

## 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 safely and on time 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, Year 3, Year 4**

Our agreed school policy is that **no pupil in Early Years 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 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 has its own collection arrangements which are shared with parents.

### **Pupils in KS2 (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 KS2 we believe that you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for this responsibility. Parents/cares take full responsibility for their child/ren's well-being and safety.

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.

**All children who walk home are advised to have a mobile phone that must be left at the front office in the mornings. It will be kept in a locked cupboard during the day. Mobile phones will be collected by Teacher / TA at the end of the day and returned to the child. Parents are advised to monitor their child/ren's whereabouts using appropriate Apps for eg Life 360, Find My Kids, GPS phone tracker, etc. The school cannot be held responsible for loss or damage, howsoever caused to the mobile phone left at the front office/school. This is left at your own risk.**

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 kick, punch, and hit as hard as they can.
- Learn their address and a telephone number: landline or mobile by heart.
- Provide them with a laminated card with their address and a few contact details of relatives
- Teach your child who is a trusted adult outside of the family / school (bus driver/ police officer etc.)

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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.**

If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility then you must inform the school by letter or by completing the slip below. 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.**

## Children Walking Home Alone Permission

As part of our continual assessment of our safeguarding procedures we have reviewed our walking home alone protocols in line with other schools in the local area and government guidance. Only children in years 5 and year 6 are allowed to come to school unaccompanied or walk home alone. Therefore, all children from Nursery to Year 4 need to be dropped off and collected by an adult.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents that we do not allow siblings or children under the age of 16 to drop the children or collect them at the end of the day, there must be an adult present.

Pupils will not be allowed to be collected by another adult unless they have the password. If no one comes to collect a child and they do not have permission to walk home alone, they will be kept in school until parents are contacted and come to collect them. If no contact is made, a referral to Social Care will be made one hour after the child should have been collected, as per the Local Authority Policy guidance - Children Not Collected from School Nov 2018.

Parents should ensure that their child understands the green cross code/road safety and is aware of stranger danger. See attached guidance to consider when making the decision to allow your child to come to/from school unaccompanied. If your child is in year 5 or year 6 and you would like to request that they come to school and/or walk home alone then the school requires you to sign the parental permission slip below.

Please complete and return the reply slip to your child's class teacher.

Ms. K. Peerwani  
Designated Safeguarding Lead

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\_\_\_ Children Walking Home Alone Permission Slip      YEAR 5/YEAR 6    - September 2022

Child's name: .....Class.....

I give permission for my child to come to school alone in the morning (8:45am) and walk home alone at the end of the school day (3:20pm). I understand that by allowing my child to walk home unaccompanied that I am taking full responsibility for their safety and wellbeing; and that I will make provision to teach my child appropriate skills to ensure their safety on the way to and from school.

Parent/Carer name: .....

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ThePark  
Federation

*to question is to grow*

## Lake Farm Park Academy

*Learning, Achieving, Aspiring Together*

Signed..... Date: .....

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