St. Joseph's

Catholic Primary School

# Travelling To and From School Alone Policy

**Last Reviewed Date – March 2023**

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## Statement of intent

At St Joseph's, we aim to promote pupils' independence as much as possible. We recognise that, as pupils become older, parents may wish for their children to be able to travel to and from school independently for example in the half-term before they begin high school. With this in mind, the school has created this policy to clarify the procedures in place to ensure that all pupils can travel safely.

**The aims of this policy are to:**

- Clarify the responsibilities of parents and the school, specifically the **headteacher**.
- Outline the procedures for requesting permission to travel to and from school alone.
- Establish effective procedures for travelling to and from school alone to maximise safety of pupils.

## 1. Related school policies

1.1. This policy will be implemented in accordance with the following school policies:

- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The headteacher is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Communicating this policy to all members of staff and parents.
- Ensuring effective procedures are in place for pupils travelling to and from school alone.
- Deciding the years in which pupils are able to be considered for travelling to and from school alone.
- Liaising with parents to establish whether individual pupils will be granted permission to travel to and from school alone.
- Deciding whether pupils will be given permission to travel to and from school alone.
- Informing parents where their child has not turned up to school to coordinate an effective response.

2.2. Parents are responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy.
- Carefully considering whether their child should be permitted to travel to and from school alone.
- Ensuring their child is aware of road safety and how to keep themselves safe when travelling to and from school.
- Ensuring their child is aware of, and adheres to, the established route for travelling to and from school.
- Submitting an annual request form to the headteacher where they wish for their child to travel to and from school alone.
- Informing the headteacher when their child has not returned home from school.

2.3. Pupils are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are competent to travel to and from school alone.
- Ensuring they are aware of the principles of road safety.
- Adhering to the route for travelling to and from school alone, as outlined by their parents.
- Behaving appropriately when travelling to and from school alone.
- Making sure they arrive to school on time when travelling alone.

## 3. Granting permission

3.1. If parents wish for their child to travel to and from school alone, they are required to submit a request form (found in the appendix of this policy and available from the school office) to the headteacher on an annual basis.

3.2. Parents should ensure they have read this policy before requesting permission for their child to travel to and from school alone.

3.3. Forms should be submitted at the beginning of each academic year. If a parent wishes to request permission at a different time, the form should be submitted to the headteacher and this will be valid until the end of the academic year.

3.4. Permission will only be granted where consent has been received from a parent in writing and where all emergency contacts have been outlined.

3.5. The headteacher will only grant permission to pupils in Year 5 & 6 – the school's policy is that no pupils in earlier years are able to travel to and from school alone.

3.6 Please note children will not be allowed to walk home after an afterschool club from **autumn second-half term to spring second-half term** (November to March) inclusive (due to darker nights).

**3.7 Children may not walk alone to Breakfast club or from the After School club: there will be no exceptions to this rule.**

3.8 Each request will be assessed on a case-by-case basis – requesting permission for a pupil does not automatically result in the pupil being permitted to travel alone to and from school.

3.9 Permission will only be granted where the parents and headteacher are satisfied that the pupil:

- Can be trusted to walk straight home or to school.
- Will adhere to the route that their parent has identified.
- Can be trusted to behave sensibly.
- Is aware of road safety.
- Is aware of the protocols to follow if a stranger approaches them or asks them to do something they do not want to.
- Would know how and where to ask for help.
- In order to consider a request, the headteacher may request a meeting with the parents of the pupil to discuss the matter. If this is necessary, parents will be informed in writing as soon as possible.

3.10 Where pupils live further than a 15-minute walk away from the school, or the headteacher has concerns about a pupil's ability to travel safely, the headteacher may not grant permission.

4 Parents will be informed in writing of the headteacher's decision within one week of receiving the initial request. Where a request has been denied, the headteacher will outline the reasons for this in the outcome letter.

5 If a parent wishes to appeal the headteacher's decision, they are required to follow the procedures outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

6 Once permission has been granted, parents are required to inform the headteacher of the planned route their child must stick to.

7 If the headteacher feels the safety and welfare of a pupil is at risk at any point after granting permission, they withhold the right to withdraw their permission for the pupil to travel alone to and from school.

