

St. Clement's C. of E. Academy

Learning for Life, Anchored in Christ

Walking Home Alone Policy 2025-2027

Reviewed July 2025
Next review July 2027

ST. CLEMENT'S
C. OF E. ACADEMY

Inspiring happy, **courageous**, independent, curious and creative, life-long learners. We aim for all to achieve their full potential, striving both academically and socially with **humility** and **dignity**. Believing being anchored in Jesus Christ will guide us all with **hope**, **compassion** and **wisdom** in becoming successful members of a global community.

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.

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. In addition, we will only hand over pupils to named adults or older siblings provided they are 14 years old or above. 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 in these year groups 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 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. 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.

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

Parents who wish their children to walk home unescorted by an adult, at the end of the school day (15:30hrs), must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Parents must have registered with the school that they are prepared for their children to walk directly home from school at the end of the day.
- Children in year 6 children are allowed to walk home all year round.
- Year 6 children must wear Hi-Viz arm bands when walking home from any after school activities.

During winter months, children will be NOT allowed to walk home alone from after school activities that go on past 3.30.

- It is the parent's responsibility to check the route that their children may walk home in order that they may make an assessment of the appropriateness of the journey. Crossing of fast roads, walking through secluded areas is to be discouraged. A single route must be agreed.
- During winter months and/or inclement weather, children must be dressed appropriately.

- Children should preferably walk in a group and not alone.
- Children should know their home phone number (plus one other emergency contact) and either have their own mobile phone or money for a phone box.
- There must be someone at home to meet the child on their arrival.
- Any child must be capable of arriving home within 30 minutes of the end of the school day (1530hrs). Journeys over 30 minutes are not considered appropriate for children to walk at this stage.

If school become aware that children/ parents are not adhering to the policy or are not acting in a sensible manner or putting the reputation of the school at risk, we can withdraw permission for the child to walk home alone.

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 (scream, shout, kick, fight)?
7. Would they know what to do if they needed help?
8. Would they know who 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 them to accompany or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted again.

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

Return to the School Office

CONFIRMATION THAT MY CHILD MAY WALK HOME ALONE

I confirm that who is in Year..... at

St Clement's C of E Academy, may walk home from school alone.

I confirm that I have read and understood the School's Walking Home Alone Policy.

Name:.....

Date: