



**Theddlethorpe  
Academy**

## **Safeguarding Pupils Walking to and from School alone – Primary Policy**

<b>Date reviewed:</b>	<b>September 2024</b>	
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>LGB</b>	<b>October 2024</b>
<b>Next review due by:</b>	<b>September 2027</b>	

***For Office Use Only:***

Policy Version: 1.1

To make changes to this policy, please  
email [admin@lincolnshiregateway.co.uk](mailto:admin@lincolnshiregateway.co.uk).



**Lincolnshire Gateway**  
Academies Trust

There are no laws around age or distance, concerning pupils walking to and from school on their own.

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."

The NSPCC states:

"While every child is different, **we wouldn't recommend leaving a child under 12 years old** home alone, particularly for longer periods of time. **Children in primary school aged 6-12 are usually too young to walk home from school alone,** babysit or cook for themselves without adult supervision."

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 an Academy 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:**

We believe that no pupil in Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1 should walk to or from school on their own or be left on their own on the at the Academy gates/Academy 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. These named adults must be recorded on our internal records system and this will be used as our reference for who we can and cannot release children to. In extreme circumstances, such as an emergency situation, where the above is not possible, a decision will be made, based on the information provided and the context of the situation.

For one off situations, pupils may be handed over to other adults if the Academy has been informed, in advance, by the parent of the child, that they have made this arrangement. We also ask that you keep us informed of any changes in arrangements, preferably by written communication, either through email or letter. If no one turns up to collect a child in these year groups they will be kept in school and parents contacted. We will not allow older brothers or sisters in school to collect younger siblings.

### **Pupils in KS2 (Years 3,4,5 & 6):**

The above is the case for pupils in KS2, unless stated otherwise below.

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. ***We would strongly recommend that pupils in years 3 and 4, similar to younger pupils, are still brought to and collected from school. It is our belief that children of this age, are too young to walk to and from school on their own.***

However, if a parent would like children in years 3 and 4 and/or children in years 5 and 6, to walk home on their own, that is a decision that is theirs to make.

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 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. (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). And if that person tries to convince him to go with him or tries to physically get close to him, then scream, "Help! This is not my dad!" or "Help! This is not my mum!" and run away. If they grab them, tell your child to kick, punch, and hit as hard as they can.

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 (scream, shout, kick, fight)?
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 Academy by letter or by completing the slip below. ***Your child will be prevented from walking home unless this permission has been given in writing.***

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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**Theddlethorpe Academy**

**Permission for pupils to walk to and from school unaccompanied**

Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to the Academy before the child can be released to leave school on their own.

Name of child:

Year:

Any additional relevant information:

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 understand that by giving this permission, I accept full responsibility for the welfare of my child, when walking to school and/or walking home from school on their own.

Signed..... Date:

(Name).....