



## **Absconding Policy**

This policy is written to guide staff of Productive Learning UK Limited in the event of a learner going missing on the premises, going missing outside of the building or having absconded.

The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly for all stakeholders, the process that will take place should a child abscond from Productive Learning UK Limited.

To abscond is to 'leave without permission'. Under Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and in Common Law, education settings owe a duty of care towards their learners. This duty of care requires that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that learners are safe and remain within the care of Productive Learning UK Limited at all times throughout the sessions and any led activities.

It is important for Productive Learning UK Limited to maintain a caring, welcoming ethos which establishes a safe, secure and stable environment to enable learners to grow, develop and learn.

Accordingly Productive Learning UK Limited must take reasonable steps, through their learner management and staff training programme, to minimise the likelihood of positive handling becoming necessary in the case of one or more learners absconding.

### **PROCEDURE:**

Where a learner, who is present at the start of a session, is found to be absent without authorisation the following safeguarding procedures must be followed:

1. Member of staff to inform Director of Productive Learning UK Limited
2. Director organises search of building and known places that the learner may have gone to.
3. If the learner is not found then all available staff to complete a more thorough sweep of the building and check the perimeter of the grounds.
4. The Director must phone the police when area has been fully checked if the learner is not found.
5. Director to immediately contact parent(s)/guardian(s) and inform them of the situation when the Police have been informed.
6. Consideration will be given to whether the search should be extended beyond the grounds perimeter. This decision will be based on staff's knowledge of the learner and on the levels of risk, any active risk assessment(s) and on what action is in the learner's best interests. Liaise with the police at all times.
7. Any staff member that leaves the grounds must take a mobile phone and maintain contact. Staff should, where possible, leave the site accompanied by another member of staff.



8. Once a learner has been found then the Director will use their professional judgement to outline the response towards the learner, and the support the learner will need in the future.
9. A written incident report must be filed on the incident and logged in the Master Incident Report Log.
10. Director must brief police and parent(s)/guardian(s).

Where a learner attempts or is seen to be leaving Productive Learning UK Limited's premises without authorisation the following procedures must be followed:

1. Staff must follow the learner to the perimeter fence or gate and must try to persuade the learner to stay in Productive Learning UK Limited.
2. De-escalation techniques must be attempted. In such stressful circumstances it is important that staff remain as calm and collected as possible and follow procedures.
3. At all times staff must be aware that active pursuit may encourage the learner to leave the immediate vicinity of Productive Learning UK Limited and may also cause the learner to panic, possibly putting them at risk by running onto a busy road, for example.
4. If the learner has left the immediate vicinity of Productive Learning UK Limited the Director must be contacted immediately, they will direct the course of action.
5. Staff will follow the learner and engage in a local search, following the learner at a safe distance if in view. Staff must take a mobile phone.
6. The Director lead may direct additional staff to join the search in a vehicle, taking a mobile phone to maintain contact.
7. If the searching staff lose sight of or are concerned for the safety of the learner or themselves, they must contact Productive Learning UK Limited giving current details of their location and the clothes which the learner is wearing.
8. The Director or designated staff must contact the Police and learner's parents/guardians immediately. These phone calls must be made concurrently.
9. If the learner has left the immediate vicinity of Productive Learning UK Limited grounds and is no longer visible then the Director will make a decision as to how to take matters further which will take into account the age of the learner, the prevailing weather conditions, the nature of the incident which led to the learner absconding, the learner's previous history of being involved in episodes of absconding and their outcomes.
10. If the learner returns of their own volition, parents/guardians and the police will be informed as soon as possible.
11. Upon their return to Productive Learning UK Limited, and when the learner is calm, the learner should be seen by the Director so that the reasons for absconding may be discussed in detail if this is appropriate. At this point a decision will be made as to the appropriateness of further actions.
12. A written incident report will be filed on the incident.



13. It is important that following an incident the issues that arise are addressed and staff must:

- Consider an individual risk assessment for the learner involved.
- If there is a second incident within an academic year, then a risk assessment must be completed.
- Where appropriate, talk through the incident with the learner and parents/guardians involved.
- Ensure that a record is kept of the discussion held with the learner and parents/guardians. Complete an incident form, a copy of which should be placed in the learner's file. Keep all colleagues informed and discuss the incident in staff meetings and/or in supervision meetings.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed regularly in line with legislative updates, and in any event not less than annually.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Morris', written over a horizontal line.

**Nicholas Morris**  
**Director – Productive Learning UK Limited**