



Absconding Policy

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Approved by:

Rob Grays – Chief Executive Officer

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Definitions

- **Adult at Risk** – any person aged 18 years and over, who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health issues, learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.
- **Child or Children** - any person under the age of 18.
- **Client** – an organisation, which engages with Prospero Group to purchase Work-Finding Services. This includes, amongst others: Schools, Local Authorities, Care Homes, Universities, Parents/Carers and Private Sector organisations.
- **Prospero Group** – is comprised of three entities: Prospero Teaching (including Prospero Childrens Education Services), Prospero Health & Social and Prospero Integrated.
- **Service User** – is defined to mean **Child, Children or Adult at Risk**.
- **Temporary Worker** – an individual receiving Work-Finding Services, delivered by Prospero Group. This includes, amongst others: Teachers, Tutors, Teaching Assistants, Care Assistants, Support Workers and Nurses.
- **Work-Finding Services** – taken to mean recruitment activity, advertising of roles and provision of work-related training, provided by Prospero Group.

Purpose and Scope

Prospero Group is committed to the safety and welfare of Children, of Adults at Risk, and of our Temporary Workers.

This policy outlines procedures for situations where a Service User leaves during the delivery of services without permission (absconds).

We understand that Service Users may have complex needs that can sometimes lead to absconding behaviour. This policy aims to minimise risk while promoting open communication and a supportive environment.

Temporary Workers are expected to treat this policy as an addition, and subordinate, to the Client's Absconding Policy, and Philomena Protocols.

Role and Responsibilities

Prospero Group will:

- Provide guidance and online training Temporary Workers on safeguarding procedures and effective supervision techniques.
- Establish clear communication protocols (to be agreed at contract mobilisation) for notifying parents/carers/guardians (where applicable), the Client, and relevant authorities in case of an absconding incident.
- Maintain a record of absconding incidents and if required by the Client, analyse trends to develop preventative strategies.
- Offer support to Temporary Workers managing absconding behaviour.
- Provide any known addresses to professionals.

Temporary Workers must:

- Record attendance in line with Prospero Group's Attendance Policy.
- Maintain constant supervision of Service Users, particularly during transitions (e.g. if moving between activities) and those subject to DoLS.
- Provide accurate and relevant information to assist in the creation/updates of Service User plans, assessments and documentation.
- Continually reevaluating and perform dynamic risk assessments to ensure the safety of all parties, especially for high risk Service Users.
- Inform Prospero Group and, if applicable, EDT and the police, immediately if a Service User attempts to abscond or succeeds in doing so. Report to Prospero Group by completing our [Safeguarding or Incident Referral Form](#).
- Document the incident, including details of the event, actions taken, and communication with relevant parties.
- Have a good description of the young person and what they were wearing at the time of absconding.
- Maintain up-to-date safeguarding training and follow established safeguarding procedures in accordance with Prospero Group's policies and procedures.
- Call the police if Child or Adult at Risk is believed to be in immediate danger.
- In the event of a Service User absconding, provide a detailed incident report to share with the Client – including any relevant information in an attempt to prevent further instances in the future.

Service Users must:

- Inform the Temporary Worker before leaving the designated learning/support area for any reason (e.g. when going to the bathroom).
- Understand the importance of remaining safe and supervised during sessions.
- Abide by the rules and expectations as set out and agreed with the Temporary Worker during session.

Where applicable, Parents/Carers/Guardians must:

- Discuss with the Service User the importance of staying with the Temporary Worker.
- Inform Prospero Group and/or the Client of any factors that may increase the risk of their Service User absconding (e.g., anxiety, recent changes in routine).
- Work collaboratively with Prospero Group to develop strategies to address absconding behaviour.
- Respond promptly if contacted regarding an absconding incident.

Safeguarding Procedures

Prospero Group will follow established safeguarding procedures in accordance with local and national guidance. This may involve contacting the police, social services, or other relevant authorities depending on the circumstances.

Data Protection

Prospero Group will treat all Temporary Workers' data confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

Enforcement

This policy will be enforced by Prospero Group's CEO, Managing Director, Operations Directors, Head of Compliance & Safeguarding, Head of HR and Data Protection Officer.

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in suspension / termination of the Temporary Worker's Work-Finding Services and referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service / relevant professional body, if applicable.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and may be updated in line with government guidance.