



Policy on Children Walking to and from School Alone

Copley Junior School

Document Type	Policy
Document Ownership	Head teacher
Title of document	Policy on Children Walking to and from School Alone
Status	Final
Created by / Date	Head teacher, September 2019
Agreed by / Date	Curriculum and Standards sub committee, September 2019
Maintained By	Head teacher
Next Review Date	September 2021
Distribution	Network, Hard Copy in central file, Website
Master copy held	Network, Safeguarding folder

POLICY ON CHILDREN WALKING TO AND FROM SCHOOL ALONE

BASED ON THE DONCASTER LOCAL AUTHORITY APPROVED POLICY

Introduction

The safety of pupils is our priority and every care is taken to ensure that the children travel to and from school safely. This policy sets out our procedures for children who have permission from their parent/carer to walk to and/or from school independently and should be read in conjunction with our 'Uncollected Children' Policy, our 'Missing Child' Policy and 'Arrivals and Departures Policy'. These policies have been formulated in consultation with staff, governors and the school's Parent Forum.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child arrives safely and promptly to school each morning and is collected safely and promptly at the end of the school day. Whilst walking to and from school it is understood that parents/carers ensure that their child takes the safest route possible and is accompanied at all times by a responsible adult.

Pupils may walk to school independently if the school has received written permission from parents/carers, who have decided that their child is capable of independently walking to and/or from school. If this is the case, parents/carers make the informed decision that they are responsible for their child's safety on their journey to and from school, even if they are not physically present.

Generally, school would advise walking to and from school independently is most suitable for pupils in Years 5 and 6. However, we recognise some parents/carers will want their child in Year 3 or 4 to walk independently, especially if the distance is short (e.g. from Copley Junior to Orchard Infants) and parents are best placed to make this decision.

It is advised that parents/carers ensure their child is fully conversant with road safety.

If the school has concerns about a particular child's ability to walk safely or is concerned that a child lives a considerable distance from school, contact will be made with the parent/carer to discuss this.

The following guidelines set out Copley Junior School's advice, policy and procedures should parents/carers wish to allow their child to walk to and/or from school without an adult on a regular basis.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to assess the route on which their child will walk to school and will walk back home from school, to ensure they are confident their child has the ability to walk home safely, even if their child has previously been accompanied to school by a parent/carer. Crossing busy main roads and walking through secluded areas is discouraged. The safe crossing of roads is supported by a crossing patrol warden before and after school near to Orchard Infant School. Regular road safety reminders and teaching of road safety are delivered by both schools.

Safeguarding is paramount and parents/carers need to ensure their child is fully aware of stranger danger and how to report any concerns to an appropriate adult. Regular stranger danger reminders and the teaching of stranger danger are delivered by the school.

'Walking to and from School' Consent Form

Should a parent/carer wish to allow their child to walk to school and/or walk home unaccompanied by an adult, parents/carers are asked to inform the school by completing the attached 'Walking to and from School' consent form. This ensures that a current register is maintained of key children to identify should a child not arrive at school at the appropriate time in the morning.

It is essential that written consent is provided by the parent/carer to authorise independent travel to and from the school. The walking home written consent form must include all emergency contact numbers and the parent/carer must notify the school and update the consent form in the event of any changes. Parents/carers are encouraged to consider if their child can walk to school with peers; 'walking buddies' are preferable to children walking to and from school alone.

Walking To and From School Arrangements

It is essential for the safety of pupils that arrangements for walking to and from school independently are clear and consistent. For clarity, the following principles must be adhered to:

- All children walking **any** distance independently are termed as 'walking to and from school alone'. **This includes children walking independently to and from Orchard Infant School to Copley Junior School.**
- **Under the terms of this policy, parents/carers either collect children from the adults on site at Copley Junior School or must complete the attached**

permission form to state that they are willing to allow their child to walk independently.

- The attached permission form enables parents/carers to detail the consistent routine that their child will follow over the course of a week. **In order to ensure pupil safety, this must be a set and consistent routine.** Constant changes to arrangements would compromise pupil safety.

