

# **Monksmoor Park CE Primary School**

## **Walking to and from school alone Policy**

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1.

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## Introduction

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.

In addition, as a school we have a duty of care for the safety and well-being of our children and therefore this policy is to help advise parents/carers in the decisions they make for their children in relation to safety to and from school. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.

The aim of this policy is to;

- promote safeguarding and child protection in relation to walking to and from school alone; and to
- ensure that all stakeholders are protecting children during their journey to and from school.

## Scope

This policy applies to all parents/carers of children on-roll at school. All references in this document to 'adult' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

## Pupils in Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery & Reception) and KS1 (Years 1 & 2)

Our agreed school policy is that pupils in Foundation Stage or Years 1 and 2 should NOT 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 who are on the school data form provided they are 18 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 someone turns up to collect your child and we have not been notified, the adult will have to wait until we have verified his or her identity.

If no one turns up to collect a child in these year groups, they will be kept in school and parents contacted. If the child is not collected within 45 minutes and we have failed to make contact with the child's carer, we have a duty of care to refer to social services.

## **Pupils in Year 3 upwards**

We highly recommend that pupils in Years 3 and 4 are still brought to and collected from school by an adult (person over 18). We also understand that there may be circumstances that make it difficult for parents to achieve this every day e.g. those who work or have appointments. However, the primary driver in making such decisions is always the safety and well-being of our children.

If a child is attending an extra-curricular activity, then we request that all children attending these sessions are collected by an adult on time. Failure to collect children punctually from these activities could lead to activities being withdrawn. We also request that children attending breakfast club or a before school club are brought to school and signed in by an adult.

## **Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6**

For pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, we believe that if children live within walking distance to school and are able to walk a safe route then parents need to decide whether their child is ready for the responsibility of walking to and from school alone. If children are attending an extra-curricular activity, then we request that all children attending these sessions are collected by an adult on time. Failure to collect children punctually from these activities could lead to activities being withdrawn. We also request that children attending breakfast club or a before school club are brought to school and signed in by an adult.

In deciding whether a child is ready to walk to school parents should assess any risks associated with the route to school and assess the child's confidence.

There are many ways a parent can prepare their child to make an independent journey. One way is to follow them a few times on their journey, so they know how safe and sensible they are.

It is also strongly advised that children who are walking without an adult or older sibling, have a cheap mobile phone that they are able to use if they need help. All mobile phones brought into school need to be handed into the class teacher immediately and placed in the mobile phone safes in Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms – in line with our ICT policy.

When deciding whether a child is ready for the responsibility of walking to and/or from home parents should consider the following questions:

1. Do you trust them to walk straight to school or straight home, using the agreed safe route?
2. Are there roads to cross on the route and how busy/safe are those roads?
3. Do you trust them to behave sensibly when with a friend or group of friends?
4. Are they road safety aware?
5. Would they know what to do if a stranger approached them?
6. Would they know what to do if they needed help?

7. Do they understand about keeping themselves safe and not to make any dangerous choices, either by themselves or with a group of friends?

If a parent decides that their child is ready for this responsibility, they should complete the permission form in Appendix A.

## Safeguarding

As part of keeping a child safe and the school being able to support our families in the case of an emergency we request that parents provide us with a copy of the walking route.

The purpose of the walking route is to provide details of the intended route that the parents have agreed with their child. This route will be the most direct route for the child to arrive at the school on time in the morning. Staff will use this route information in the case that a child has not arrived at school and contact has been made with parents who confirm that the child has left for school.

Children who arrive late will enter the school via the main school entrance where they will sign themselves in late providing a reason for their lateness. They will then be let through to the main building and escorted to their classroom by a member of staff.

Parents of Year 5 and Year 6 will be called first when considering First Day Response phone calls to ensure that a timely contact is made

## Appendix A: Permission to walk to and/or from school alone letter

Child's first and last name \_\_\_\_\_ Year group \_\_\_\_\_

The route to school is within safe walking distance	Yes/No
I consider the route to school to be a safe route	Yes/No
When walking home – my child will go straight home	Yes/No
When walking home, a responsible person will be at home to supervise them	Yes/No
My child does need to cross a busy/main road(s) and I have taught them to cross safely at a crossing labelled on the map of the route	Yes/No
My child is aware of the potential dangers regarding roads/ traffic and how to avoid dangers and stay safe	Yes/No
My child understands and follows the green cross code	Yes/No
My child understands stranger danger	Yes/No
My child knows what to do in an emergency	Yes/No
My child will have a mobile phone	Yes/No
They will have my number, the school number and an emergency contact on their phone	Yes/No

Please tick relevant boxes:

- ☐ I have read and understood this policy on safeguarding my child walking to school.
- ☐ I have read and understood this policy on safeguarding my child walking home from school alone.
- ☐ I fully understand that it is my responsibility to ensure my child gets to and from school safely including getting to school on time. If circumstances change then I will communicate this with school.
- ☐ I fully understand that if my child attends an extra-curricular activity/wrap around care provision they should always be collected by an adult or signed in by an adult.
- ☐ I have provided a map of the route to school.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to child: \_\_\_\_\_

Print first and last name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note that this consent will remain in place unless you inform the school of changes.**