

## ABSCONDING AND GOING MISSING PROCEDURE - PATHWAYS

### DEFINITION

Students with severe to moderate learning difficulties can exhibit unpredictable behaviours if they are suffering anxiety. One of the behaviours presented can be running away and trying to leave the college environment. If staff are concerned that a student is missing or absconding, the following procedures will occur.

### AIMS

Students on the Pathways Course who require additional support are supervised during the movement from one building to another to an appropriate level, unless there is an agreement with them that they are allowed to move independently. At break times and lunchtimes those students who require additional support are supervised closely with particular reference to keeping them within the college environment. For community based lessons a risk assessment is completed.

### GUIDANCE

If a student is missing from a lesson, a member of staff will go and look for them. If that member of staff cannot find the student within 15 minutes then the following steps should be taken:

1. Assistance will be requested from other members of staff to support the search for the missing student. The Head of Department and the Head of Student Services must be notified.
2. If the Head of Student Services is not available then the Principal, a member of SMT or a Head of Hall must be notified immediately.
3. If the student is unable to be found as the ongoing search of the premises continues the Head of Student Services or relevant member of staff will then decide at which point to contact the police. Contact will usually be made within 30 minutes of the student going missing.
4. If it is determined possible that the student may have absconded from the college campus the ongoing search will be coordinated to cover the local area.
5. The senior member of staff will call the police and parents/carers will be informed. While the police are being called, members of staff will search the local area, they will investigate the land and roads around the immediate college area.

All students have a photograph on MyLoreto which can be handed to staff involved in the search and the police. There is also an Individual Learning Plan for each student, outlining their behaviour and language ability which may be useful to staff involved.

- When the police arrive, the senior member of staff will provide the police with copies with the student's details and photograph, and any other relevant information related to the student at the time they went missing/absconded.
- Parents/carers will be updated regarding the procedure being followed and the results of any search at regular intervals.

## **OUTCOMES**

- If a student goes missing on campus, which results in a successful staff search and the student is able to continue with their college day, parents/carers will be informed that day of the incident.
- When the student is found, there will be a thorough investigation of how the student left college premises.
- In the event of a student absconding or going missing for any reason, there will be a full review of this procedure and of the student's individual risk assessment and behaviour support plan. This information will be shared with staff and parents.
- Should there be any weaknesses identified in the system of students' safeguarding, they will be remedied effectively.