

Walking Home Policy

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School will help every child to reach their full potential in a place where they can love, learn and grow together with Jesus.

- ❖ We will always open our doors wide in welcome.
- ❖ We will always love and care for each other as Jesus taught us.
- ❖ We will always place the Word of God at the heart of our School.
- ❖ We will always worship God our Father.
- ❖ We will always be witnesses to Jesus Christ by following in his footsteps.

It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure their child is collected promptly and safely each day. 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 4, 5 and 6 parents/carers may decide that their child is capable of independently walking/cycling home from school. If this is the case, parents/carers make the informed decision that they are responsible for their child's safety on their journey home from 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.

Our recommended guidance:

- It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to assess the route on which the child will walk home from school to ensure they are confident their child has the ability to walk home safely, even if their child is accompanied to school by a parent/carer. Crossing busy main roads and walking through secluded areas is discouraged.
- It is also advised to the parents/carers that their child knows their own home phone number and other emergency contacts 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. If a mobile phone is brought to school by a child this must be left in the school office and collected at the end of the day.

- Safeguarding is paramount and parents/carers need to ensure their child is fully aware of stranger danger and how to report any concerns to an appropriate adult.
- Should a parent/carer wish to allow their child to walk to school unaccompanied by an adult, parents/carers are asked to inform the school and the walking consent form is completed/updated so that a register can be compiled of key children.
- It is essential that written consent is provided by the parent/carer to authorise independent travel to and from the school. The walking home policy must contain all emergency contact numbers and the parent/carer must notify the school and update the consent form in the event of any changes.
- The school may refuse a proposal if a child is not deemed able to walk/cycle home alone.
- If the school has concerns about a particular child's ability to travel safely or if a child lives too far away more than 15 minutes away permission for the child to walk home alone may be refused.
- There must always be an appropriate adult/parent/carer/older sibling at home to meet the child on their arrival. Parents/carers need to be aware when walking 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.
- If the school feels the welfare and safety of the child walking home from school is compromised the school may revoke the arrangement and will notify parents/carers accordingly.
- It is recommended that ONLY children in Years 4, 5 and 6 be allowed to walk to school unaccompanied by an adult and only then if the parent/carer is confident that it is safe for them to do so. However individual cases will be discussed with parents/carers.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to assess the route on which the child will walk home from school to ensure they are confident their child has the ability to walk home safely. Crossing busy main roads and walking through secluded areas is discouraged.
- A register of children who have permission to walk/cycle home alone after the school day will be kept by the school.

- 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 home time and therefore it will be parents/carers responsibility to notify the police.