



Timbertree Academy

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Timbertree Academy

Walking To and From School Alone Policy

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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/Carers 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.

Procedures Before School (Breakfast Club) and going home after a School Club

Pupils who attend Breakfast Club are **not allowed to walk to school on their own**. The procedure for Breakfast Club is that the parent / carer signs the pupil into the club on a daily basis. After school clubs, parents may take the decision for their child to walk home after the club finishes. The facilitator / coach of the club must be informed in writing prior to club commencing. The responsibility for that child's safety and welfare lies with the parent / carer, if they sign to say that they wish their child to walk home.

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 his or her 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 (however, if the professional judgement of the adult at school deems the older sibling not to be suitable, they will not hand the child over). 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 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 30 minutes and we have failed to make contact with the child's carer, we will consult with family services. We will not allow older brothers or sisters in school to collect younger siblings.

Pupils in KS2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6)

While there is no set age when children are ready to walk to school or home on their own, we believe that pupils in year 3 and 4 should be still brought to and collected from school and this is our school policy. Therefore, for pupils in Years 5 and 6, we believe that you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for the responsibility of walking to and from school alone.

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 many 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 finding the way on their own, in preparation for walking with friends or alone when they are older.

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 from school?
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 approached 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 did not want to do?
7. Would they know what to do if they needed help?
8. Would they know whom 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 to accompany or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted again.



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**IF AT ANY TIME YOU NEED TO CHANGE ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE
PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW IN WRITING IMMEDIATELY.**

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Permission for pupils to walk to and from school unaccompanied

Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to school as soon as possible.

Name of child:

Year:

I wish to inform you that my child will be walking to/from school on 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 'Walking To and From School Alone Policy'. I fully understand that once I give permission for my child to walk to and from school alone, the school is not responsible for my child's actions or whereabouts once they are not on the school premises.

Signed..... Date:

(Name print)