The Cliff Federation

Pupil Collection Policy

March 2026

Policy for Collecting Children from School at the End of the Day and Safeguarding Pupils Walking to and From School Alone

Rationale

There are no laws around age or distance of walking to school. A family's 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. We are also mindful of NSPCC advice on road safety, which states:

"Children under eight can't judge the speed and distance of moving vehicles. They still need help when crossing roads." 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. In setting our protocol for collecting children we have taken advice and guidance which states that it is for each school to decide and enforce its own pupil collection policy.

All Pupils

Permission and arrangements for children leaving the school at the end of the day will be confirmed either verbally or in writing by the parent/carer where they are not being collected by the parent at the end of the school day.

All children must be collected from After School Clubs by an adult unless written permission is given for the child to walk home.

No adult other than those named will be allowed to leave the school with a child. In the event that someone else should arrive without prior knowledge, the school will telephone the parent/carer immediately and await their advice.

If the parent/carer or alternative nominated adult is going to be late to collect their child, they should let the school know as soon as possible. We will keep children in school until their arrival.

Pupils in Foundation Stage or KS1 (Years 1 & 2)

All children in EYFS and Key Stage 1 should be picked up from the school site by a known, designated adult or siblings provided they are 16 years old or above. This can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with discussion with the Headteacher and parents/Carers. School should agree consent and agreement given via completing the permissions slip from the Parents/Carers.

Pupils in KS2

There is no set age when children are ready to walk to school or home on their own. It very much depends on their maturity and confidence. As part of school's work around safety in school, children are provided with regular guidance on what to do if an adult is not there at the end of a school day, the main feature of which is to return to school. We would encourage parents to regularly reinforce this message at home.

Key stage 2 children may be considered to be released to walk to "the gate", to a known adult nearby the school. However, this MUST be discussed with school and consent and agreement given via completing the permissions slip

Children in Years 4 - 6 may be released from school at the end of the school day to make their own way home. This is for parents and families to decide but in order for children to do this, written permission must be given. Parents should be aware that if they give permission for their children to walk to the boundary, school staff will release children at 3.15pm and it will be parental responsibility from this time to ensure that children are safeguarded. If you wish your child to walk home, you must complete the school permissions slip.

Where a child has a special educational need which may affect their capacity to keep themselves safe, parents will be invited in to discuss the matter further with the SENDCo / Headteacher before a decision is reached.

Walking Home Alone

We advise parents to think about whether your child is ready to walk to and from school and assess any risks associated with the route and your child's confidence. 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. 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 self-assurance 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.

● 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 and cross while keeping an eye on traffic.
● Wearing hi-visibility clothes.

● Remember that drivers may not see a child, even if the child 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.) If that person tries to convince the child to go with him or tries to physically get close, then scream, "Help! This is not my dad!" or "Help! This is not my mum!" and run away. If they grab them, tell your child to kick, punch, and hit as hard as they can.

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 or fight)?

· Would they know what to do if they needed help?

· Would they know who best to approach to get help?

If your child is planning on riding a bike to school, whilst we encourage healthy choices for travelling to school, please consider the following:

- Do you trust them to cycle home?

● All the questions above regarding walking to school.

● Do they know the highway code for the roads?

● Are they know enough about road safety, as a cyclist, to be alone cycling home from school?

● Do you believe they will be safe cycling home from school?

● Do they have a cycle helmet they will wear whilst cycling every day?

● Is the bike in a good condition, e.g. brakes, lights (in winter) and the right size for your child?

Children not picked up on time

The following procedures will be followed for any child who is not picked up

· The child will remain with the class teacher for up to 5 minutes.

· After 5 minutes the child should be taken to the School Office. The Senior Leaders, School Business Manager or Safeguarding Lead Professionals in the School will contact the parents by telephone.

· If other contacts are given on the child's confidential data collection sheet, they will be contacted. · If no contact can be made with the emergency contact or parents the school will continue to try and make contact for a reasonable amount of time until 3.45pm, at the latest.

· After 3.45pm, if we have not been able to make contact then Social Services will be contacted for advice.

· Two members of school staff (which will normally include at least one Senior Member of Staff) will remain at school until Social Services make their decision as to whether it is a case of abandonment. · The school will ensure that these protocols have been followed by staff and a note of all calls will be completed.

· If a child is frequently not collected on time, then the parents will be asked to attend a meeting in school to discuss this situation and how childcare can be improved.

· NO CHILD WILL EVER BE LEFT ON THE SCHOOL PREMISES UNATTENDED.

The following procedure will be followed if any child is picked up by an allegedly impaired person.

· If the person picking up a child is, in the judgment of staff, impaired (under the influence of drugs or alcohol) and unable to adequately care for the child, the staff will not release the child to that person

· The child will be taken to the School Office and a Senior Member of Staff; the School Business Manager or Safeguarding Lead Professional will offer to call a relative or friend to pick up the person and child.

· If no contact can be made then Social Services will be contacted for advice.