



POLICY ON SAFEGUARDING PUPILS 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. However, as a school 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 arriving to and from school.

We also have a statutory duty to alert relevant authorities/agencies should we believe a child's welfare is at risk (Linked to our safeguarding policy).

We will only hand over pupils to named adults or older siblings provided they are 16 years old or above. Information you supply regarding these people is kept on our pupil data sheets within the school office.

Pupils will not be handed over to other adults unless the school has been informed by the parent that they have made this arrangement. These details are collected on our pupil data sheets and kept within the office at school for referral. If no details are on record we will not allow the collection.

We also ask that you keep us informed of any changes in arrangements, preferably by letter or Class Dojo OR by emailing admin@williamdeyaxley.cambs.sch.uk by 8.30 a.m. on the day.

We understand that on occasion, arrangements are changed on the day; in these circumstances a telephone call to the school office is necessary.

If no one turns up to collect your child, they will be kept in school and parents will be contacted using the information we hold on file.

We will not allow older brothers or sisters in school to collect younger siblings.

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. Therefore, as regards to pupils in KS2 we believe that you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for this responsibility.

We would still highly recommend that pupils in year 3 and 4 at least are brought to and collected from school. We suggest that a walking distance of more than 30 minutes is unsuitable for pupils of this age.

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. We suggest that you work with your children to build up their independence while walking to school through agreeing a route, learning road names, improving their 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 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.
- 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 and motor cycles.
- 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 to go with him or tries to physically get close to him, and then scream, "Help! This is not my dad!" or "Help! This is not my mum!" and run away (try to agree where this might be between you and your child). 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

www.nspcc.org.uk



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? Help them to memorise your mobile phone number.
8. Would they know who best to approach to get help? Agree this together.
9. How will they inform you of their arrival home?
10. What would happen if they did not arrive home in an appropriate amount of time?

If you are not confident about how your child would react to any of the above, then you should seriously consider whether you should allow them to walk on their own at this time.

If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility then you must inform the school by letter or by completing the slip below. It is vitally important that you realise your child will be prevented from walking home unless this permission has been given in writing. This is for their own safety and wellbeing.

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 your child until it is agreed by school and home that 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.**

.....



Permission for pupils to walk to and from school unaccompanied

Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to school a.s.a.p

Name of child:

School Year:

I wish to inform you that my child will be walking to/from school on 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 pupils walking to and from school alone'.

Signed

Date: (D/M/Y)

(Name print)