Safeguarding Pupils Walking to & from School Alone Policy

Longfields Primary School and Nursery

Approved by:	Governing Board	**Date:** July 2026
Next review due by:	September 2027	

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.

Parents are legally obliged to ensure their children get to school and attend regularly, but this in itself does not disallow independent travel.

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."

Below is our policy for allowing children to independently travel home (or to another specified location.)

Pupils in Foundation Stage (Nursery or Reception) or KS1 (Year 1 &2)

Our school policy is that no child 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. In addition, we will only hand over pupils to named adults or older siblings (the exception primary school age siblings). children 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 no one turns up to collect a child in these year groups they will be kept in school and parents contacted.

If there has been no contact from parents and the children have still not been collected once the school is closed the Safeguarding Lead will be contacted and they will decide next steps. This could lead to contacting Social Care or the police.

Pupils in Lower KS2 (Years 3 & 4)

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 LKS2 we believe that you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for this responsibility. We would still highly recommend that pupils in years 3 and 4 are still brought to and collected from school. If you would like your child to walk to and from school, you must first discuss this with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). SLT will take into consideration the distance of school to home and also the maturity of your child.

Pupils in Upper KS2 (Years 5 & 6)

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

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).

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?
7. Would they know what to do if they needed help?
8. Would they know who best to approach to get help?

If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility then you must inform the school by completing the slip below. Your child will be prevented from walking home unless this permission has been given in writing.

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

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 a 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’.
- I understand that it is my responsibility and not the schools once my child has left the school premises.

Any Additional information:

Signed…….....

Relationship with child: ……

(Name print)…….....

Tel……

Date: ……..