If the school has concerns about a particular child's ability to walk safely, is concerned that a child lives a considerable distance from school or that arrangements are changing so frequently that safety is being compromised, contact will be made with the parent/carer to discuss this.

There must always be an appropriate adult/parent/carer to meet the child on their arrival home. Parents/carers need to be aware when walking home the school will not know if a child arrives home as planned. Hence the parent/carer needs to ensure adequate safety protocols are in place should an emergency/accident arise.

The Start of the School Day

As the responsible body receiving children from home at the start of the day, the school will ensure that morning registrations are taken in each class. If a child is found to be absent and no prior notice of such absence has been received from the child's parent/carer, the school recognises a clear responsibility to contact the parent/carer to ascertain the reason for absence or highlight that a child has not attended morning registration.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that school is informed should their child be unable to attend school for any reason in accordance with the school attendance policy. If a child who walks to school unattended is not in school, contact will be sought with the parent/carer by 9.45am at the latest and an absence without reason being noted by the classroom staff. Looked After children (CLA), children with Child Protection plans who are absent and children known to walk independently to school with the permission of their parent/carer, will be notified to the Head teacher (or Deputy Head teacher in her absence) as a matter of priority.

If, upon contact, it is confirmed that a child has left home with the intention of walking to school but has not arrived and therefore an issue of a missing child is noted, the school will contact the police immediately. The school's designated safeguarding lead will then be immediately informed and safeguarding procedures for child protection/missing children procedures will be followed.

Any children arriving after 8.55am **MUST** come into school via the main office/reception door and register with the office staff. Please note that if your child arrives at school late, in the interests of your child's safety they should be **accompanied into the school office by their adult**, who can then sign the signing in record and note the reason for the late arrival. There is a safeguarding risk if children are directed by their parent/carer to walk into the school grounds unsupervised after 8.55am as all staff and children are within the locked building and office staff will only be aware of the arrival of the child as, and if, they enter via the school office door.

Walking Home Independently at the End of the School Day

A register of children who have permission to walk home alone after the school day will be maintained by the school. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform the school if they wish to make any occasional changes to this arrangement. However, as outlined above, **in order to ensure pupil safety, there must be a set and consistent routine**. Constant changes to arrangements would compromise pupil safety. If this were to arise, school will contact the parent/carer to discuss this.

If a child has left the school to walk home but does not arrive home when expected, and direct contact with the child has not been established, the parent/carer should contact the school in the first instance to seek clarification from the responsible adult who dismissed their child as to the time they left school. However the school may not be contactable after home time and therefore it will be the responsibility of parents/carers to notify the police.

After School Clubs

Pupils are allowed to walk home independently after extra curricular clubs, if we have a signed permission slip from parents/carers. Permission will be sought from each club attended by a child. This arrangement only applies from Easter up to the October half term when there is still plenty of daylight at the end of the club to walk home safely. From October half term up to Easter the school asks that all parents/carers collect their children from after school clubs.

Policy approved by staff, the Parent Forum and governors of the Curriculum and Standards sub committee: January 2016

Policy reviewed by staff and governors of the Curriculum and Standards sub committee: September 2017 and September 2019

PARENT/CARER CONSENT THAT MY CHILD MAY WALK TO AND FROM SCHOOL/HOME ALONE (this includes any independent walking (without an adult), including walking independently to and from Copley Junior and Orchard Infant School)

I confirm that _____ who is in _____ Class at Copley Junior School may walk independently to and/or from Copley Junior as set out below:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Permission to walk to school independently					
Permission to walk from school independently					

Please tick as applicable.

- I confirm that I have read and understood the school's Policy on Children Walking to and from School Alone (available on the school website). I will notify the school immediately of any changes to the emergency contact details.
- I confirm that I understand the arrangements above must represent the **usual** routine for my child; any changes to routine must be occasional and communicated to the school office. Constant changes to arrangements would compromise pupil safety.
- I understand the school will contact me to discuss my child walking independently if they feel my child's safety is compromised.

In the event of an emergency please contact:

..... (parent/carer)

Contact Number(s):

Or (name/relationship to child)

Contact Number(s):

Signed:..... (parent/carer)

Date: