



# Collecting Children from School

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<b>Signed by</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Headteacher:</b>	
<b>Trust:</b>	

# St Thomas' CofE Primary Academy

*Jesus said 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.'* John 10:10

## Introduction:

At St Thomas' we strive to ensure that all children and families are provided with the highest level of support, nurture, academic and pastoral care. We are a fully inclusive and attachment aware school. We take safeguarding of all members of the school community seriously and fully implement all legal frameworks to keep children safe.

## Aims:

As part of our safeguarding procedures a child can only go home with the usual person who collects the child. If someone different is collecting, the class teacher should be informed beforehand by the child's parent, preferably in writing. We will not send a child home with someone else even if they are known to the staff member/school unless this has been communicated to the class teacher first. The class teacher will be responsible for ensuring that they share this information if someone else will be sending the child home.

When informing the class teacher, parents should indicate if this is an on-going arrangement or a one off situation. If the arrangement is likely to be frequent, the information will be added to Arbor/Edukey so that all staff can be made aware of the arrangement.

If someone different is collecting a child, and the teacher does not already know this person, staff will ask for a password as a way of being able to identify them. If a parent contacts the school during the day to inform that someone else is picking up the child, the member of staff who takes the message is responsible for ensuring that a password is recorded on Arbor or requesting a password where one does not appear.

If a message is given to a member of the admin team during the school day, it may not be possible for the message to be given to the class teacher before it is time to go home. In these circumstances, class teachers will bring the child and the person collecting them to the school office (once all the other children have been dismissed) for clarification of this before sending the child home.

Children must be collected by someone over the age of 14 years. If staff are unsure of a young person's age, they will seek proof before sending the child home. No child will be sent home with another person without the school receiving at least verbal permission from a person with parental responsibility. In the event the parent/carer cannot be contacted the school will seek advice from a member of the schools safeguarding team before making a final decision to send a child home.

### **Collection from school during school hours.**

Parents/carers should aim to ensure that routine appointments, e.g. to see the dentist or doctor, are made during the school holidays or after school. If your child needs to attend appointments during the school day, evidence of the appointment/s should be provided to the school office prior to the appointment day wherever possible so that this can be recorded on Arbor. If class teachers are shown evidence of an appointment they will the admin officer who will add the information on their behalf. When coming to collect your child to attend an appointment, parents/carers who have not provided evidence beforehand will be asked for evidence to validate the reason for the child to be collected from school during the day. Evidence could include a hospital letter, an appointment card or a text confirmation/reminder. If no evidence can be provided parents/carers may be asked to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

### **Walking To and From School Unaccompanied**

There is a growing trend for the older children in the school to walk home unaccompanied at the end of the school day or at the end of an after school club. While we as a school promote independence in our children, we are always mindful that safety and security should come first, particularly as the evenings start to get darker.

Only pupils in year 5 and 6 can go home on their own provided that both the school and family have no concerns about the child's ability to keep themselves safe and that the school receives permission in writing from the parent/carer. There is a separate walking home from school policy and consent form (see appendix A) . This must be completed by parents/ carers prior to any child being allowed to walk home from school independently. This request must also be agreed by the Head of School.

As part of our safeguarding procedures we have an up to date register of all children who have been given permission to walk home alone and all signed consent forms are uploaded to MyConcern. This is kept up to date by Mrs Taylor, who will ensure that staff members of children in years 5 and 6 have a class list with information about the arrangements for each child. This should be accessible in the classroom in case another member of staff is dismissing the class. A copy will also be kept in the SLT area and main school office. In addition, there is a copy on TEAMS for staff access if dismissing from year 5 & 6 classrooms.

Parents should ensure that their child understands the Green Cross Code/Road Safety, is aware of stranger danger and clearly understands what action to take in case of an emergency. It is advised that children of primary age walking home alone go straight to an agreed residence and do not go home to an unsupervised dwelling.

### **Collection from extra-curricular clubs.**

Children must be collected promptly from extra-curricular clubs. (Most of these finish at 4:15pm). If children are not collected on time then they will be placed in after school club and there will be a charge to parents. This charge will be in line with the after school provision charges.

### **Collection from after-school club.**

St Thomas' run wraparound provision from 7:30am – 17:30. After school provision charged at 2 separate rates for all children, 15:25– 16:15 is charged at £4:00 per session and 15:25 – 17:30 is charged at £8 per session. Children must be collected on time, if children are collected after 16:15 then they will be charged the full after school club fee. Late collections (after 5:30pm on the Care Club clock) will result in a penalty charge. This will be a charge of £10.00 for every 10 minutes. (E.g. Between 17:30 and 17:40 = £10, between 17:30 and 17:50 = £20). Charges will be added to the next fee payment.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We are committed to treating all pupils fairly and challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any member of the school community and it helps to promote equality and accessibility at our school. The curriculum is planned to be inclusive and meet the needs and interests of a full range of learners. Activities and resources will be differentiated and adult support used to ensure that children assess the curriculum and make the best possible progress.

### **Safeguarding commitment**

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We take seriously our duty of care to our pupils and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism - this includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. We work closely with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Any incidents that occur with children walking home, which are believed to be a safeguarding concern will be followed up by school. If we conclude there is a safeguarding risk, any agreement for children walking home along will be immediately reviewed.

### **Other Relevant School Policies**

- Safeguarding
- Anti-Bullying Policy

## **Appendix A**

### **Policy on pupils walking to and from home alone**

#### **Safeguarding Children Walking to and from School Alone- A Guide for Parents**

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.

Any incidents that occur with children walking home, which are believed to be a safeguarding concern will be followed up by school. If we conclude there is a safeguarding risk, any agreement for children walking home along will be immediately reviewed.

#### **Pupils in Foundation Stage and Years 1-4**

Our agreed school policy is that no pupil in Foundation Stage or Years 1-4 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 Year 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 way finding 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 where there are traffic lights or on the designated crossing; 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 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 and on the way home. Should their behaviour not be acceptable you will be asked 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.**

**Permission for pupils to walk to and from school unaccompanied.**

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 pupils walking to and from school alone'.

I fully understand that once I give permission for my child to walk to and from school alone, the school is not responsible for my child's actions or whereabouts once they are not on the school premises.

Permission given for the following days of the week:

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Childs Name:..... Year.....

Signed..... Name Printed.....

Date:.....

Agreed by Principal or DSL

Signed ..... Name Printed .....

Role ..... Date .....

