



QUEEN VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Child Collection and Walking Home Alone Procedure

July 2023

Review Date: July 2026

CHILD COLLECTION AND WALKING HOME ALONG PROCEDURE

Purpose

To ensure the safeguarding of all children, it is essential that the school has a procedure in place for the safe collection of all children at the end of a school day, and guidance for parents in the event of them being late/unable to collect their child.

Aims

- To keep children safe
- To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of the correct procedures for the end of the school day.
- To highlight the importance of maintaining clear lines of communication and up-to-date contact details.

Policy

Admission Information

When children start at Queen Victoria Primary School, parents are asked to fill in information about their child. Details are completed about the people who will be collecting their child. This information is then filed and used to identify the designated person(s).

Password

Parents are asked for a memorable password, which is also filed. Parents are asked to give the password only to the people they wish to collect their child.

Relationship breakdown of parents/carers

The school has a clearly defined procedure, which is followed in the event of the relationship between a child's parents/carers breaking down.

- Unless there is a court order, of which the school must have a copy, we are unable to legally deny access of any parent contacting their child.
- Should a parent of concern ask to access their child, we will contact the first parent to come to school as soon as possible, explaining this procedure and asking the second parent to wait.
- If there is concern about violent or aggressive behaviour from either parent we will seek advice from the Police and follow their recommendations.

PUPILS WALKING TO AND FROM SCHOOL ALONE

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 Nursery, Reception or KS1

Our agreed school policy is that no pupil in Nursery, Reception or Key Stage 1 should walk to or from school on his or her 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 (however, if the professional judgement of the adult at school deems the older sibling not to be suitable, they will not hand the child over).

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, by letter or email. If someone turns up to collect your child and we have not been notified, the adult will have to wait until we have verified his or her identity. If no one turns up to collect a child in these year groups, they will be kept in school and parents contacted. If the child is not collected and we have failed to make contact with the child's carer, we will consult with family services. We will not allow older brothers or sisters in school to collect younger siblings.

Pupils in KS2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6)

While there is no set age when children are ready to walk to school or home on their own, we believe that pupils in year 3, 4 and 5 should be still brought to and collected from school and this is our school policy. However, with regard to pupils in Year 6, we believe that you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for the responsibility of walking to and from school alone.

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 many 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 at the intersection where there are traffic lights; 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. Speak to your child about what they should do if this should ever happen.

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 did not want to do?
7. Would they know what to do if they needed help?
8. Would they know whom 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 its 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 to accompany them or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted again.

We will not allow children to walk home alone in the dark. Please bear in mind that if they are attending an after school club it may be dark when the club finishes.

Where children walk to, or walk home from school, alone, we would usually expect that a parent, or other responsible person, is at home when they leave or arrive. If the child will be leaving from, or returning to, an empty house, we would expect that this is only for a short period of time and that the child knows how, and can, access emergency adult support if needed.

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

School Collection Times

The school expects children to be collected at the end of the school day, which is

| | Finish Time |
|-------------|-------------|
| Nursery | 3.25pm |
| Reception | 3.10pm |
| Years 1 & 2 | 3.20pm |
| Years 3 - 6 | 3.20pm |

- The school gates are opened 10 minutes before end of session. Parents are asked to keep the area around the classroom doors clear to enable children to make a safe exit and are asked to make sure they are visible to their child.
- Children in Key Stage One and Lower Key Stage Two (Years 3 and 4) are let out of class at 3.20pm and are handed over to their Parent/Carer.
- Parents/carers are asked to wait in the playground to collect their child.
- Children in Upper Key Stage Two (Years 5 and 6) are let out of class at 3.20pm. Parents/carers are asked to wait for their child in the playground area, near to their child's exit door. Your child will only be allowed to walk home by themselves or with friends if the school have received written permission from parents/carers.



QUEEN VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Permission for pupils to walk to and from school unaccompanied

**Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this
reply slip to school as soon as possible:**

Name of Child: Year/Class

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 safeguarding 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.

Signed:
(PRINT NAME)

Date:

Late Collection Process for Teachers

- If the person expected to collect the child is not there, the child will return to the classroom and inform the class teacher.
- Any child not collected within 10 minutes will be taken to After School Club and should be collected from the main school reception. Please refer to the charging policy.

Failure to Collect a Child

In the event of a Parent/Carer failing to collect a child the procedure set out below will be followed:

- All contacts held on the school records for parents/carers will be contacted and messages left.
- Other contact numbers held on the school system will then be contacted.
- If the parents/carers have not collected the child by 6.30pm then the school will contact Social Care or the Police and the matter will be handed over to their care.
- On no account must a child be taken by a person not known by the school.

Guidance for parents/carers in the event of a Parent/Carer not arriving to collect their child at the end of the school day

As a Parent/Carer, it is your responsibility to ensure that your child is collected at the end of the school day. It is essential that parents/carers provide the school with a record of their contact details i.e. names, addresses, home, work and mobile telephone numbers. Parents should also provide the school with the contact details of at least two other relatives/carers who can be called when the Parent/Carer cannot be contacted or in the event of an emergency. Should any of these details change, parents/carers should inform the school immediately.

If you are unexpectedly delayed and are unable to collect, or will be late collecting your child from school, please contact the school immediately by telephoning 01384 812545.

If you arrange for another adult to collect your child, you must let the school know the details of that person.

If contact has not been made by 5pm a telephone call will be made with Social Services informing them of the situation.

The following information will be required:

- Child's name
- Date of birth
- Address
- Parent/Carer/alternative carer details - names and addresses
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Language spoken
- Special dietary needs
- SEN/behavioural difficulties/medical needs
- Home/work and mobile telephone numbers
- Any current or previous child protection concerns
- Any previous incidents of not being collected from school

If there are any concerns about the welfare of the Parent/Carer, Social Services will ask the local Police to visit the home address.

In the event that the child is in immediate need of protection, the Police, who have emergency protection powers, will be contacted.

GDPR - PERSONAL DATA

This policy is collecting personal data and accordingly adheres to the principles of data protection law. Further information on the lawful basis of using personal data can be found in the school's privacy notices. The personal data obtained will also be managed in line with the school's data retention policy. For further information, please refer to the schools' data protection policy."