

EKC Group Absconding Policy for Junior Colleges

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly the process that will take place should a Junior College student abscond from a college site.

Whilst most of EKC Group's colleges have secure perimeter fences, the purpose of these is to minimise opportunities for unauthorised persons to enter with the intention to steal, cause damage or threaten the safety and wellbeing of staff and students. As pre 16 learners, we have a duty of care for staff to be aware of where students are during the school day and to have confidence in their safety.

Without the necessary support and guidance outside College, these students may be extremely vulnerable. The College will therefore ensure that when such students abscond or attempt to abscond, every reasonable endeavour is made to ensure that the student is located and returns to learning activities within the College.

Preventative measures

The College will take the following measures to minimise the instances of students (who are known absconders) absconding:

- Photograph and behaviour support plan for the student who is a known absconder to be discussed with the estates team.
- Individual risk assessments for students which are reviewed and updated in accordance with the student's needs;
- Mentors to telephone the parent/carer of any student who does not arrive to school to have a clear understanding of which students we expect present that day;
- Registers being taken in a timely way at the start of lessons both in the school and within vocational areas, and to immediately notify the representative in the school of any students who do not return from breaks;
- Students who have a tendency to abscond to be made aware to all teaching staff to ensure a rigorous approach;

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- For Head of Junior College I to meet with the parent/carer of any absconder, as well as a behaviour contract to be implemented to ensure student is signing in with nominated member of staff at the start of all lessons and break times;
- Providing students with stimulating and enjoyable learning activities;
- Providing learning environments in which students feel comfortable and secure;
- Being vigilant to signs of absconding and taking appropriate and timely action;
- Notification to Safety and Security staff of any students who have a tendency to abscond along with their photo;
- Having clear and effective communication channels between staff and management to manage any instances of absconding.

Procedure

3.1 Where it is known that the student has absconded and they may be on campus

- Member of staff to immediately alert the College Duty manager as well as the Junior College mentor. Description of student to be provided, along with photograph and details of what they are wearing. Mentor should be made aware to ensure there is no known information regarding the student's departure from site.
- Security team and Estates manager to conduct a search of the campus and monitor all exits;
- College Duty Manager to advise College Principal and Head of Junior College of incident and contact the parent.
- Estates Manager directs team to undertake a systematic search of college site.
- Junior College mentor and other relevant staff will check the student's last known location, known hiding points, calm down areas and areas student may regularly go to if absconding.
- When the student is located, they will be escorted back to their area and settled back into learning activities.
- Mentor and/or Head of Junior College to contact parent/carer within 24 hours to make aware of the incident and advise that student will be put on an attendance/behaviour contract to be signed by a nominated member of staff at all lessons and break times.
- Incident to be noted on pro monitor comments.

3.2 Where it is known that a student who isn't a regular absconder has absconded and has left the campus

- The relevant member of staff to notify College Duty manager who should make contact with Head of Junior College, College Principal and Estates Manager/estates.
- Estates Manager to appoint member of staff to review and download CCTV footage of student leaving campus. Ongoing monitoring of CCTV footage to be undertaken in case student returns to college.
- Junior College mentor contact Police, parent/carer and KCC Social Services if relevant to student. Police to be provided with photograph of student, description of what they are wearing, student's date of birth and details of any behavioural matters and inherent conditions, which may assist the search.
- Police to conduct external search and maintain contact with Junior College Mentor. Staff will not participate in the external search unless advised otherwise by the Police.
- Head of Junior College to be the communication link for all updates and to keep parent/carer informed of updates unless the Police advise that in the interests of the student's safety and welfare, they should manage and facilitate communications.
- When the student is located by the Police, they will be escorted back to campus and settled back into learning activities or returned to the parent/carer depending on the circumstances.
- Incident to be noted on pro monitor comments.

3.3: Where it is known that a student who is a regular absconder with a risk assessment has absconded and has left the campus

- Relevant member of staff to notify College Duty Manager, College Principal and Estates Manager/Estates.
- Security team to review and download CCTV footage of student leaving campus. Ongoing monitoring of CCTV footage to be undertaken in case student returns to campus.
- Head of Junior College to be the communication link with parent/carer and to follow agreed actions in risk assessment.
- Head of Junior College to meet with parent/carer within 48 hours to discuss the incident, implement an attendance/behaviour contract and, review their risk assessment from their previous absconding incident. The Junior College disciplinary policy should be followed.
- Incident to be noted on pro monitor comments.

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Post incident actions

After the incident is resolved, the following steps will be undertaken:

- In the case of 3.2 and 3.3, Head of Junior College to meet with parent/carer within 48 hours to discuss the incident, implement an attendance/behaviour contract and, if they have absconded before, follow The Junior College disciplinary policy.
- In the case of 3.2, relevant Pre 16 Senior Lead to hold a case review meeting within 48 hours of the incident resolution to identify if any improvements are needed to be made to the process. If this incident occurs immediately before a non-working day, the meeting will be held on the next working day. In the case of 3.3, as the student regularly absconds, a briefing with staff will take place to ensure all agreed actions with parents/carers were followed.
- Members of staff engaged in the incident to write an incident report within 48 hours of the incident's resolution. The reports will be collated by the Head of Junior College to inform the creation of a summary incident report.
- Summary incident report to be sent relevant agencies and copy to be kept on student's file.
- Student's risk assessment and behaviour support plan to be updated with details of incident and any further preventative measures that will be taken to mitigate future instances of absconding.

Related policies and procedures

Safeguarding and preventing terrorism and extremism policy

Additional Learning Support policy

Managing Challenging Behaviours policy and Process

The Junior College Disciplinary Policy

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