

# Creative Sports Coaching CIC

## Child absconding from an activity risk assessment



**Important note:** *This risk assessment identifies typical examples and controls to illustrate how Creative Sports Coaching CIC may manage certain risks. These can be used as a guide to think about hazards in our operation and the steps needed to manage those risks. In order to be compliant with the law and protect our participants, we consider the specific hazards and controls our company needs.*

Assessment conducted by: James Hatch	Job title: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Covered by this assessment: All venues
Date of assessment: 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Review interval: Annual	Date of next review: 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2025

Risk rating		Likelihood of occurrence		
		Probable	Possible	Remote
Likely impact	<b>Major:</b> Causes major physical injury, harm or ill health.	High (H)	H	Medium (M)
	<b>Severe:</b> Causes physical injury or illness requiring first aid.	H	M	Low (L)
	<b>Minor:</b> Causes physical or emotional discomfort.	M	L	L

Hazard	Who may be harmed	Risk rating L/M/H	Existing controls	Further action required	Assigned to	Completed
Insufficient awareness of Creative Sports Coaching CIC procedures	Staff and participants	<b>M</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff are aware of their duty to ensure every participant feels safe, supported, included and respected.</li> <li>• Staff are made aware of the relevant factors that may contribute to a participant being more at risk of absconding from activities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The age of the pupil.</li> <li>- Any vulnerabilities the pupil may have, e.g. mental health challenges.</li> <li>- Historic occurrences of absconding.</li> <li>- What may be triggering the participant to abscond.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Staff are aware of, and adhere to, the following policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy</li> <li>- Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>- Physical Intervention Policy</li> <li>- Behaviour Policy</li> <li>- Staff Code of Conduct</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular CPD sessions for all staff to reinforce company procedures</li> </ul>	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024

Hazard	Who may be harmed	Risk rating L/M/H	Existing controls	Further action required	Assigned to	Completed
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils are aware of, and adhere to, the following policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Behaviour Policy</li> <li>Pupil Code of Conduct</li> </ul> </li> <li>All staff are aware of the company's de-escalation strategies for challenging participant behaviour.</li> <li>Staff are made aware to react in a calm and professional manner when a participant absconds.</li> <li>Staff are made aware that they should react proportionately if a participant has absconded from an activity.</li> <li>The company ensures all participants who have a historical record of absconding, or are identified as at-risk of absconding, understand the company's attendance and behaviour expectations.</li> <li>Additional support or adjustments are put in place where a participant needs extra help understanding and adhering to the company rules and participant code of conduct.</li> </ul>			

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rules are clearly set out for all parents to see.</li> </ul>			
Lack of awareness and training	Staff and participants		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff are aware of what it means for a participant to abscond, what it is defined as, and understand that it is a serious issue.</li> <li>The DSL ensures all staff are adequately trained on how to react when a participant absconds from an activity, in line with the company's policies and procedures.</li> <li>Staff emergency training is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.</li> <li>The company runs regular emergency protocols to test staff knowledge of procedures and to identify any gaps or weaknesses in emergency procedures.</li> <li>Participants who have absconded, have a history of absconding, or are at high risk of absconding, are made aware that if they leave the venue and are out of sight of staff members, their parents and police will be notified.</li> </ul>	Regular CPD training for staff and relevant courses identified to up-skill workforce	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024

Hazard	Who may be harmed	Risk rating L/M/H	Existing controls	Further action required	Assigned to	Completed
Lack of supervision and monitoring	Participants	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff undertake attendance registers <u>twice a day</u> without fail.</li> <li>Staff ensure any unauthorised absences are followed-up and investigated as soon as possible.</li> <li>At the first sign that a participant has attempted, will attempt, or makes it known they plan to attempt, absconding from the venue, the DSL notifies the participant's parents and advises them as necessary.</li> <li>Staff are aware of their duty to act 'in loco parentis' while the participant is at a company venue.</li> <li>The DSL ensure measures are in place to react in a serious and timely manner to any reports from participants, staff, parents, or the public if they have identified a participant from the activity not on the school grounds when they should be.</li> <li>Where the school has identified a participant at risk of absconding, the DSL will put measures in place to ensure the participants supervision and support is more robust, as necessary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure staffing ratios are sufficient for number of participants</li> </ul>	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024

