



Veritas Primary Academy

Safeguarding Pupils Walking To and From School Alone 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, 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.

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 still highly recommend that pupils in year 3 and 4 at least are still brought to and collected from school.

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.

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 and 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.

If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility then you must inform the school by completing the 'Walking to/from School Agreement'. 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 ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW IN WRITING IMMEDIATELY.

Walking to School

At Veritas Primary Academy we feel that older children (preferably Y5/6) may walk to school independently of an adult where parents have made arrangements for them to do so. Parents therefore take an informed decision that they are responsible for their child's safety on their way to school, even when they are not physically present.

Parents must inform the school if their child will, at any time, be walking to school without an adult, so that a register can be compiled enabling us to identify any who have not arrived at school at the appropriate time in the morning. Children walking to school independently should not arrive at school before 8.45am and should be at school no later than 8.55am

As the responsible body receiving children from home at the start of the day, the school recognises a clear responsibility to contact parents if their child is not at morning registration and no contact has been made by the parent to the school to inform the school of absence due to illness or other reason.

Parents are responsible for informing the school immediately should their child be unwell or otherwise unable to attend school. This includes informing the school prior to taking their child for any early morning medical examinations (e.g. doctor or dentist) which may cause their child to miss registration in the morning and arrive in the school later than 8.55 am.

The school will, therefore, ensure that registers are checked and will then make attempts to contact the parent to ascertain a reason for absence or to highlight that a child has not attended registration. Please ensure that you are contactable by phone during this period and that the school has up to date contact information.

Where a child has not arrived at school and the parents cannot be contacted the school will immediately contact the police to report a missing child. The school's designated senior person for child protection will then be informed and safeguarding procedures for child protection will be followed.

Walking Home from School

Children who walk home alone are not permitted to stay and play on the school grounds after school. Children walking independently must ensure that they walk directly home.

If a child attends a club they must be picked up by an adult with parental responsibility.

The school maintains a register of those known children whose parents have made the request that their child is dismissed by a member of staff at the end of the school day to walk home independently.

If a child has left the school to walk home alone but does not arrive home, the parent should contact the school in the first instance to seek clarification from the school as to when the child left the school site. If the parent feels that a period of time has passed and their child has not arrived at home and that this is unusual or causing concern, the school recommends that the parent immediately calls the police to report their concern.

There are lots of ways you can prepare your child to make an independent journey. The best way to do this is to walk with your children on the route they will take, teaching them about crossing the road, learning how to navigate and keep safe. 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.

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 him to go with him or tries to physically get close to him, 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 do whatever they need to do get away including kicking or hitting.



Veritas Primary Academy Walking To and From School Agreement

Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this slip to school BEFORE a child is allowed to walk to school or home from school.

Name of Child: Class: Year:

Date:

I wish to inform you that my child will be walking to school independently on the following days:

Mon Tues Weds Thurs Fri

I wish to inform you that my child will be walking home from school independently on the following days:

Mon Tues Weds Thurs Fri

Please read and tick each of the following statements. You will need to share them with your child.

I have read and understood the guidelines, systems and reasonable precautions set out in the policy document 'Safeguarding Pupils Walking To and From School Alone Policy' which is aimed at ensuring my child is safe.

I understand that the school requires me to inform them (by phone call, letter or email) if my child is absent from school for any reason.

I understand that the school will endeavour to make contact with me on the morning of registered absence if my child is absent from school and no contact has been made with the school for that absence.

I understand that my child is not allowed to stay and play on the school grounds after school and that they must walk straight home.

I understand that if my child attends an after school club they must then be picked up by an adult with parental responsibility.

Signed: Print: (Parent) Date:

Signed: Print: (Child) Date: