

# Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School



An Academy School Part of  
The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust



## Walking Home from School Policy 2026

*Our Mission Statement:*

*We are a catholic school. We strive to be a sign of Christ's presence in the world.  
We follow Jesus.*

Date Approved by Governing Body:	5 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
Date To be Reviewed by:	Summer Term 2029
Signed By:	Richard Sharman, Chair of Governors

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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 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 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. 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 school premises either before or after school. In addition, we will only hand over pupils to named adults or older siblings provided they are 16 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. School has a named adult system in place whereby parents maintain a list of adults with permission to collect their child. This alleviates the need to contact school should a change need to be made.

We do not allow older brothers or sisters in school to collect younger siblings. In Key Stage Two, we permit pupils in Year 6 to walk home on their own provided parents have given written permission. 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. We strongly recommend that you do not consider giving your child a mobile phone in the belief that this will help them to keep safe as this could increase their vulnerability.

When you decide that your Year 6 child is ready to walk home, we ask that you 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).

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 (scream, shout, kick, fight)?
- Would they know what to do if they needed help?
- 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 school in writing by emailing the school office.

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 them to accompany or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted again.