



Cherry Orchard Primary School

Travelling To and From School Alone Policy

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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.

Pupils in Foundation Stage or KS1

Our agreed school policy is that no pupil in Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1 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 **14 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. 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 from the Foundation Stage or KS1.

Pupils in KS2 (Years 3, 4, 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 KS2 we believe that you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for this responsibility.

We would advise that pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 should still be brought to and collected from school or after school club. They may, however, walk with older siblings. A request for this must be put into writing and parents must ensure that a responsible adult will be in the home to supervise on arrival.

We understand that some parents may wish to prepare Year 6 children for secondary school by giving them greater freedom to travel part or all of the way to and from school. If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility then you must inform the school by completing the form in Appendix 1. 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 be unacceptable, 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 ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE, PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW IMMEDIATELY.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually, or more regularly in the light of any significant new developments or in response to changes in guidance.

Appendix 1

Cherry Orchard Primary School

Permission for pupils to travel from school unaccompanied

Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to your child's class teacher.

Name of child: _____ Class: _____

- ✓ I wish to inform you that my child will be travelling to/from school alone on a 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 the 'Travelling To and From School Alone Policy'.

Signed _____ Date: _____

Name of parent/carer (please print) _____

Name of class teacher _____ Signed _____

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Person with parental responsibility to complete this section if your child will be travelling with a mobile phone.

- ✓ I have read and understood the 'Mobile Phones and Wearable Technology Policy' and have discussed it with my child. We agree to support Cherry Orchard Primary School in its whole school implementation.
- ✓ I understand that the phone should be clearly marked with my child's name and that phones brought into school are left at their owner's risk.
- ✓ We understand that this privilege will be withdrawn if the mobile phone is not handed in first thing every morning.

Signature of child: _____ Date _____

Signature of Parent: _____ Date _____

Make / Model of phone _____

Appendix 2

Guidance for parents

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 children 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.
- 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 them to go with him/her 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 (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?