

Safeguarding Pupils Walking To and From School Alone

Walking Home Alone Guidance

Parents are legally obliged to ensure their children get to school and attend regularly. This does not disallow independent travel. As a school, we are responsible for the welfare of our pupils and therefore must consider what we believe is good practice in ensuring the safety of our pupils. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.

There are no laws around age or distance of walking to school.

We have taken advice from the following:

Department for Education states:

- It is for each school to decide, and enforce, its own pupil collection policy and request that parent/carers formalise collection arrangements in writing.
- The school is not responsible for a child's safety on their way home.

NSPCC states:

- Children under eight can't judge the speed and distance of moving vehicles. They still need help when crossing roads.

PCSO states:

- Children need to be aware of the Green cross code - Roadwise and of stranger danger

Procedures

Pupils in Foundation Stage (EYFS) or KS1 (Years 1 & 2)

All children in EYFS and Key Stage 1 must be brought to and collected from the school site by a named adult or sibling who is older than primary age.

Older brothers or sisters in school should not bring or collect younger siblings.

No-one other than named people will be allowed to collect unless school has been contacted in advance. If staff do not have this information, they will have to check with the school office which will delay collection.

Registered Office / Head Office

Education House, Spawd Bone Lane, Knottingley, WF11 0EP
Company Number: 07386086 (England and Wales)
Charity Exempt under the Academies Act 2010
VAT Number 115 811 243

Pupils in KS2 (Years 3, 4, 5 & 6)

There is no set age when children are ready to walk to school or home on their own. It very much depends on their maturity and confidence. Children under the age of eight can't judge the speed or distance of moving vehicles and some older children might not be able or confident to do this.

We expect Year 3 and Year 4 children to be brought to and collected from school by a named adult or sibling older than primary age.

We understand that it can be busy at the end of the school day. For parents and carers who have children leaving from different ends of school, we suggest collecting children in KS1 first. School staff will wait with children in KS2 until they are collected.

Preparing children to walk to and from school.

We teach children about keeping themselves safe in PSHE and other curriculum areas.

Parents and carers can teach children about road safety and stranger danger.

When deciding whether your child is ready for this responsibility consider the following:

- Are they road safety aware? Do they know the safe places to cross? Do they know what to look out for when walking near school? (Other pedestrians and road users including cyclists.)
- Do you trust them to walk straight home?
- Do you trust them to behave sensibly when with a friend?
- Would they know what to do if a stranger approaches them?
- Would they have the confidence to refuse to do what a stranger asked?
- Would they know the best action to take if a stranger tried to make them do something they didn't want to do (scream, shout, kick or fight)?
- Would they know what to do if they needed help?
- Would they know who best to approach to get help? Some children walk to meet a parent away from school. Do they know what to do if the parent is not there? (Returning to school is usually the best option.)

If you and your child feel confident that they are ready to walk home or to an agreed meeting place, please inform school using the Walking Home Consent form. If you want to update the details at any point, contact the school office.

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Parents/carers of children who wish their children to walk home unescorted by an adult must follow these guidelines:

- Children must be in Year 5 or 6.
- It is the parents/carer's responsibility to check the route that their children may walk home to assess whether this is a safe route. Crossing of fast roads, walking through secluded areas are discouraged. A single route must be agreed.
- Parents/carers must be certain that children have an awareness and understanding of road safety and stranger danger. It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure they are happy that their child can take the proposed journey safely. They must consider weather conditions and darkness during the winter months.
- There should be someone at home to meet the child on arrival.
- If a child does not arrive within the agreed timescale, parents/carers must immediately notify school so we can take appropriate action, which may include contacting the police.

Parents/carers must inform school if they want their child to walk home by completing the consent form on the ParentApp. School staff will not allow children to leave the site unaccompanied unless this permission has been given.

Parents and carers are always responsible for their child's behaviour, including before and after school. Should their behaviour not be acceptable they will be asked to be accompanied or collected by parents/carers.