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Lack of awareness of the local hazards	Staff and participants	<b>M</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DSL surveys the immediate land beyond the venue perimeter for any local hazards, e.g. deep water, roads, rivers.</li> <li>The DSL identify any other hazards in the venue's locality, e.g. railway tracks, electrical substations, public rights of way</li> <li>The DSL survey the venue perimeter for any immediate hazards, e.g. sharp or broken fencing, that may pose a risk to a participant attempting to abscond.</li> <li>The DSL survey the venue and identify any areas that pose a greater risk to participants, e.g. easily accessible roofs, car parks, ongoing building works.</li> <li>The DSL considers how adverse weather may put an absconded participant at further risk of harm and how this can be managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk assessment and Emergency Medical Plans prepared for each venue used by the company</li> </ul>	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
Participant safety	Participants	<b>M</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are aware that, if they are in pursuit of an absconded participant, they do not engage in any intervention that would cause more harm to the participant.</li> </ul>			

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are aware that, should they pursue an absconded participant who is threatening to harm themselves – e.g. jump from an elevated position – this is dealt with by the police.</li> <li>Staff members are aware that, should they be following a participant who has absconded, they should not act or communicate in a way that may startle or frighten the participant, or cause them to run away further.</li> <li>Staff are aware that, where they are in pursuit of an absconded participant, they do not use a vehicle to follow them as this puts the pupil at further risk of injury.</li> <li>Any use of physical intervention is accurately recorded.</li> <li>Participants absconding from a venue are not ignored and are always kept within sight of staff.</li> </ul>	Regular CPD and sharing of experiences amongst staff to ensure best practice.	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
Staff injury and safety	Staff	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are made aware to follow the participant at a safe distance using the safest route possible – staff do not put themselves at risk of avoidable harm.</li> <li>Staff are aware that, where a participant has absconded and they</li> </ul>			

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			<p>are in pursuit, they must be aware of their own safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are aware that, where they are in pursuit of an absconded participant, they do not use a vehicle to follow them as this puts them at further risk of injury if they are unable to concentrate on the road.</li> <li>Staff are aware not to approach a participant who is at risk of harming them.</li> </ul>	Regular CPD and sharing of experiences amongst staff to ensure best practice	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
Access to roofs and dangerous areas of the venue	Staff and participants	<b>M</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The company prohibits access to dangerous areas of the venue, including roofs.</li> <li>The staff secures and bars entry to roofs and other dangerous areas of the school.</li> <li>The staff ensures ladders and other means of accessing roofs and other dangerous areas of the venue are locked away where pupils cannot access them.</li> <li>Entryways, e.g. doors and gates, to prohibited areas are locked at all times when not in use.</li> </ul>			

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When in use, unlocked entryways to roofs and dangerous areas are always attended by a member of staff.</li> </ul>	Risk assessment to be carried out for all venues	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
Harm caused to a participant by others	Participants	<b>M</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DSL work with the pupil's parents and any relevant staff members to identify whether a participant at risk of absconding is also subject to any ongoing safeguarding or child protection concerns.</li> <li>Staff are aware that, where a participant absconds from a venue, only the relevant personnel, family members and the emergency services are alerted.</li> <li>Staff are aware that, under no circumstances, is the school's wider community, neighbours or locality alerted to the presence of a participant who has absconded from a venue, in order to protect them from further danger, e.g. abduction.</li> <li>Participants are never left unsupervised at any time during the activity – the company also ensures all supervision is undertaken by a suitable individual.</li> </ul>			

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are made aware that, where a participant has absconded from a venue, that the safety and safeguarding of participants who remain at the venue is not compromised, e.g. lack of supervision while in pursuit of the absconded participant.</li> </ul>	Regular CPD and sharing of experiences amongst staff to ensure best practice	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
Exacerbated behavioural challenges	Staff and participant	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are aware that, where an absconded participant is upset, angry, or displaying challenging behaviours, they need to be wary of how they approach the participant.</li> <li>The DSL and the participant's parents identify any triggers or situational factors that may worsen an at-risk participant's behaviour.</li> <li>Where a participant has a history of absconding, the DSL work with the participant's parents to identify any challenging behaviours the participant exhibits that may put them at further risk.</li> <li>Staff are made aware of any behavioural challenges an at-risk participant may exhibit before, during, or after absconding.</li> </ul>			

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A quiet, secure place within the school is identified as somewhere to allow an absconded pupil to calm down following their return to school.</li> <li>An adult the pupil trusts is identified and designated to offer them support following their return to school.</li> <li>All responses to a pupil absconding are undertaken with the best interests of the pupil in mind at all times.</li> </ul>	Regular CPD and sharing of experiences amongst staff to ensure best practice	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
Exacerbated mental health challenges	Pupils	<u>M</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where a participant has a history of absconding, the DSL works with the participant's parents to identify any mental health challenges that may put the participant at further risk.</li> <li>Staff are made aware of any mental health challenges an at-risk participant is experiencing.</li> <li>Staff are aware of any responses to an at-risk participant with mental health challenges absconding from a venue.</li> <li>Where a vulnerable participant has absconded but remains in the venue grounds, processes are in place to determine the best response to bring that participant back to safety without</li> </ul>			

