



# St. Anthony's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

*"We walk in the footsteps of Christ and are held in the  
hand of God."*

## Walking Home Policy

2025-2026

Signed by:

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Headteacher

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Chair of governors

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## WALKING TO AND FROM SCHOOL ALONE

Parents are legally obliged to ensure their children get to school and attend regularly. Whilst this in itself does not disallow independent travel, 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 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 16 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 via the Studybugs app or by contacting the school office. If someone turns up to collect your child and we have not been notified, the adult will have to wait until we have verified their 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 Key Stage 2 should be still brought to and collected from school by named adults or older siblings provided they are 16 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**). This is our school policy for Years 3, 4, 5 for the whole school year and Year 6 in the Autumn and Spring Terms.

In the Summer Term (after the Easter Holidays) you may feel that your **Year 6 child** is ready for the responsibility of walking from school alone, possibly in preparation for going to Secondary School.

In deciding whether your child is ready to walk from school you should assess any risks associated with the route and your child's confidence. Work with your child 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 home 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 their own.

**If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility in the Summer Term, then you must inform the school, by letter, clearly stating the days that they will be walking alone and who will be there to meet them. We will not allow children to walk home alone in the dark or after-school club, if we feel the route and distance pose too high a risk to their safety and wellbeing, if there will be no one at home to greet them or if we feel the child is not responsible enough. Your child will be prevented from walking home unless this permission has been given.**

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 proven they can be trusted.

Where children walk home from school, alone, we 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 this is not the case, then the child will be needed to be collected from school by an adult.

### **Mobile Phones**

If you choose to send your child to school with a mobile phone on the days that they are walking home it must be delivered to the school office by 9am, where it will be kept securely, and be turned off until they leave the school site at 3.30pm. The children will not have access to their phones during the day and will not be able to communicate with parents using their phones until they leave school. On days that your child has their phone in school you will still need to contact the main school office or use Studybugs to inform your child of any changes to arrangements.

If your child is found to have a phone in school we will, in line with our mobile phone policy, remove the phone and keep it securely in the school office until a parent is able to collect it.

**IF AT ANY TIME YOU NEED TO CHANGE ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE, PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW IMMEDIATELY VIA STUDYBUGS OR BY CONTACTING THE SCHOOL OFFICE.**