

# **CHANCERY EDUCATION TRUST**

## **PUPILS WALKING HOME ALONE POLICY**

### **July 2025**

Next Review Date: July 2028

*Staff should make themselves aware of all policies and amendments or updates to policies and adhere to the same, which will be made available on relevant websites and internal data and computer systems.*

## **Executive Summary for the CET – Pupils Walking Home Alone Policy July 2025:**

### **Core Purpose**

- Prioritises pupil safety for those walking to/from school independently.
- Aligns parental discretion with the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

### **Eligibility by Year Group**

- EYFS, Years 1 & 2:  
Not allowed to walk alone or be unsupervised on school premises.
- Years 3 & 4:  
Also not allowed to walk alone or be unsupervised.
- Years 5 & 6:  
May walk alone if parents assess readiness and give written permission.  
Year 5 pupils can only walk home in the Summer Term.
- Additionally Resourced Provision (Pickhurst & Oaklands):  
Pupils may not walk alone at any time.

### **Parental Readiness Checklist**

Before granting permission, parents should consider:

- Can the child follow a direct route safely?
- Do they understand road safety and how to seek help?
- Are they confident around strangers?
- Are they trustworthy and sensible when alone or with peers?

### **Recommended Safety Skills for Pupils**

Children should learn to:

- Use safe crossings and remain alert.
- Be cautious of blind spots, parked cars, and bends.
- Watch for cyclists and distracted drivers.
- Never follow anyone except a known, designated adult.
- Know basic navigation and emergency contact protocols.

## **Siblings & Collection Policy**

- All pupils up to Year 5 must be collected by someone aged 16 or older.
- Year 5 & 6 pupils are not permitted to collect younger siblings.
- Parents remain legally responsible if an older sibling is left in charge of a younger child.
- NSPCC and RoSPA recommend no one under 16 should care for a younger child.

## **Time & Light Guidelines**

- Pupils must not walk home in the dark.
- Parents are advised to reconsider permission in winter due to early darkness.

## **Expectations at Home**

- Ideally, a responsible adult should be at home when the child leaves or arrives.
- If home alone briefly, the child must know how to reach emergency support.

## **Permission Process**

- Written parental permission via email is mandatory.
- Parents must update the school immediately if permission changes.

## **Behaviour Expectations**

- Children must demonstrate safe and appropriate behaviour.
- If behaviour is unacceptable, walking privileges may be withdrawn.

## **Monitoring & Review**

- Reviewed every three years (Next review: July 2028).
- The Trust may update it earlier to meet safeguarding requirements.

# **CHANCERY EDUCATION TRUST**

## **PUPILS WALKING HOME ALONE POLICY**

The safety of our pupils is our priority and this policy sets out our procedures for those pupils with permission to walk to and from the Academy School.

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 Academy School safely and on time and attend regularly, but this in itself does not disallow independent travel. However, as an Academy School we are responsible for the welfare of our pupils and therefore must 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.

### **Children in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) or Years 1 & 2**

It is our agreed Academy School policy that no pupil in Reception or Years 1 & 2 should walk alone to or from the Academy School site or be left on their own on the Academy School site, either before or after the school day.

### **Pupils in Years 3 & 4**

It is our agreed Academy School policy that no pupil in Years 3 & 4 should walk alone to or from the Academy School site or be left on their own on the Academy School site, either before or after the school day.

### **Pupils in Years 5 & 6**

There is no set age when children are ready to walk to the Academy School or home on their own. It very much depends upon their maturity and confidence. Therefore, with regards to pupils in Years 5 & 6 we believe that you as parents should decide whether your child is ready for this responsibility, however pupils in Year 5 will only be allowed to walk home alone during the Summer Term (this may be amended at the discretion of the Headteacher/Principal).

### **Pupils in the Additionally Resourced Provision (Pickhurst & Oaklands)**

It is our agreed Academy School policy that no pupil in the Additionally Resourced Provision should walk alone to or from the Academy School site or be left on their own on the Academy School site, either before or after the school day.

In deciding whether your child is ready to walk to the Academy School alone, 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 street 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 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.

**We recommend you teach your child to:**

- Always pay attention to traffic when crossing the street; never become distracted
- Always cross the road where there are traffic lights, pedestrian crossings, zebra crossings, pelican crossings etc; do not cross in the middle of the road. Alternatively cross in a place where you can see clearly in all directions. Avoid crossing the road near 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 of walking to and from the Academy School alone you might want to consider the following:

1. Do you trust them to walk straight to or from the Academy School?
2. Do you trust them to behave safely and 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 your child's ability to walk to and from the Academy School alone, then we highly advise you to reconsider your decision.

If you decide that your child is ready for the responsibility of walking to and from the Academy School alone, then you must inform the office via email (see Academy School website for email address). Your child will not be permitted to walk home alone unless permission has been received.

**IF AT ANY TIME YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR CHILD'S PERMISSION STATUS, PLEASE EMAIL THE ACADEMY SCHOOL OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.**

Pupils in Year 5 & 6 are not permitted to collect pupils in other year groups.

### **Siblings Collection**

All pupils, up to and including Year 5 must be collected by someone over the age of 16. If staff are unsure of a young person's age, they will ask for proof before sending the child home.

There is no minimum age set in law when a young person is allowed to remain in charge of another child, however it is an offence to leave a child alone if it places them at risk. This can include in the care of an older sibling if the level of supervision is 'likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to health' (Children and Young Persons Act, 1933). Therefore, parents/carers must understand and be prepared to take responsibility for anything that will go wrong in their absence. They are also responsible for the care and safety of their eldest child, even while that child is acting in a caring role for younger siblings. It is also worth noting that The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the NSPCC recommend that no one under the age of 16 be left to care for a younger child.

Your child will also be responsible for their behaviour whilst on the Academy School premises including before and after Academy School hours. Should their behaviour not be acceptable, you will be asked to accompany and/or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted to walk alone safely and with acceptable behaviour.

The Academy School will not allow pupils to walk home alone in the dark. Please bear in mind that during the winter months, it may be dark by the time it comes to them leaving. We strongly advise not allowing your child to walk home alone during these periods.

Where pupils walk to, or walk home from the Academy 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.

## Monitoring and Implementation Policy

The policy is reviewed every three years, although the Trust may vary or amend it periodically to ensure that we fulfil our obligation around the Pupils Walking Home Alone Policy. All proposed changes to this policy would be made following the approval from the Committee.

|                                  | Name                        | Date          |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Policy written by                | Trust/Headteacher/Principal | July 2025     |
| Review by Committee              | CET Board                   | July 2025     |
| Approved by Committee            | CET Board                   | December 2025 |
| Adopted by Governing Board       | LGB                         | February 2026 |
| To be reviewed every three years |                             |               |
| Review by                        | July 2028                   |               |

Chancery Education Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.