



## THRUNSCOE PRIMARY AND NURSERY ACADEMY

### POLICY ON SAFEGUARDING PUPILS WALKING TO AND FROM THE ACADEMY 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/carers to decide when children can play out on their own, walk to the shops or school."

Parents, and those with parental responsibility, are legally obliged to ensure their children get to school and attend regularly, but this in itself does not disallow independent travel. However as an academy we are responsible for the welfare of our pupils and therefore have to 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.

#### **Pupils in Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1**

Our agreed academy policy is that **no pupil in Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1** should walk to or from school on their own or be left on their own on the academy premises either before or after the academy day. In addition, we will only hand over pupils to named adults over the age of 18 years. Pupils will not be handed over to other adults unless the academy has been informed by the parent/carer that they have made this arrangement. We also ask that you keep us informed of any changes in arrangements, preferably by letter. If no one turns up to collect a child in these year groups they will be kept in the academy and parents/carers contacted. We will not allow older brothers or sisters in the academy to collect younger siblings.

The Nursery (Foundation Stage 1) has its own collection arrangements which are shared with parents/carers.

#### **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 upon their maturity and confidence and the nature of their journey home. Therefore, the academy strongly recommends that pupils within lower-KS2 (Years 3 and 4) should **not** walk home alone and should be collected by a responsible adult known to the academy or by a sibling over the age of 14.

We believe that you as parents/carers need to decide whether your child in Years 5 or 6 is ready for this responsibility. However, the academy cannot take responsibility for any accident/injury that may occur to a particular child if the parent/carer has given written consent for their child to walk home alone.

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 or from the academy 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 find their way, in preparation for walking with friends or alone when they are older.

Teach your child to:

- Cross at a zebra/pelican crossing or with a lollypop person
- Pay attention to traffic at all times when crossing the street; never become distracted.
- Always cross at the intersection if 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). And if that person tries to convince him to go with him or tries to physically get close to him, 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.

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 (scream, shout, kick, fight)?
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 Academy by letter or by completing the slip below. Your child will be prevented from walking home unless this permission has been given in writing.

**NB: This relates to walking to the Academy at the start of a day and walking from the Academy at the end of an Academy day, not during the Academy day.**

Your child will also be responsible for their behaviour whilst on the school premises either before or after school. **Should their behaviour not be acceptable you will be asked to accompany or collect them until they have proved 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.**

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**Thrunscoc Primary and Nursery Academy**

**Permission for pupils to walk to and from the Academy unaccompanied**

**Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to the academy before their child is allowed to walk home alone.**

I wish to inform you that my child will be walking to/from the Academy on a regular basis (beginning and end of the Academy day only)

I will notify you immediately should this arrangement change.

I have read and understood the guidelines, systems and reasonable precautions set out in the 'policy on safeguarding pupils walking to and from the academy alone'.

Signed person with parental responsibility .....Print Name.....

Name of Child ..... Date .....

*We require one signed form for each child*

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Policy Date: JULY 2024

Approved by the Resources Committee of the Governing Body on: 2rd July 2024

Review date: JULY 2026