



Walking Home Policy Details:

Reviewed: June 203

Next review: June 2025

Policy history:

| | | |
|------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| June 2023 | Policy reviewed | Steph Watson (Acting Principal) |
| June 2022 | Policy reviewed | Steph Watson (Vice Principal) |
| March 2020 | Policy written | Steph Watson (Vice Principal) |

This policy was reviewed by the Local Advisory Board in Summer 2 2023



Walking Home Policy

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. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.

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 upper KS2 (year 5 and 6), we believe that you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for this responsibility.

Parents of children, who wish them to walk home unescorted by an adult, at the end of the school day (3.25pm), must adhere to the following guidelines;

- Children **must** be in year 5 or 6.
- Parents must have registered with the school that they are prepared for their children to walk directly home from school at the end of the day.
- Children in Year 5 and 6 are **not permitted** to walk home younger siblings.
- It is the parent's responsibility to check the route, assessing 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 (e.g. knowledge of the green cross code and stranger danger).
- During winter months and/or inclement weather, children must be dressed appropriately.
- Children should preferably walk in a group and not alone.
- Children should know their home phone number (plus one other emergency contact) and, ideally, have their own mobile phone.
- There must be someone at home to meet the child on their arrival.
- Any child must be capable of arriving home within 30 minutes of the end of the school day (3.20pm). Journeys over 30 minutes are not considered appropriate for children to walk at this stage.
- If any child does not arrive home within the agreed timeframe, parents must immediately notify the school in order that appropriate action can be taken.
- If any child does not arrive home within the agreed timeframe and direct contact with the child has not been established by either school or parents, school will instigate the missing person's procedure in conjunction with the relevant authorities.



Wistaston Church Lane Academy

- If the missing person procedure is initiated, there must be a point of contact remaining at both the home and school location until further advised by the relevant authorities.
- If your child does arrive home after the missing person procedure has been instigated, due to the time that will have passed, immediate notification to the relevant authorities/emergency services must be made. This is to enable the missing person procedure to be stood down.
- Once the missing person procedure is initiated, responsibility will pass to the relevant authority to further any enquiries. Both parents and school will be guided by them in order that a successful outcome is achieved.



Permission to Walk Home Alone

Dear Parent/Carer,

Please read and complete the permission slip below if you wish for your child to walk home unsupervised.

We encourage parents/guardians to 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). And if that person tries to convince the child to go with them or tries to physically get close to them, 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?
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. Your child will be prevented from walking home unless this permission has been given in writing. 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 them to accompany or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted again.

IF AT ANY TIME YOU NEED TO CHANGE THIS ARRANGEMENT PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW

.....



Wistaston Church Lane Academy

Permission for pupils to walk to and from school unaccompanied

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

Name of child: _____ Year: _____

I wish to inform you that my child will be walking to/from school on a regular basis. I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that my child knows the arrangement for getting home at the end of each day – whether walking home or being collected.

I will notify you should this arrangement change. I have read and understood the guidelines, systems and reasonable precautions set out in 'Walking Home Alone Policy 2023'.

I understand that the school may need to contact me to check on arrangements if my child is unsure.

Signed

(Name – please print):

Relationship to child:

Date: