

8th September 2023

Dear Parents / Carers,

Headteacher Mrs V. Kerr

Policy safeguarding pupils walking to and from school alone

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. Parents are legally obliged to ensure their children get to school and attend regularly, but this in itself does not disallow independent travel.

Below is our policy at Carr Junior School for allowing children to independently travel to and from school alone.

Pupils in Year 3 & 4

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. Therefore as regards pupils in Lower KS2 we believe that not all pupils will be ready for this level of responsibility by this age and should therefore continue to be collected by a parent or named responsible adult.

Pupils in Year 5 & 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 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.

When walking to school, children can be taught to:

- Pay attention to traffic at all times when crossing the street; never become distracted.
- Always cross at the intersection where there are traffic lights or a 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 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 be deemed a safeguarding risk you will be asked to accompany them to and from school until they have demonstrated 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.

Please complete the attached form and return it to the school office.



AIM HIGH, SHINE BRIGHT

Carr Junior School Permission for pupils to walk to and from school unaccompanied

Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to the school office.

I have read and reiterated the rules outlined in this policy to my child and I am confident that they:

- Can be trusted to walk straight home or to school alone.
- Will adhere to the route that we have identified together.
- Can be trusted to behave sensibly.
- Is aware of road safety.
- Is aware of the protocols to follow if a stranger approaches them or asks them to do something they do not want to.
- Would know how and where to ask for help.

Name of child: _____ Class: _____

Please tick the following boxes to confirm what you are giving permission for:

- ☐ I wish to inform you that my child will be walking to/from school on a regular basis. I will notify you immediately should this arrangement change.
- ☐ I wish to inform you that I also give permission for my child to walk home after any after school clubs which may end as late as 4:30pm
- ☐ I have read and understood the guidelines, systems and reasonable precautions set out in 'policy on safeguarding pupils walking to and from school alone'
- ☐ I understand that it is my responsibility and not the schools once my child has left the school premises.

Adults name (print): _____ Signed: _____

Relationship to child: _____ Contact number: _____

Date: _____



AIM HIGH, SHINE BRIGHT