

Walking to and from school Policy



Policy developed by Mr Grogan (Headteacher) and Mrs Malley (Acting Deputy Headteacher): December 2025

Policy approved by Governors: April 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fiona Taylor'.

Chair of Governors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Grogan'.

Headteacher

Policy shared with staff and shared on the school website: April 2026

'Never settle for less than your best'

WALKING TO AND FROM SCHOOL POLICY

Our school motto

Never settle for less than your best.

Our Vision

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, each member of our community will flourish as resilient, respectful and adaptable individuals prepared for life's journey. Along the way we will encourage and inspire each other to continue growing as beacons of light in our own lives and the wider world.

Our Mission Statement

St. George's Central seeks to provide quality education rooted in the Christian faith, serving the spiritual, moral, and educational needs of the community of which it is part.

Introduction

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/carers 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 children and therefore have to consider what we believe is good practice in ensuring the safety of our children. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.

Children in Early Years or KS1

Our agreed school policy is that no child in Early Years 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 children 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).

Children will not be handed over to other adults unless the school has been informed by the parents/carers that they have made this arrangement. We also ask that you keep us informed of any changes in arrangements, preferably by letter. 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/carers contacted. If the child is not collected and we have failed to make contact with the child's carer, we will consult with Wigan Council Children's Health and Social Care. We will not allow older brothers or sisters in school to collect younger siblings.

Children 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 and Year 4 should be still brought to and collected from school and this is our school policy. Furthermore, we will only hand over children 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).

Therefore, as regards children in Year 5 and Year 6, we believe that you as parents/carers need to decide whether your child is ready for the responsibility of walking to and from school alone. If any parent/carers wishes for a younger child to walk home alone, this must be discussed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and will be allowed on a case-by-case basis.

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.

'Never settle for less than your best'

Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' John 8:12

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 an 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 then you must inform the school by letter or by completing **Appendix 1**. 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.**

Only children who are walking to and from school are permitted to bring a mobile phone to school. The phone should be switched off as soon as they arrive at the school gate and should only be turned back on once they have left the school premises.

No child should be on their phone whilst on the school premises.

Children in Year 5 and Year 6 will only be permitted to walk home after an after-school club, where this has been agreed in advance with school and written permission has been sought in your child's planner.

Where children walk to, or walk home from school, alone, we would expect that a parent/carer, or other responsible person, is at home when they leave or arrive.

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

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St George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery

Permission for Year 5/Year 6 child to walk to and from school unaccompanied

Please complete and return this form to your child's teacher prior to them walking to/from school alone

Child: _____

Class teacher: _____

My child _____ has permission to **walk to school** alone each morning.

My child _____ has permission to **walk home from school** alone at the end of the school day.

We currently live at _____.

We have agreed that my child will take the following route each morning:

We have agreed that my child will take the following route after school:

Please tick boxes

*Road safety has been discussed with my child and expected length of time for travel has been estimated and we will ensure that our child travels directly between our two locations.

*As parents/carers we take full responsibility for my/our child when they are off the schools' premises and I will ensure there is an adult at home to meet my child when they return home.

*I understand that should my child's behaviour not be acceptable then an adult will be asked to accompany them or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted again.

Printed name _____ Signed _____

Relationship to child _____ Emergency contact number _____

To be completed by school:

Date received _____ Class teacher aware/informed (signed) _____

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