

# John Blandy Primary School



## Walking to and from school alone Policy

## POLICY ON SAFEGUARDING PUPILS

### WALKING TO AND FROM SCHOOL ALONE

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.

### Pupils in Reception, KS1 (Years 1 & 2) and Years 3 and 4

Our agreed school policy is that pupils in Reception or Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 **should NOT walk to or from school on their own** or be left by a carer 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 secondary-school age siblings who are on the school collection data form. Pupils will not be handed over to other adults or siblings 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 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 you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for the responsibility of walking to and from school alone. **If your child is attending an extra-curricular activity, we request that children attending these sessions are collected by an adult on time. Children may only be allowed to walk home with written consent.** Failure to collect children punctually from these activities could lead to activities being withdrawn.

In deciding whether your child is ready to walk to school you should assess any risks associated with the route to school and assess your child's confidence. There are many ways you can prepare your child to make an independent journey. One way is to follow them a few times on their journey, so you know how safe and sensible they are. You may consider your child if walking to and from school alone, to have a mobile phone. All mobile phones brought into school, should be turned off on entry to the school gates and need to be handed into the class teacher immediately – in line with our safeguarding policy.

**When deciding whether your child is ready for the responsibility of walking to and/or from home you might want to consider the following:**

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 approaches 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?

**At the start of each academic year, we ask parents to complete an online form where you can give permission for your child to walk home. If you wish for your child to walk home after this time, please contact the school office where they can reissue the online form or give your written consent to your child's class teacher.**