8 Parents may withdraw their consent at any point during the academic year. To do so, parents are required to inform the headteacher in writing.

9 A register is maintained of all pupils granted permission to travel alone to and from school. This is updated whenever permission is granted and is held in the school office.

10 Only pupils named on the register are permitted to travel to and from school alone. The register will be circulated to all members of staff as necessary.

## 4 Travelling procedures

3.6 Any staff member monitoring the school entrance/ exit will retain a copy of the register. Before allowing any pupil to leave the school premises alone, the register will be checked.

3.7 If, at any time, a staff member is concerned about the welfare of a pupil by allowing them to travel home alone, the staff member may not permit them to leave.

3.8 Pupils are expected to stick to the route outlined to them by their parents. Once a pupil leaves the school premises, or is travelling to the school, the responsibility for their welfare lies with the parents.

3.9 Parents should ensure that they, or another responsible adult, are available at their home once their child arrives home from school.

3.10 The school ensures that a register is taken at the beginning of the school day. If a pupil that travels alone has not arrived at school, and the school has not already been informed that the pupil will be absent, the parents will be contacted.

3.11 The DSL will be notified of the pupil's absence and the procedures outlined in the school's Attendance Policy will be followed.

3.12 If a pupil is late to registration more than three times, the headteacher will hold a discussion with the pupil's parents to determine whether travelling alone to school is appropriate. If necessary, the headteacher may withdraw their permission to allow the pupil to travel to and from school alone.

3.6 Where a pupil does not arrive home from school, parents should contact the school to speak with the staff member who dismissed the pupil from the premises to establish the time they left school.

3.7 Where pupils will be travelling home from school after an after-school club, the above procedures will be followed.

3.8 Mobile phones. Some parents may wish their child to have a mobile phone with them if they are walking home alone. In these circumstances, parents must indicate this is the case on the request form. Phones need to be handed in to the class teacher at the start of the school day and collected at the end of the school day. School does not take responsibility for phones that go missing or get damaged as a result.

## 4 **Monitoring and review**

5 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2023.

6 Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff and parents.

# Travelling alone request form

Please note, only pupils in Year 5 & Year 6 will be considered for travelling alone to and from school. On completion of this form, please return it to the school office – the headteacher will contact you with their decision in writing within one week of receiving this form.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Date:** | |
| **Parent name:** | |
| **Pupil name:** | |
| **Pupil year:** | |
| **Pupil class name:** | |
| **Pupil class teacher name:** | |

I, _____ (name of parent), request permission for my child, _____(name of child), to travel to and from school alone.

**Emergency contacts**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name of contact 1:** | |
| **Relationship to pupil:** | |
| **Contact number 1:** | |
| **Alternative contact number 1:** | |
| **Name of contact 2:** | |
| **Relationship to pupil:** | |
| **Contact number 2:** | |
| **Alternative contact number 2:** | |

I can confirm that:

- I have read and fully understand the procedures outlined in the school's Travelling To and From School Alone Policy.

- I understand the headteacher considers requests on a case-by-case basis and requesting permission does not automatically enable my child to travel to and from school alone.
- My child is competent to travel to and from school alone.
    - Can be trusted to walk straight home or to school.
    - Will adhere to the route that their parent has identified.
    - Can be trusted to behave sensibly.
    - Is aware of road safety.
    - Is aware of the protocols to follow if a stranger approaches them or asks them to do something they do not want to.
    - Would know how and where to ask for help.
- I have a responsibility to outline an identified route for my child and ensure my child sticks to this route.
- I have a responsibility to ensure my child arrives to school on time when travelling alone.
- I understand the headteacher has the right to withdraw their permission for my child to travel to and from school alone at any time.
- I understand that staff members will only allow my child to travel to and from school alone if they are identified on the register.
- I understand if any staff member has a concern about the safety and welfare of my child, they may refuse to allow them to leave the school premises and travel alone.
- I am required to inform the headteacher if I wish to withdraw my permission for my child to travel to and from school alone.
- The responsibility for my child lies with me when they are on the way to the school premises.
- My child **will/ will not*** be bringing a mobile phone which they will hand to the class teacher at the start of the school day and collect at the end of the school day.

  *please delete s appropriate

**Signed:** _____ **Date:** _____