



## 1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out the expectations of Christ Church Grammar School (the School) staff in the event of a student running away or being identified as missing from School or a School approved activity.

## 2. Definitions

**Absconding** means leaving hurriedly and secretly, typically to escape. Synonyms of absconding include (but are not limited to) running away, escaping, bolting, fleeing.

**Missing** means unable to be found during the course of any school activity or school related activity (e.g., at an excursion; camp or school related trip).

## 3. Policy Principles

If a staff member reasonably suspects that a student has left the school campus or a school-approved activity, or has otherwise gone missing, they must take immediate appropriate action. In determining what are reasonable and appropriate steps to take, staff should consider the following:

- The location of the School, and/or the School approved activity, and its proximity to external dangers such as busy roads or a body of water (the river or ocean)
- The student's age, vulnerability (e.g. disability; mental health; medical condition or any recent exposure to stressful life events or trauma), and mental state immediately prior to leaving the School grounds or the School approved activity e.g., whether the student was highly distressed; , drug or alcohol affected, evidence of neurodisability
- Appropriate supervision of other students whilst action is taken to ascertain the whereabouts and/or establish the safety of the missing or absconding student.
- Any communication to be provided to the other students involved directly or indirectly in identifying the student as missing or having absconded, or who may potentially become aware of the other student's absence

Depending on the individual circumstances of the case and the complexity of the scenario, reasonable steps to be taken **may include one or more** of the following:

- Searching for the student, particularly if there is information available as to the student's potential whereabouts
- Contacting the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student to advise them that the student has left the School grounds or School-approved activity and to obtain any additional information and assistance that may help in locating the

student

- Contacting the Western Australian Police to advise them of the missing student and the age, disability, vulnerabilities or mental state of the individual student
- Following the student and maintaining visual contact until the student returns to School or the School-approved activity, or is in the company of the police or their parent or guardian
- Making contact with the student and encouraging them to return to the School grounds or the School approved activity, go to a safe place, stop the behaviour that may be putting them at risk, or remain in the company of a suitable and responsible adult
- Restraining the student in exceptional circumstances (for example where the student is about to step in front of a car or otherwise harm themselves) and in accordance with the School's Policy on Students with Disabilities

The following steps after the incident:

- Inform the School Principal.
- Report the incident to the parent(s) or guardian(s) if this has not already occurred
- Report the incident to the Director General of Education as a Reportable Incident using the Reportable Incident Notification form within 48 hours of the incident
- Report the incident in writing as soon as possible to the Chair of Council as an Emergency and Critical Incident
- Document the incident and the staff response in the school database
- If there are any grounds to support the possibility of abuse (i.e., physical; sexual or emotional), or neglect (i.e., physical or emotional), take appropriate action in accordance with the Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Consider whether it is appropriate to develop a Student Behaviour Management Plan for the student in consultation with the School Psychologist, the student, and his parent(s)/guardians(s)
- A member of the Preparatory School leadership team, Deputy Principal or Head of House will contact the student and encourage them to make positive choices regarding their behaviour, where appropriate.

## 4. Related Policies and Resources

Attendance Policy

Code of Ethics

Code of Conduct for all Students

Code of Conduct for Staff, Contractors and Volunteers

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy

Critical and Emergency Incident Management Policy and Handbook

Duty of Care for Students Policy

Students with Disabilities Policy  
Registration Standards for Non-Government Schools

<b>Document title:</b> Students Absconding or Going Missing from School	<b>CRICOS:</b> 00433G
<b>Date originally approved:</b> 5 December 2023	<b>Approving Authority:</b> Council
<b>Date this version approved:</b> 5 December 2023	<b>Date to be reviewed:</b> 5 December 2026
<b>Policy Custodian:</b> Deputy Principal/Head of Senior School and Head of Preparatory School	<b>Policy Category:</b> Child Safety and Wellbeing <b>Page 3 of 3</b>