

# CHILDREN WALKING TO/FROM SCHOOL ALONE AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN AT HOMETIME POLICY



## Introduction

Parents take full and due responsibility and care to ensure that their child arrives safely at school each morning. Where children walk to school it is understood by the school that parents ensure that their child takes the safest route to school as is possible and that they are accompanied to school by a responsible adult. Parents are advised to talk to children about road safety even if children are accompanied to school by an adult.

In Year 4 and above, parents may decide that their child is capable of walking to or from school without an adult, particularly if they live very close to the school and do not need to cross any major roads. The following guidelines set out the school's advice, policy and procedures should parents wish to consider allowing their child to walk to or from school without an adult.

## Walking to School Without an Adult

Although it is up to parents' discretion how children travel to school each day, the school recommends that all children in Year 3 and below are accompanied by an adult on the way to school and that Year 4 children and above only travel without an adult if the parent/carer is fully satisfied that it is safe for them to do so. The school recommends beginning this in the Summer Term for Year 4 and when it is deemed safe by the parent/carer to do so for Year 5 and Year 6 children.

Parents/carers are asked to inform the school if their child will be regularly walking to school alone so that a register can be compiled should they not arrive at school at the appropriate time in the morning. **(See Appendix 1)**

The school recognises a clear responsibility to contact parents if their child has not attended 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.

The school will therefore ensure that registers are checked and will then make attempts to contact the parent/carer to ascertain a reason for absence or to highlight that a child has not attended registration.

Contact will be sought with the parent/carer within 30 minutes of registers being taken and an absence without reason being noted by classroom staff.

Where a child has left their parent with the intention of walking to school but has not arrived and the school has made contact with the parent/carer and an issue of a missing child is therefore noted, the school will immediately contact the police to report a missing child. The school's designated senior person for child protection will then be immediately informed and safeguarding procedures for child protection will be followed.

Parents are responsible for informing the school immediately should their child be unwell or otherwise unable to attend school.

### **Home time**

Parents/carers who are collecting children from classes in Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 should wait in the rear yard for the children to be brought out by the teachers.

Reception parents/carers should walk past the allotment area and wait on the playground near the Reception classroom.

Parents/carers of children in Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 should stand in the areas where your child's class line up in the morning, in view of the teacher.

The classes are led out into the playground where the children are handed over to parents/carers. Parents/carers must not take their child without informing the teacher.

It is important that both teacher and child know which adult will be collecting the child at the end of the school day so please inform the school in advance of any changes. If a change is made without informing the school, it will be necessary to contact the parent for confirmation.

Parents/carers need to collect their child promptly. However we are aware that on a few occasions parents may be late for a variety of reasons. If this is the case please inform the school that you will be late. Your child will be taken to the After School Club and will wait for you there. There may be a charge for this service should it become a regular occurrence.

### **Walking Home from School Without an Adult**

It is the policy of the school to seek written clarification from parents/carers who wish their child to walk home alone at the end of the school day.

All children from Nursery to Year 3 must be collected at the end of the day or from After School Club by a responsible adult aged over 16. Children in Year 4 should be collected at the end of the day in the Autumn and Spring Terms when the light is failing by a responsible adult over the age of 16. However, during the Summer Term, children in Year 4 may begin to go home on their own only if the parent/carer has made an approved request to the school (see appendix 2). Children in Year 5 and Year 6 may begin to go home on their own when their parent/carer feels it is appropriate and then only if the parent/carer has made an approved request to the school (see appendix 2).

Parents/carers must make an informed decision that they are confident that their child is able to walk home sensibly and must be aware that they are responsible for their child's safety on their way from school even when they are not physically present. Parents are advised to consider the following before deciding whether to request permission for their child to walk home alone:

- How long is the journey?
- Are there any roads to cross and, if so, does your child know how to cross them safely?
- What time will your child be walking home? (It is recommended that children do not walk home in the dark or in failing light)
- Are you confident that your child is aware of safety rules around stranger danger?
- Does your child have some friends to walk home with? If so, are you confident that they will walk together sensibly?

The school maintains a register of children who have permission to be dismissed by a member of staff at the end of the school day or at the end of After School Club to walk home alone.

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 instant to seek clarification from the responsible adult 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/carer calls the school to report their concern. The school can then offer assistance in using contacts to search for their child. It is recommended that the police are informed if the child is not traced within half an hour of this action being taken or indeed as soon as the parent or school deems police involvement is necessary.

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## APPENDIX 1

### **Information Form - Walking to School Without an Adult – Year 4 and above only**

Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to the Office Manager at Pegswood Primary School.



NB There must be a separate form completed for each child for whom there is a request.

Name of child: .....

Class: .....

Date: .....

- 1) I wish to inform you that my child will be walking without an accompanying adult to school on regular basis.
- 2) I understand that the school will contact me if there are any concerns relating to my child walking to school alone.
- 3) 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.
- 4) I understand that the school requires me to inform them as soon as possible if my child is absent from school for any reason.
- 5) 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 notice has been given (from myself) to the school.

Signed: .....

(Please print name): .....

Contact Number (parent): .....

## APPENDIX 2

### **Request Form – Walking Home from School Without an Adult – Year 4 (Summer Term only) and Year 5 and Year 6**



Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to the Office Manager at Pegswood Primary School.

NB There must be a separate form completed for each child for whom there is a request.

Name of child: .....

Class: .....

Date: .....

1) I wish to request permission for my child to walk home from school without an accompanying adult on a regular basis.

2) 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, not allowing them to walk home alone in the dark.

3) I understand that I have full responsibility for my child's safety if they walk home alone.

Signed: .....

(Please print name): .....

Contact Number (parent): .....