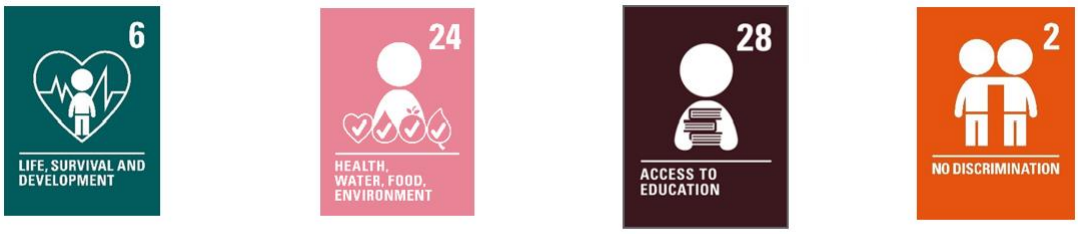
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Walking to and from School Alone Policy



Date of last review: Sept 2026

Date of next review: Sept 2027

Lead member of staff: Mr L Blake (Head Teacher)

Purpose

This policy sets out guidance for parents/carers and describes how the school will manage the safety and welfare of pupils when travelling to and from school, including any arrangements for independent walking.

As a school, we have a **duty of care** to safeguard the safety and well-being of our children. We also have a responsibility to **alert relevant authorities** where we believe a child's welfare may be at risk.

Legal Context

There are **no laws** that set an age or distance limit for children walking to school alone. As stated in *A family's guide to the law*:
"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/carers are legally responsible for ensuring children attend school regularly. This does not automatically restrict independent travel, but parents/carers must make safe, appropriate decisions.

Rights Respecting School Commitment (UNCRC)

As a **Rights Respecting School**, we follow the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**. Children are entitled to safety and wellbeing, and this policy supports those rights in relation to travel to and from school.

General Principles

- The **primary consideration** in all decisions is the **safety and well-being** of pupils.
- The school will only hand over pupils to **named, authorised adults** or **authorised older siblings** (where allowed and approved).
- Parents/carers must keep the school informed of any changes to collection/walking arrangements.
- If a pupil is not collected as expected, the school will follow safeguarding procedures.

Collection and Waiting Arrangements (All Year Groups)

Authorised Collectors

For pupils in year groups where independent travel is restricted (see sections below), pupils will only be handed over to:

- **Named adults** recorded on the school data form, who are **18 years old or above**, or
- **Older siblings**, where permitted by this policy and where the school has received the required permission and checks.

The school will **not** hand over a pupil to an alternative adult unless the parent/carer has informed the school in advance.
If an unauthorised adult arrives to collect a child and the school has not been notified, the adult will be required to wait until the identity has been verified.

If No One Collects the Child

- If no one collects a child where a parent/carer is expected to do so, the child will remain in school.
- The school will attempt to contact the parent/carer.
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Safeguarding Referral

If a child is not collected within **45 minutes** and the school cannot make contact with the carer, the school has a duty of care and will **refer to Social Services**.

Age/Year Group Requirements for Walking Independently

Foundation Stage (Nursery & Reception) and KS1 (Years 1 & 2)

Walking to/from school

Pupils in **Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 must NOT**:

- walk to or from school **on their own**, and
- be left on the school premises **before or after school** on their own.

Collection

Pupils will only be handed over to:

- named adults who are **18 or over**, or
- authorised older siblings **only** if the school has been informed and the arrangement meets this policy's requirements (including age and authorisation), where applicable.

If no one collects a child, the safeguarding procedures apply

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Year 3 pupils

Recommended approach

We **highly recommend** that pupils in **Year 3** are still brought to and collected from school by an **adult (over 18)**.

Where independent walking may be agreed

Where it is not possible for an adult to bring/collect, parents/carers may request consent for the duty to be carried out by an **older sibling**, subject to the following conditions:

The older sibling:

1. Is **16 years and over**.
2. Is judged by the parent/carer to be responsible enough to do so safely.
3. Will travel via a route the parent/carer judges to be a **safe walking distance and safe route**.
4. Parent/carer completes and submits the **Permission to walk to and/or from school with older sibling form** including:
    - proof of the older sibling's age,
    - a map of the route,
    - and submission to school.
5. The school confirms receipt and may discuss any concerns raised by the form.
6. Ensures the older sibling and child go **straight home**.
7. Is responsible for **no more than two children**.

The school's decision will be guided by safeguarding considerations and route safety.

Extra-curricular Activities (Applies to all relevant year groups)

Where pupils attend extra-curricular activities:

- We request that **all children are collected by an adult on time**.
- Failure to collect children punctually may result in activities being **withdrawn**.

Breakfast Club:

- We request that children attending **breakfast club** are brought to school **by an adult**.

Year 4 – 6 pupils

For pupils in **aged 9 – 11 (Y4 – Y6)**, where children live within walking distance and are able to walk a safe route, the decision to allow independent travel is primarily for **parents/carers**, based on readiness and risk.

Parent/carer decision-making (risk assessment)

Parents/carers should assess:

- risks associated with the walking route,
- the child's confidence,
- road safety and traffic levels,
- the child's ability to follow the agreed safe route.

Preparation and safety advice

Parents/carers are encouraged to:

- walk the route with the child and follow them a few times before independence,
- help them practise safe decision-making,
- consider that children walking without an adult/older sibling should have access to a **cheap mobile phone** for emergencies.

Mobile phones in school (safeguarding requirement)

All mobile phones brought into school must be:

- handed into the **class teacher immediately**, and
- placed in the **mobile phone safes** in the Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms, in line with the school's safeguarding policy.

Considerations for readiness (Year 4/5/6)

Parents/carers should consider whether their child:

- can be trusted to walk **straight to school or straight home** using the agreed safe route,
- can manage roads to cross, including whether they are busy/safe,
- will behave sensibly when with friends or in a group,
- is road safety aware,
- knows what to do if a **stranger approaches**,
- knows what to do if they need help,
- understands how to keep themselves safe and not make dangerous choices, alone or with friends.

If the parent/carer decides the child is ready, they must complete the attached permission form (as applicable).

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents/Carers must:

- ensure arrangements for walking/collection are safe and suitable for their child,
- keep the school informed of authorised collectors and any changes,
- complete and return any required forms
- discuss and agree safe routes and expectations with their child.

The School will:

- supervise pupils according to duty of care expectations,
- only hand over pupils to authorised adults/older siblings (where approved),
- contact carers promptly if collection arrangements fail,
- escalate concerns about welfare to appropriate authorities where required.

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8. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains current, effective, and aligned with safeguarding expectations.