

Children walking or cycling to and from school alone

Reviewed by	Resources committee
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Source and date of model policy (if applicable)	n/a

Introduction

It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure their child arrives safely and promptly to school each morning. Whilst walking to school it is understood that parents/carers ensure that their child takes the safest route possible and is accompanied at all times by a responsible adult.

During Years 5 and 6 parents/carers may decide that their child is capable of independently walking/cycling to school. If this is the case, parents/carers make the informed decision that they are responsible for their child's journey to school, even if they are not physically present.

It is advised that parents/carers ensure their child is fully conversant with road safety, the bike is road worthy and appropriate safety gear is used.

The following guidelines are set out as Trumpington Federation advice, policy and procedures should parents/carers wish to allow their child to walk to or from school without an adult.

- i. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to assess the route on which the child will walk to and from school to ensure they are confident their child has the ability to travel safely, even if their child is sometimes accompanied to school by a parent/carer. Crossing busy main roads and walking through secluded areas is discouraged.
- ii. It is also advised to the parents/carers that their child knows their own home phone number and other emergency contact and either has a mobile or money for a pay phone should they need to call home in an emergency. Some mobile phones have a GPS tracking system and having an emergency ICE (In Case of Emergency) number in contacts is recommended.
- iii. Safeguarding is paramount and parents/carers need to ensure their child is fully aware of stranger danger and knows how to report any concerns to an appropriate adult.
- iv. Should a parent/carer wish to allow their child to walk to or home from school unaccompanied by an adult, parents/carers are asked to inform the school by completing the walking/cycling/travelling consent form, which is available from the school office. A register will be compiled of children who have permission to travel to and from school independently in order that appropriate actions can be taken should a child not arrive at school at the appropriate time in the morning.

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- v. It is essential that the consent form is provided by the parent/carer to authorise independent travel to and from the school. All emergency contact numbers must be provided and the parent/carer must notify the school and update the consent form in the event of any changes.
 - vi. The school may refuse a proposal if a child is not deemed able to walk/cycle to school or home alone.
 - vii. If the school has concerns about a particular child's ability to travel safely or if a child lives a distance away deemed to be too far away, permission for the child to travel to or from school alone may be refused.
 - viii. There must always be an appropriate adult/parent/carer at home to meet the child on their arrival. Parents/carers need to be aware when walking /cycling home, the school will not know if a child arrives home as planned. Hence the parent/carer needs to ensure adequate safety protocols are in place should an emergency/accident arise.
 - ix. If the school feels the welfare and safety of the child walking/cycling to and from school is compromised the school may revoke the arrangements and will notify parents/carers accordingly.
 - x. As the responsible body receiving children at the start of the day, the school will ensure that morning registrations are taken in each class. If a child is found to be absent and no prior notice of such absence has been received from the child's parent/carer, the school recognises a clear responsibility to contact the parent/carer to ascertain the reason for absence or highlight that a child has not attended morning registration.
 - xi. It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that school is informed should their child be unable to attend school for any reason in accordance with the school attendance policy. If a child who walks/cycles to school unattended does not arrive, contact will be sought with the parent/carer within 30 minutes of the school's protocol for morning registration taking place and an absence without reason being noted by the class teacher.
 - xii. If upon contact it is confirmed that a child has left home with the intention of walking/cycling to school but has not arrived and is therefore missing, the school will contact the police immediately. The school's designated safeguarding lead will then be immediately informed and safeguarding procedures for child protection/children missing procedures will be followed.

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- xiii. A register of children who have permission to walk/cycle home alone after the school day will be kept by the school.
 - xiv. If a child has left the school to walk home but does not arrive home when expected and direct contact with the child has not been established, the parent/carer should contact the school in the first instance to seek clarification from the responsible adult who dismissed their child as to the time they left school. However the school may not be contactable after 4pm and therefore it will be the parents'/carers' responsibility to notify the police.

Appendix A

Walk Home from School Consent Form (please complete a form for each child)

NB: If your child/children do not regularly walk home on their own; this form is still required to be completed and you will need to phone the office to advise us each day that your child/children are walking home alone. The form is only required to be completed once.

When walking to/from school, please remind your children of the following safety guidelines:

- Try walking with a partner or a group
- Go directly to/from school/home
- Always use the same route to get to school/home
- Use footpaths or cycle paths if cycling
- Check in with a parent/guardian once you arrive home (see policy point xii for arriving at school)
- Cross at designated road crossings where available
- Obey all traffic signs and signals
- Discuss a contingency plan with your child/children in case they get locked out or if they are going to be left for a long period of time

I hereby give permission for _____ (child's name) to walk to/from **Trumpington Meadows Primary School**. I acknowledge that my child/children may be walking to/from home during changing weather conditions and alone.

I understand that I am releasing the **Trumpington Federation – Trumpington Meadows School** from responsibility and liability or claims which may arise out of, or in connection with, my child/children walking to/from school alone.

Child's Name: _____

Age: _____ Year & Class _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Phone Number: _____ Alternate Phone Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____