person is enabled to manage any upset or dysregulation safely. They are trained to follow a dysregulated young person at a distance, ensuring they have space and that they are safe.
- If a child or young person wants to go home, then they need to communicate this to a member of staff who can then make the necessary arrangements.
- All our students are staffed 1:1 or in small groups with a high staff ratio.
- All our staff are in walkie talkie contact at all times.

What is absconding at CoRE?

- Leaving the site from the front gate onto the road, while being encouraged to stay on site by a member of staff and told that it is unsafe, would be described as absconding.
- Climbing over into neighbouring farms/ land and running off without listening to instruction from CoRE staff, would be described as absconding.

Where a young person has previously left the site without permission, or is assessed as being at increased risk of doing so, an Individual Risk Assessment will be developed and shared with relevant staff to reduce the likelihood of future incidents.

We recognise that it is highly unlikely that a young person will try to abscond from our provision. However, if this does happen we also recognise that it is due to mental health difficulties and extreme dysregulation.

This policy is written to ensure we are ready to deal with this eventuality should it occur.

Therefore if a young person leaves the boundaries of the CoRE site or leaves through the front gates at CoRE onto the road. So the following procedures will apply.

Dynamic Risk Assessment

Staff will undertake a dynamic risk assessment based on the individual young person's known risks, age, vulnerability, emotional presentation, communication, previous behaviour, location, weather, traffic hazards and any immediate safeguarding concerns. Responses will be proportionate to the level of risk presented.

Procedure if a young person leaves CoRE without permission, due to dysregulation:

1. The mentor of that student will alert the Senior Manager (Rachelle Green) or (in her absence) Education Manager (Alasdair Green) or other Manager on site.
2. Staff will not chase the young person but will follow the young person at a distance to avoid the young person wandering further afield, acting impetuously or causing a traffic accident.
3. The Senior Manager will designate another member of staff or themselves to support the mentor following the student.
4. It is important that as little disruption as possible is created to the other young people on site, so mentors must not leave their students until suitable/ appropriate cover is found.
5. The second member of staff following should follow on foot/ car/ bike as appropriate and pick up a mobile phone to be able to contact the CoRE office.
6. The office manager, senior manager should be in the office to enable them to call parents, communicate/ support mentors as appropriate.
7. ~~If there is no doubt that the young person has absconded completely and they are not in sight, the Manager on site will make the decision to contact the police as an emergency situation and the pupil's parent to inform them.~~ *If the young person cannot be located, or there are immediate concerns regarding their safety, vulnerability or risk of significant harm, the Manager on Site will decide whether emergency services should be contacted immediately. This decision will be based on the dynamic risk assessment rather than elapsed time alone.*

8. If the young person returns of his / her own volition, parents and (if necessary) the police will be informed.
9. Upon his or her return to CoRE, and when the student is calm, the student must be seen by the Senior Manager 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 consequences~~ *appropriate restorative actions, support or changes to risk management. This policy will be discussed.*
10. A written report will be filed on the incident and filed in the students' file. See Appendix A.
11. An agreement will be written, giving details of the incident and agreed actions.
12. *Following any incident, staff involved will participate in a debrief to review the effectiveness of the response, identify any lessons learned and consider whether any changes are required to individual risk assessments or wider practice.*
13. If the young person absconds for a second time in the same academic year, the Senior Manager may consider whether CoRE is the right provision for this student.

Parent & Carers:

- Parents / carers of young people are responsible for supporting the work of CoRE.
- They are responsible for encouraging their children to keep to all of CoRE's procedures and policies.
- Once CoRE has informed the parents that their child has absconded, parents and carers are responsible for actively supporting CoRE with the subsequent procedures and actions. This could include coming on site or meeting staff to help secure the safety of the child after he / she has absconded as well as meeting with the Senior Manager in order to agree subsequent actions.

Monitoring and evaluation:

- Each incident will be recorded, monitored and evaluated and recorded.
- Recorded incident paperwork (see appendix A) will be kept in student files.
- A copy of this incident will be shared with the school partner and parents of this student.
- The incident will also form part of the end of term Report for this student, which is accessed by funders and other professionals.
- Following the incident, An Individual Risk assessment for this student will be put in place, shared with the CoRE team and filed in the student file.

Appendix A (What Absconding Report should include):

Absconding Student Incident Report

Name of pupil:

Date:

An outline of the incident (Please include time of day, staff involved and how the issue was resolved.)

What triggers led to this incident occurring?

What action will be taken to support the student to feel happy and safe at CoRE?

Signed by Senior Manager:

Signed by Parent:

Signed: **A *Green* (Education manager)**

Name: Alasdair Green

Date: 2/7/26

This policy will be reviewed annually, or as and when there are any changes in the law or procedure