



Cherrywood Federation
POLICY ON SAFEGUARDING PUPILS WALKING TO AND
FROM SCHOOL ALONE

Approved by: Anita Saville and the
Cherrywood Federation
Governing Body

Date: 01/09/23

Last reviewed on: September 2025

**Next review
due by:** September 2027

Statement of Intent

Our children's safety is of paramount importance to us all. We will endeavour to ensure clear and robust procedures for collection are in place, regularly reviewed and clearly shared with staff, parents, carers and pupils. In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised person at the end of the school day the school puts into practice agreed procedures.

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.

Aim

The end of the school day is a busy time, and our aim is to ensure children are dismissed carefully, under strict supervision, collected on time and arrive home safely. The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety of children by making sure that the responsibilities and expectations of all parties are clear when it comes to children leaving the school premises.

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult, we will ensure the situation can be resolved as quickly as possible to cause as little distress as possible to the child. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so if they are unavoidably delayed they will be aware of procedures being followed.

The Authorised Adult

The Authorised Adult must be a responsible person aged 16 years or over. The person may be a:

- Parent/Carer
- Family member
- Child minder
- Neighbour
- Someone over the age of 16 who has the parent/carer's written permission to collect the child from school.

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 (who does not have written

permission to walk home alone) 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 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. Children must be collected by an authorised adult aged 16 years or above.

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, our school policy is that children in Years 5 and 6 will be the only children permitted to walk to or from school on their own. Children in Years 3 and 4 must still be accompanied to and from school by an authorised adult.

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 regularly driven to school do not have the opportunity to develop road awareness and are therefore more vulnerable when they start to walk to and from 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.

Children should be taught to:

- Always pay attention to the traffic and their surroundings when crossing a road and to not become distracted.
- Use zebra crossings/pedestrian crossings safely and to never cross a road on a bend or where there are parked cars and they cannot see in both directions.
- Look in both directions before crossing and to listen for traffic coming;
- Always be cautious when crossing a road-it is hard to judge the speed of a car.
- Look out for cyclists.
- Never, ever, follow someone who is either a stranger or someone they know, but is not an authorised "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, family friend or trusted neighbour). And if that person tries to convince your child to go with them or tries to physically get close to your child, then your child should scream, "Help! This is not my dad!" or "Help! This is not my mum!" and run away. If they grab your child, tell your child to kick, punch, and hit as hard as they can whilst shouting out.

Children should remember that a driver may not see them, even if they can see the driver; a reflective coat/jacket will help with this

Other safety issues

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children do not access or use any areas of the school site that are prohibited. This includes playing on any outdoor playground equipment such as climbing frames before or after school. This equipment is only permitted to be used by pupils of the correct age during the school day and under appropriate supervision. For all pupils' safety no football should be played on the playgrounds before or after school and no pupils should use bikes, skates or scooters etc. on the school site.

Extra-Curricular Clubs Arrangements

Please note that ALL pupils will need to be collected if they are staying late at school for any reason after 4.00pm, e.g. If your child takes part in an after school activity club, they may need to be collected at 4.00pm, 4.15pm or 4.30pm, depending on the club. No pupils will be allowed to leave school on their own at any time other than the normal end of the day for safety reasons. This also applies to school discos or PTFA/HSA events.

After School Care Club

Pupils should be collected by an authorised adult. After School Club staff will deal with the safe collection and drop off of pupils in their care. Pupils will not be allowed to leave with any siblings under the age of 16.

Communication

As always, good communication between home and school is vital so please let us know ASAP if there are any changes to your normal drop off and collection routines. Particularly if you will be late to collect your child at the end of the school day and please remember that it is a parent's responsibility to ensure children travel to and from school safely. Please talk to your children about staying safe

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 walking with a friend or friends?
3. Are they road safety aware?

4. Would they know what to do if a stranger approaches them?
5. Would they know what to do if they needed help and would they know who to approach to get help?

If you are not confident about how your child would react in an unusual situation, 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 appropriate form which can be obtained from the school office or the staff in Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 & 6).

Your child will not be allowed to walk home unless this permission has been given. Your child will be responsible for their own behaviour whilst on the journey to and from school. Should their behaviour not be acceptable you may be asked to accompany or collect them.

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

When children are not collected

Sometimes, in exceptional circumstances, a child may not be collected on time. We request that you contact school as soon as possible to notify us that you may be late. If we receive no such message, the following procedure would be followed;

1. The child will remain with their class teacher/TA until their adult arrives.
2. If their adult is late (after 3.30pm), they will wait near the main office whilst staff try to contact parents/carers.
3. We inform parents that if children are not collected at the end of the day we follow the following procedures: Messages are checked to see if there are any changes to the end of day arrangements. Parents/carers are contacted at home or work. If this is unsuccessful, other authorised adults are contacted. In the meantime the child will wait at the main office entrance under adult supervision. If no adult arrives to collect the children but contact has been made, after a further 15 minutes the school reserves the right to issue a fine and charge parents, £10 for every half hour.

Where NO authorised adult can be contacted.

- 4. If the child(ren) has not been collected after one hour, (4.30pm) and no contact has been made or arrangements agreed we will follow our Child Protection Procedures and contact the Local Safeguarding Team.
- 5. The Safeguarding Team will aim to locate the parent/carer or relative. If they are unable to do so the child may be placed into the care of the Local Authority.
- 6. The school will deliver a letter to the child/children’s home informing the parent/carer of the actions that have been taken to safeguard their child.

7. A full report of the incident will be written and placed in the child’s school file. Following a Late Collection, all late collected children will be recorded in the school registers and this information will be passed on to the school’s Attendance Officer for further investigation. Where a child has 2 recorded late collections in one half term a letter will be sent home to the parents. Where there is no improvement in late collection a second letter will be sent and a referral made to the Educational Welfare Service.

Where children are collected more than 15 minutes late from a school-run after school club (e.g. a teacher activity club) on 2 occasions they will automatically lose their place at that club.

This policy will apply to all children within our Federation and will be reviewed in September 2027.

Cherrywood Federation

Permission for pupils to walk to and from school unaccompanied for Yrs 5 and 6 pupils only.

Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to school asap.

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 'Policy on Safeguarding Pupils walking to and from School Alone'.

Signed..... Date: (d/m/y)

(Name print).....