

# COGNITA

## Walking/Cycling to and from School Alone

### September 2020



LONG CLOSE SCHOOL

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy sets out to support all the aims of the school by ensuring that all pupils are properly cared for in a caring environment and in a position to access the education that the school aims to provide. This policy applies to all pupils registered at the school.
- 1.2 Parents are legally obliged to ensure their children get to school and attends regularly. 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.

## **2 Our Approach**

- 2.1 Our agreed school policy is that no pupil from Early years to Year 7 should walk or cycle to or from school on their 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 14 years old or above. 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, preferably by letter or email. 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.

## **3 Parental Responsibility Guidelines**

- 3.1 Parents should decide whether their Year 7 child is ready for the responsibility of travelling alone. 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.
- 3.2 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 same opportunity to develop road awareness and are therefore more vulnerable when they start to walk to school independently. 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 route finding on their own, in preparation for walking with friends or alone when they are older.
- 3.3 Teach your child to:
  - Pay attention to traffic at all times when crossing the street; never become distracted. (Do not wear headphones).
  - Always cross at the intersection where there are traffic lights, a zebra crossing or Crossing Patrol Officer (Lollipop Person); 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).

- 3.4 When deciding whether your child is ready for this responsibility you might want to consider the following:
- Do you trust them to walk straight home?
  - Do you trust them to behave sensibly when with a friend?
  - Are they road safety aware?
  - Would they know what to do if a stranger approaches them?
  - Would they have the confidence to refuse to do what a stranger asked?
  - Would they know the best action to take if a stranger tried to make them do something they didn't want to do?
  - Would they know what to do if they needed help?
  - Would they know who best to approach to get help?

#### **4 Parental Actions**

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility then you must inform the school by completing the slip below. Your child will be prevented from walking home unless this permission has been given in writing.
- 4.3 Your child will also be responsible for their behaviour whilst on the school premises, either before or after school. Once signed out, they are to walk home immediately and must not play on the school site.
- 4.4 Should their behaviour not be acceptable, you will be asked them to accompany or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted again.
- 4.5 IF AT ANY TIME YOU NEED TO CHANGE ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW IN WRITING IMMEDIATELY.

**Annex 1**

Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to the School Office before your child will be allowed to walk to and from school.

Name of Child: .....

Form Group: .....

I wish to inform you that my child will be walking/cycling 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 above.

I accept the procedure regarding my child's behaviour whilst walking/cycling to and from school.

Signed: .....

Print Name: .....

Date: .....