



SAFEGUARDING PUPILS WALKING TO AND FROM SCHOOL ALONE POLICY

"Working Together"

Date Adopted:	Summer 2017
Date of Review	Annually
Policy Reference Number:	
Staff Member:	Jenny Callaghan
Governors:	C Pettifer, G ApThomas, P Wain.

This policy is devised for the general health and safety of children. At Wild Bank Community School, we recognize that 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 a legal obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.

Pupils in Foundation Stage, KS1 and Lower KS2 (years 3 & 4)

Our agreed school policy is that **no pupil in Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 or Lower Key Stage Two** should walk to or from school on their own or be left on their own on the school premises either before or after school. In addition, we will only hand over pupils to named adults or older siblings provided they are 16 years old or above. Pupils will not be handed over to other adults unless the school has been informed by the parent 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 school and parents contacted. We will not allow older brothers or sisters in school to collect younger siblings.

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

Pupils in Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 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. Therefore, as regards pupils in Upper KS2 we believe that you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for this responsibility.

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 child to build up their independence while walking to school 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 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.
- 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.

It is the parent's responsibility to check the route that their child may use to walk home in order that they may make an assessment of the appropriateness of the journey. Crossing of busy roads or walking through secluded areas is to be discouraged. A single route must be agreed.

Parents must be certain that children have an awareness and understanding of the green cross code and stranger danger. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure they are sufficiently confident that their child is capable of undertaking the proposed journey safely.

During winter months and/or inclement weather, children must be dressed appropriately.

Children should preferably walk in a group and not alone.

Children who cycle to and from school MUST wear a helmet, and their bicycle must be road safe. The child must have completed their Bike Ability training in Year 5.

Children should know their home phone number (plus one other emergency contact)

There must be an adult at home to meet the child on their arrival.

The children must not be using public transport without adult supervision.

Any child must be capable of walking home within 15 minutes of the end of the school day. Journeys over 15 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, it is the parents' responsibility to contact the relevant authorities to instigate the missing person's procedure

If the missing person's 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 persons procedure has been instigated, immediate notification to the relevant authorities/emergency services and school must be made. This is to enable the missing persons procedure to be stood down.

Once the missing persons 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.

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.

Parents who wish for their child to walk home unescorted by an adult, at the end of the school day (3:15pm) or after extra-curricular activities (4pm or 4:15pm), are asked to comply with this policy.

If you decide that your child is ready to walk home alone, you will need to inform the school by letter or by completing the slip below. Your child will remain at school as usual, until collected, unless this permission has been given in writing.

The school cannot be held responsible for a pupil's behaviour while travelling to and from school. Your child will also be responsible for their own 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 THE ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW IN WRITING IMMEDIATELY.



SAFEGUARDING PUPILS WALKING TO AND FROM SCHOOL ALONE

Parental permission for pupils to walk to and from school unaccompanied

The person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to school.

Name of child: Class:

Date:

- I wish to inform you that my child will be walking to/from home without an accompanying adult on a regular basis.
- I understand that the school will contact me if there are any concerns relating to my child walking from school alone.
- I will notify you immediately should this arrangement change.
- I have taken reasonable precautions aimed at ensuring my child is safe including showing them the safest route, demonstrating the route to them and talking to them about road safety and stranger danger.
- I have read and understand the guidelines, systems and reasonable precautions set out in the “policy on safeguarding pupils walking to and from school alone”.

Signed:

..... (Please print name):

..... Contact number (parent):

IF AT ANY TIME YOU NEED TO CHANGE THE ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW IN WRITING IMMEDIATELY.