

Swanwick School and Sports College

Absence without Authority Policy

Initial Date	Reviewed	Next Review
October 2024	October 2025 June 2026	July 2027

Aim:

To have in place procedures identifying actions to be taken when a pupil is **Absent without Authority**.

Immediate response: Missing Young Person

If a pupil is absent without authority from school e.g. their whereabouts is unknown and believed to have run away from school. A member of staff should notify a member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately. The reporting staff must share all relevant information; this may include last known location, time last seen or any known triggers or concerns.

The Senior Leadership Team and/or Pastoral Team supported by other identified staff should search the school buildings and grounds and the immediate surrounding area.

Informing Parents/ Carers of missing Young Person

During school hours (08:50-15:00) parents/carers will be notified of their child's absence without authority after 15 minutes since the pupil was last seen. Parents/Carers will be kept fully informed of any developments and will be updated regularly as new information becomes available. Parents/Carers will be advised that the police may be informed if the pupil doesn't return or not found shortly.

Informing Police of a Young Person Absent Without Authority

If a pupil has a known history of absconding from school, then the local police will be informed of the potential risk. Staff may be required to complete information in relation to a missing person to support any investigation.

The local police will be provided with any known information including; likely locations, peer associations, known risks (to themselves or others).

For further information or advice then referral should be made to the document "The Joint Protocol between Derbyshire Police and Derbyshire County Council to ensure

all procedures are in place to Safeguard and Child/Young Person who goes missing from Care, School or their Placement.

Return of missing Young Person

On return, the pupil should be given the opportunity to speak with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, Pastoral and/or a key adult. This is to discuss any reasons for absence, identify any concerns or risks and support reintegration into school.

A safe and well check should be made to look for indications that the child has suffered any harm, where and with whom they may have been and for them to disclose any information including offences they may have committed or had committed against them.

If the reason for their Absence without Authority is the result of alleged abuse at the school this would be dealt with under the schools Child Protection Procedures.

Incidents of Absence without Authority

Incidents of Absence without Authority must be recorded on Arbor, a Serious incident Form and My Concerns. These incidents must be monitored and Risk Assessments and Positive Handling Plans updated accordingly.

Risk Assessments/Positive Handling Plans

Pupils identified at risk of Absence without Authority must have; individual Risk Assessments and Positive Handling Plans that outline preventative strategies and clear response actions. This information should consider:

- The age of the child
- Previous history of absconding or similar behaviours
- Emotional and mental health needs
- Peer influences and relationships
- Whether the child is running from or to something
- The risk of offending behaviour
- Risk of the child being targeted for economic or sexual exploitation