



Policy on Safeguarding Pupils Walking To and From School Alone

Date reviewed and approved by Governing Body: December 2020

Review period: 3 Year

Next review due: Autumn Term 2023

Walking to and from school alone

There are no laws around age or distance of walking to school. A families' guide to the law states:

"There is no law prohibiting children from being out on their own at any age. It is a matter of judgement for parents to decide when children can play out on their own, walk to the shops or school."

Parents are legally obliged to ensure their children get to school and attend regularly, but this in itself does not disallow independent travel.

In addition, as a school we have a duty of care for the safety and well-being of our children and therefore this policy is to help advise parents/carers in the decisions they make for their children in relation to safety to and from school. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.

Pupils in Foundation Stage (Reception), KS1 (Years 1 & 2) and Years 3 and 4

Our agreed school policy is that pupils in Foundation Stage or Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 **should NOT walk to or from school on their own** or be left on their own on the school premises either before or after school. In addition, we will only hand over pupils to named adults or older siblings who are on the school data form

provided they are 18 years old or above. We will not allow older brothers or sisters in school to collect younger siblings. Pupils will not be handed over to other adults unless the school has been informed by the parent that they have made this arrangement. We also ask that you keep us informed of any changes in arrangements. If someone turns up to collect your child and we have not been notified, the adult will have to wait until we have verified his or her identity.

If no one turns up to collect a child in these year groups, they will be kept in school and parents contacted.

If the child is not collected within 45 minutes and we have failed to make contact with the child's carer, we have a duty of care to refer to social services.

Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6

For pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, we believe that if children **live within walking distance to school and are able to walk a safe route** then you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for the responsibility of walking to and from school alone. **If your child is attending an extra-curricular activities or Afterschool Provision then we request that all children attending these sessions are collected by an adult on time.** Failure to collect children punctually from these activities could lead to activities being withdrawn.

Walking to school

Walking to school is a great opportunity to learn road safety skills. The best way to do this is to walk with your children from a young age, teaching them about crossing the road, learning how to navigate and a host of other skills. This helps them gain the experience and confidence to deal with traffic and way finding on their own, in preparation for walking with friends or alone when they are older. Teach your child to:

- Pay attention to traffic at all times when crossing the street; never become distracted.
- Cross in a place where you can see clearly in all directions. Avoid parked cars or bends in the road.
- Look both ways before crossing; listen for traffic coming; cross while keeping an eye on traffic.
- Look out for cyclists.

- In the darker months, wear a reflective jacket or accessories so that you can be clearly seen.
- Remember that drivers may not see them, even if they can see the driver.
- Remember that it is hard to judge the speed of a car so be cautious. If in doubt, wait it out.
- Never, ever, follow someone who is either a stranger or someone they know but is not a designated "safe" adult. (A safe adult is someone who has been previously agreed upon by you and your child to be safe, such as a grandparent or trusted neighbour). And if that person tries to convince him/her to go with him/her or tries to physically get close to him/her, then scream, "Help! This is not my dad!" or "Help! This is not my mum!" and run away. If they grab them, tell your child to kick, punch, and hit as hard as they can. More information can be found on: www.think.direct.gov.uk

www.roadwise.co.uk

Walking to School Alone

In deciding whether your child is ready to walk to school you should assess any risks associated with the route to school and assess your child's confidence. There are many ways you can prepare your child to make an independent journey. One way is to follow them a few times on their journey, so you know how safe and sensible they are. It is also strongly advised that children who are walking without an adult, have a cheap mobile phone that they are able to use if they need help. All mobile phones brought into school need to be handed into to the class teacher – in line with our mobile phone policy.

When deciding whether your child is ready for the responsibility of walking to and/or from home you might want to consider the following:

1. Do you trust them to walk straight to school or straight home, using the agreed safe route?
2. Are there roads to cross on the route and how busy/safe are those roads?
3. Do you trust them to behave sensibly when with a friend or group of friends?
4. Are they road safety aware?
5. Would they know what to do if a stranger approaches them?
6. Would they know what to do if they needed help?

7. Do they understand about keeping themselves safe and not to make any dangerous choices, either by themselves or with a group of friends?

If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility, please complete the attached form.

How to complete the form

1. Circle yes or no for each statement (please note that if you circle 'no' for any of the statements, your child may not be ready to walk to or from school)
2. Read the information and if you agree please sign and date if you want your child to walk to school alone
3. Read the information and if you agree, please sign and date if you want your child to walk home alone
4. Please return the form to the office – for safeguarding purposes, the form needs to be submitted prior to any independent travel
5. If at any time you need to change the arrangements, please ensure you let us know in writing.

As part of keeping your child safe and the school being able to support our families in the case of an emergency we do request that parents provide us with a copy of the walking route. You will receive a letter from school to confirm that we have received your permission form for your child to either walk to school alone, walk alone from school to home or both.



Permission to Walk To and From School Alone

Child's name _____	Year group _____
The route to school is within safe walking distance	yes/ no
I consider the route to school to be a safe route	yes/ no
I have provided school with a map of my child's route to and from school	
My child does not need to cross any busy/main roads	yes/ no
My child does need to cross a busy/main road(s) and I have taught them to cross safely at a crossing labelled on the map of the route	yes/ no
My child is aware of the potential dangers regarding roads/ traffic and how to avoid dangers and stay safe	yes/ no
My child understands and follows the green cross code	yes/ no
My child understands stranger danger	yes/ no
My child knows what to do if they need help	yes/ no
My child knows what to do in an emergency	yes/ no
My child will have a mobile phone	yes/ no
They will have my number, the school number and an emergency contact on their phone	yes/ no



Permission to Walk To and From School Alone

I acknowledge that there will be other risks	yes/ no
When walking home – my child will go straight home	yes/ no
When walking home, a responsible person will be at home to supervise them	yes/ no

Please tick relevant boxes

- ☐ I have read and understood this policy on safeguarding my child walking to school.
- ☐ I have read and understood this policy on safeguarding my child walking home from school alone.
- ☐ I understand that my child is my responsibility until they are on the school premises and once they have left the school premises.
- ☐ I fully understand that it is my responsibility to ensure my child gets to and from school safely including getting to school on time. If circumstances change then I will communicate this with school.
- ☐ I fully understand that if they are at an extra- curricular activity/After School Provision they should always be collected by an adult.
- ☐ I have provided a map of the route to/from school.

Signed _____ Parent/Guardian

Date _____