



**Policy for Safeguarding children walking to and from school alone.**

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<b>Policy Type:</b>	Safeguarding
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<b>Review Cycle:</b>	2 Yearly unless need arises
<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2026

As a school we are responsible for the welfare of our children and therefore have to consider what we believe is good practice in ensuring the safety of our children. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child’s welfare is at risk.

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

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.”

Our village is busy, one main route through the village with the pavement only on one side in places and road crossing needed; pavements are narrow and crossing points need to be carefully considered.

Given the context of the village, we would only consider it possible for our **Year 6** children to walk home alone. Year 6 will not be allowed to collect a younger sibling and walk them home.

In deciding whether your child is ready to walk to school you should assess any risks associated with the route and your child’s confidence. Work with your children to build up their independence while walking to school through route finding, road safety skills and general awareness. There are lots of ways you can prepare your child to make an independent journey. Children who are driven to school do not have the opportunity to develop road awareness and are therefore more vulnerable when they start to walk to school independently. 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 finding their way 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.

- Always cross at the intersection where there are traffic lights; do not cross in the middle of the road. Alternatively 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.
- 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.
- 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).

**When deciding whether your child is ready for this responsibility you might want to consider the following:**

1. Do you trust them to walk straight home?
2. Do you trust them to behave sensibly when with a friend?
3. Are they road safety aware?
4. Would they know what to do if a stranger approaches them?
5. Would they have the confidence to refuse to do what a stranger asked?
6. Would they know the best action to take if a stranger tried to make them do something they didn't want to do?
7. Would they know what to do if they needed help?
8. Would they know who best to approach to get help?

If you are not confident about how your child would react then you should seriously consider whether you should allow them to walk on their own.

If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility then you must inform the school by completing the slip below or emailing the office. Your child will be prevented from walking home unless this permission has been given in writing.

Your child will be responsible for their behaviour whilst walking to/from school and on the school premises either before or after school. Should their behaviour be deemed a safeguarding risk you will be asked to accompany them to and from school until they have demonstrated they can be trusted again.

IF AT ANY TIME YOU NEED TO CHANGE ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW IN WRITING IMMEDIATELY.

**When can you travel to and from school alone?**

A teacher will be at the school door every morning and at the end of the school day, to make sure that your child arrive on time and that they are safe when you leave. If this teacher doesn't think it's safe for you to travel home alone, the school will call your parents to come and pick you up.

You won't be allowed to travel home from school alone if:

- You have been sent home ill.
- The school closes because of bad weather.
- It is dark when you're leaving.
- The school closes because of a fire or serious event.

If you go to an after-school club, you will be allowed to travel to and from school if the school and your parents say it's ok, as long as it is not dark.

You will not be allowed to walk home from Out of School Club (OOSC) after 4.30pm, an adult will need to collect you or during the winter if it has gone dark at the point of leaving OOSC.

### **Which route should they take?**

If you have allowed your child to travel to and from school alone, the school expects them to only travel on the route parents have said is ok for you to use.

### **What If a child is late or does not arrive?**

If you don't turn up to school, the school will call parents to make sure that your child is safe.

You need to get to school on time so that you don't miss anything important – if you're late **three times in a month**, school will request you do not travel to school alone.

### **Mobile Phones**

If your child brings a mobile phone to school because they are walking to school, they must be labelled and hand in to the school office at the start of school and collected before you go home. Children are not permitted to have mobile phones or electronic devices in shared areas of school (classrooms, playground, hall etc.) for any reason. Please talk to your child about sensible and safe use of mobile devices.

## Permission for children to walk to and from school unaccompanied

Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to school

Name of child:

- I wish to inform you that my child will be walking to/from school on a regular basis. I will notify you immediately should this arrangement change.
- I have read and understood the guidelines, systems and reasonable precautions set out in 'policy on safeguarding children walking to and from school alone'.
- I understand that it is my responsibility and not the schools once my child has left the school premises.

Additional information:

Signed.....

Relationship with child: .....

(Name print).....

Tel.....

## Pupil promise

A pupil promise is a promise between you, your teachers and your parents which says that you will follow the rules included in the promise, to make sure that you're safe when travelling to and from school alone.

You promise to:

- Walk straight to and from school, not stopping off anywhere on the way.
- Always use the route that your parents have told you to use.
- Always be sensible when walking to and from school.
- Make sure you know the rules of the road.
- Never run across the road.
- Never push, shove or play next to a road.
- Follow the road safety advice at all times.
- Always stop, look and listen before crossing the road.
- Make sure you know what to do if a stranger approaches you.
- Make sure you know how to ask for help.
- Never accept sweets, gifts or lifts from strangers.
- Not be late to school.
- Behave appropriately when travelling to and from school, not being rude or damaging the school's reputation.
- If I bring a mobile phone to school for my journey, I will hand it into the office first thing in the morning and collect before I go home. It will be off and labelled with my name.



## I will keep my pupil promise!

- Name: .....
- .....
- Signature: .....