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Spaxton CofE Primary School

'Together we flourish and achieve'

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Spaxton
C of E Primary School

Walking To and From School Independently Policy

DATE: September 2026

POSTHOLDER RESPONSIBLE: Mrs Rachel Rood

AUDIENCE: Staff, Parents, Pupils

REVIEW DATE: September 2027

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Introduction

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 judgment 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 children and therefore have to consider what we believe is good practice in ensuring their safety. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.

Early Years/Key Stage 1/Lower Key Stage 2

- Agreed school policy is that no pupil in Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 or Lower Key Stage 2 should walk to or from school on their own.
- Children must be collected by named adults aged 16 years 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 ask parents to keep us informed of any changes in arrangements, preferably by email.
- If no one arrives to collect a child, they will be kept in school and parents contacted. We will not allow older brothers or sisters in school to collect younger siblings if they are not aged 16 or over.

Upper Key Stage 2 (Year 5 and 6)

There is no set age when children are ready to walk to school or home on their own - it depends upon their maturity and confidence. Therefore, we believe parents need to decide whether a child is ready for this responsibility. 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.

Teach your child to:

- Pay attention to traffic at all times when crossing the road; never become distracted.
- Always 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.
- 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.

When deciding whether your child is ready for this responsibility you might want to consider the following:

1. Do you trust them to walk straight home?
2. Do you trust them to behave sensibly when walking with a friend or friends?
3. Are they road safety aware?
4. Would they know what to do if a stranger approaches them?
5. Would they know what to do if they needed help and would they know who 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 and by completing the parental consent on Arbor.

Your child will not be allowed to walk home unless this permission has been given. Your child will be responsible for their own behaviour whilst on the journey to and from school. Should their behaviour not be acceptable you may be asked to accompany or collect them.

IF AT ANY TIME YOU NEED TO CHANGE ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE, PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW IN WRITING IMMEDIATLEY.