



**BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL POLICY
(WALKING ALONE / MOBILE PHONES)**

FLIXTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Introduction

It is the parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure their child arrives safely and promptly to school each morning. Whilst walking to school, it is understood that parents/carers ensure that their child takes the safest route possible and is accompanied at all times by a responsible adult.

During Years 5 and 6, parents/carers may decide that their child is capable of independently walking to school. If this is the case, parents/carers make the informed decision that they are responsible for their child's safety on their journey to school, even if they are not physically present.

It is advised that parents/carers ensure their child is fully conversant with road safety and crosses any main roads at appropriate crossing points.

The following guidelines set out Flixton Primary School's advice, policy and procedures should parents/carers wish to allow their child to walk to or from school without an adult.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to assess the route on which the child will walk home from school to ensure they are confident their child has the ability to walk home safely, even if their child is accompanied to school by a parent/carer. Crossing busy main roads without crossing patrol assistance or proper crossing points (zebra/pelican crossing) and walking through secluded areas is discouraged.

It is also advised to the parents/carers that their child knows their own home phone number and other emergency contacts and possibly has a **mobile phone*** should they need to call home in an emergency. Some mobile phones have a GPS tracking system and having an emergency ICE (In Case of Emergency) number in contacts is recommended.

Safeguarding is paramount and parents/carers need to ensure their child is fully aware of stranger danger and how to report any concerns to an appropriate adult.

The school may counsel against a child walking home alone, if he/she may be at greater risk of harm doing so, for example too long a walk, route too busy, coming home to an empty house.

In Year 5 and Year 6 teachers do not 'hand children over' at the end of the school day. Instead they wait until children have dispersed. All children are encouraged to return to a teacher if their pick up arrangements are not as expected.

There should always be an appropriate adult/parent/carer at home to meet the child on their arrival. Parents/carers need to be aware that if a child is walking home alone, the school will not know if they have arrived home as planned. Hence, the

parent/carer needs to ensure adequate safety protocols are in place should an emergency/accident arise.

If the school feels the welfare and safety of the child walking to/from school is compromised, the school may ask parents/carers to find alternative arrangements.

It is recommended that ONLY children in Years 5 and 6 be allowed to walk to/from school unaccompanied by an adult and only then if the parent/carer is confident that it is safe for them to do so. Individual cases in other year groups may be discussed with parents/carers, where we feel it is appropriate to do so.

As the responsible body receiving children from home at the start of the day, the school will ensure that morning registrations are taken promptly in each class. If a child is found to be absent and no prior notice of such absence has been received from the child's parent/carer, the school recognises a clear responsibility to contact the parent/carer to ascertain the reason for absence or highlight that a child has not attended morning registration.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that school is informed should their child be unable to attend school for any reason in accordance with the school Attendance Policy. If a child who walks to school unattended is not in school, contact will be sought with the parent/carer within 30 minutes of the morning registration taking place and an absence without reason being noted by the classroom staff.

If upon contact it is confirmed that a child has left home with the intention of walking to school but has not arrived and therefore an issue of a missing child is noted, the school will contact the police immediately. The school's designated safeguarding lead Miss Harris will then be immediately informed and safeguarding procedures for child protection/children missing procedures will be followed.

If a child has left the school to walk home but does not arrive home when expected and direct contact with the child has not been established, the parent/carer should contact the school in the first instance to seek clarification from the responsible adult who dismissed their child as to the time they left school. However, the school may not be contactable after home time and, therefore, it will be parents/carers responsibility to notify the police.

*** Mobile Phones:**

We do not allow children to have mobile phones in school for two important reasons:

1. Phones can be valuable and we do not want them to be lost or broken;
2. Many phones allow access to the internet and we cannot allow pupils to have unsupervised access to the internet for safeguarding reasons.

There is no reason that pupils of primary school age would need a mobile phone during school hours. However, we are aware that parents might wish for their child to bring a phone to school because of before or after school arrangements. In these circumstances, we would appreciate it if you would let the school office or your child's class teacher know beforehand (a quick email to the office would suffice) and remind your child to hand their phone (switched off) in to the school office for safe-keeping when they come into school. Pupils can then collect their phone from the school office at the end of the day.