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			<p>further aggravating the situation or putting the participant at further harm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A quiet, secure place within the venue is identified as somewhere to allow an absconded participant to calm down following their return to the venue.</li> <li>An adult the participant trusts is identified and designated to offer them support following their return to the venue.</li> <li>All responses to a participant absconding are always undertaken with the best interests of the participant in mind.</li> </ul>	Regular CPD and sharing of experiences amongst staff to ensure best practice	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
Recurrence	Staff and participants	<u>M</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are aware of any potential triggers or situational factors that may make the participant abscond and actively avoid these where possible.</li> <li>The DSL and participant's parents draw up a plan of how to address and/or avoid the triggers or situational factors identified that may make a participant abscond.</li> <li>The participant is made aware that they should talk to a trusted adult if they experience a trigger that has</li> </ul>			

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			<p>previously resulted in them absconding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participant is provided with the opportunity to talk about the incident to find out what may be behind their behaviour.</li> <li>• Staff react proportionately to avoid recurrence of the behaviour, e.g. if the behaviour is in response to bullying, the bullying is addressed.</li> <li>• Additional support or supervision put in place is communicated to the relevant members of staff and the participant's parents as soon as possible.</li> <li>• The DSL and the participant's parents identify suitable staff members the participant can talk to if they feel distressed and feel they want to leave the venue.</li> <li>• Staff are made aware of any situational factors that may lead to the participant absconding and report it as soon as it is identified.</li> <li>• Additional support for the participant is put in place, where necessary.</li> </ul>			

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DSL and other relevant staff put a behaviour plan in place for the participant, where necessary.</li> <li>The company reflects on and learns from any failed attempts to stop the pupil absconding.</li> <li>A record is kept of any attempts, successful or unsuccessful, the participant has made to abscond from venue.</li> <li>Incidents and near misses are reported according to the company's incident reporting procedures.</li> <li>The participant's parents are informed whenever their child has attempted to abscond from a venue, regardless of whether the attempt was successful.</li> <li>Parents are made aware of their role when their child absconds, or attempts to abscond, from a venue.</li> </ul>	Regular CPD and sharing of experiences amongst staff to ensure best practice	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
Inadequate perimeter fencing	Staff and participants	<u>M</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff ensures measures are in place to prevent participants from opening and closing venue gates, and any electronic gate operating mechanisms.</li> <li>Staff opening and closing the venue gates ensure no pupils are in the vicinity while they do so.</li> </ul>			

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The company ensures school perimeter fencing and gates have regular maintenance schedule.</li> <li>Gaps, flaws and weaknesses in perimeter fencing are identified or replaced as soon as possible.</li> </ul>	Risk assessment to be carried out for all venues	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
Inadequate venue security	Staff and participants	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Venue perimeter fences and gates are not fitted with features or mechanisms that allow for ease of climbing.</li> <li>venue fences and gates are locked using an appropriate locking mechanism.</li> <li>Under no circumstances are participants permitted access to gate locking mechanisms, keys, etc.</li> <li>Gaps, flaws and weaknesses in site security are addressed as soon as possible.</li> <li>The DSL identifies and draws up a plan to address any flaws or weaknesses in the site's security, e.g. replacing chain-link fencing that is easy to climb.</li> <li>The venue gates are kept locked during school hours, as necessary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk assessment to be carried out for all venues</li> </ul>	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024

Hazard	Who may be harmed	Risk rating L/M/H	Existing controls	Further action required	Assigned to	Completed
Injury and emergencies	Staff and participants	<u>M</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where the participant is at immediate risk of harm, staff are aware to call the police straight away.</li> <li>Procedures are in place to ensure an absconded participant who has returned to a venue is assessed by a suitable first aider for injuries and/or signs of distress.</li> <li>Any injuries found or first aid administered is recorded and communicated to the participant's parents.</li> <li>Staff follow the company's First Aid Policy where a participant has been injured and/or is in need of emergency medical or psychological attention.</li> <li>Staff do not attempt to intervene where a participant is at immediate risk of harm. The emergency services are called in these instances.</li> <li>A designated 'on-call' member of staff (DSL) is assigned to respond specifically to participants absconding from school.</li> </ul>	Risk assessment to be carried out for all venues	DSL	<i>James Hatch</i> 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2024