**Journey Independent School**

**Absconding and Missing Children Policy**

**September 2025**





Policy: Missing or Absconding Student

1. Objective The objective of this policy is to establish procedures for handling situations where a student enrolled in an Independent School is reported as missing or has absconded from the premises. The guidelines outlined below aim to ensure the student's safety, prompt response, and effective communication with relevant parties to resolve such incidents in a timely and professional manner.

2. Reporting a Missing or Absconding Student

2.1. When a student is observed to be missing or is believed to have absconded, the incident must be immediately reported to the designated staff member responsible for student welfare or the person in charge.

2.2. The person receiving the report will ensure the necessary steps are taken promptly and will initiate the process to address the situation.

3. Initial Response

3.1. Immediately after the incident is reported, a thorough search of the premises will be conducted by designated staff members to locate the missing student.

3.2. Prioritise the student's safety and wellbeing during the search, following established safeguarding guidelines.

3.3. Communication channels will be activated, and key personnel, such as the student's legal guardians, local authorities, and AEP management, will be informed of the situation.

4. Internal Investigation

4.1. An internal investigation will commence promptly to determine possible reasons and contributing factors leading to the student's absence or absconding.

4.2. The investigation team will consist of appropriate staff members, including the designated staff responsible for student welfare, relevant AEP personnel, and any other individuals necessary for a comprehensive inquiry.

4.3. The investigation will involve reviewing CCTV footage, speaking to staff members, collecting witness statements, and any other relevant information.

4.4. The investigation team will document their findings and report to the AEP management as soon as possible.

5. Communication

5.1. Throughout the entire missing or absconding incident, effective communication will be maintained with all relevant stakeholders, including the student's legal guardians, appropriate local authorities, and any other parties involved.

5.2. Regular updates will be provided to stakeholders, ensuring that accurate and timely information is shared.

5.3. Communication channels will be clearly documented, including contact details for key personnel involved in the incident.

6. Preventative Measures and Continuous Improvement

6.1. The AEP will review and evaluate its safeguarding protocols and procedures regularly to identify areas of improvement and implement necessary changes.

6.2. Staff training will be provided to ensure all staff members understand the procedures and are capable of handling missing or absconding incidents effectively.

6.3. Full cooperation with local authorities, relevant agencies, and other educational institutions will be pursued to enhance student safety and responses to such incidents.

7. Policy Review This policy will be reviewed annually or as necessary, taking into account any changes in legislation or best practices related to missing or absconding students, to ensure its continuous relevance and effectiveness. This policy is implemented to provide clear guidelines for addressing incidents involving missing or absconding students in the Independent School. The safety and welfare of our students are of paramount importance, and this policy aims to minimise risks, swiftly respond to incidents, and enhance collaboration with relevant parties to ensure the wellbeing of our students at all times.