LIMITLESS ALTERNATIVE PROVISION • STATUTORY POLICY

STUDENT ABSCONDING POLICY

POLICY VERSION	DATE ADOPTED	REVIEW DATE	DSL	PROPRIETOR
1.0	February 2026	Annually – Feb 2027	Harriet Ann Fry	Dwayne Paul

1. POLICY STATEMENT & 2. DEFINITION

Limitless Alternative Provision is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all pupils. This policy provides guidance for preventing, managing, and reporting instances where a pupil absconds from the provision, including during off-site activities.

Aligns with: *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, *DfE: Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits*, and *Ofsted* expectations.

2. Definition: Absconding occurs when a pupil leaves the premises or an educational activity without permission, supervision, or notification, potentially putting themselves or others at risk.

3. PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Maintain **secure entry and exit points** at all times.
- Ensure **adequate staff supervision** based on risk assessment and pupil needs.
- Conduct **regular headcounts** in classrooms, gym, and during off-site activities.
- Maintain **positive relationships and engagement** with pupils to reduce risk.
- Implement **individual risk assessments** for pupils with a history of absconding, SEND, or SEMH needs.
- Use **structured routines, clear expectations, and behaviour support plans**.

4. PROCEDURES WHEN A PUPIL ABSCONDS

4.1 Immediate Actions

- Staff nearest to the pupil **attempt to calmly prevent absconding** without putting themselves or others at risk.
- Alert other staff and the **DSL immediately**.
- Do not chase in a way that endangers staff or pupils; ensure safety first.

4.2 Search & Comms

- Conduct a **coordinated search** of the site and surrounding area.
- If off-site, ensure other staff **maintain supervision of remaining pupils**.
- **Contact emergency services** if the pupil's location is unknown and there is risk of harm.

4.3 Notification

- **Parents/carers** informed immediately.
- **DSL and Proprietor** informed.
- **Commissioning school** notified if applicable.

4.4 Recording

Complete a **Student Absconding Report** including:

- Time, location, and circumstances
- Staff involved & actions taken
- Outcome & follow-up measures

5. POST-INCIDENT ACTIONS & 6. STAFF TRAINING

Post-Incident: Conduct a **review meeting** with staff to identify causes; review and update **risk assessments and behaviour plans** for the pupil; consider **safeguarding referrals** if appropriate; and implement **strategies to reduce recurrence**, including SEMH support or adjusted supervision.

Staff Training: All staff receive training in safeguarding and child protection, managing high-risk behaviour, preventing absconding, risk assessment and incident reporting, and de-escalation and positive behaviour strategies.

7. SAFEGUARDING CONSIDERATIONS & 8. MONITORING

Safeguarding: Absconding may indicate **safeguarding concerns** (e.g., neglect, exploitation, mental health crisis). All incidents are evaluated for **risk of harm** and reported appropriately. DSL monitors trends in absconding and updates procedures.

Monitoring & Review: All incidents are logged and reviewed termly by the **DSL and Proprietor**. Patterns of behaviour or high-risk pupils trigger **updated risk assessments**. Policy reviewed annually or following significant incidents.