



Our Lady Catholic Primary School

Child Drop-Off, Collection Policy and Independent Travel Policy



The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust
A Catholic Academy

November 2023

Rationale

The need for the school to devise a child drop off/collection policy is to:

- Ensure each child is safe when on the school grounds.
- Clearly outline the drop off/collection procedures to the school community.
- Devise an easy to follow signing in and out system within the school.

Aims

- To safeguard all children in the school.
- To ensure all staff have up to date information
- To ensure no child is unaccounted for at any time.
- To ensure each teacher is up to date with child drop off/collection procedures and arrangements.
- That the school community is aware of the appropriate drop off/collection procedures.
- To provide a well organised and safe signing in and out procedure.
- To encourage children to take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of those around them.
- To ensure effective partnership between school and parents/carers.

Roles and Responsibilities

Child collections and drop offs place particular responsibility on those involved and we must all accept the role we play and our responsibility to ensure:

- Positive school community communication.
- Co-operation between all parties to safeguard all children and staff.

Guidance

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.”

Is it Legal? A parent’s guide to the law’ by the Family and Parenting Institute (June 2011)

Although there is no set legal age that children can walk to and from school independently or be left on their own, it is an offence to leave a child alone if it places them at risk and therefore schools have a continual obligation to alert relevant authorities if they believe this is the case. This could, theoretically, include the school journey.

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- Children attending Breakfast club can access the school site from 7:45am via the pedestrian gate using the intercom system. The pedestrian gate will be opened to all other parents and children at 8:35am. The gates are then closed for school at 9.00am. The gates are re-opened again at 3:05pm to enable parents to enter the school. They are closed again at 3.30pm. **Parents are responsible for the behaviour and safety of their child/children up to 8:45am and after 3:15pm. Parents should ensure acceptable behaviour is maintained at all times.**
- Reception children should wait with their parents by the gate to their classrooms until a member of staff welcomes them into the classroom. **Adults should not enter the classroom but may assist their child with changing and entering the classroom under the protected area.**
- Key Stage One children should enter their classrooms via the class external door. A member of staff will be there to greet them. Parents should not enter the classroom.
- Year 3 and 4 children should enter the classroom via the external hall door and walk across the hall to their classroom where a member of staff will greet them.
- Year 5 and 6 children should enter their classrooms via the KS2 cloakroom. A member of staff will greet them at their classroom door.
- If parents require access to the school office in the mornings, they can access the school via the main entrance.
- School responsibility commences from 8:45am when the children enter their classrooms. Children should not be left alone on the playground before this time.
- School ends at 3.15pm.
- Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils will remain in their classroom until they are released by staff to their parent or carer. The teacher will not release the child until visual contact is made with the parent/carers.
- Key Stage 2 teachers will escort their class to the grass area at the front of the school each day and will be on duty in this area for 10 minutes. Year 6 children and Year 5 children in the summer term who have permission to walk home will leave the playground immediately. Parents and carers of those children being collected will assemble on the grass area and by the bike store.
- The school should be informed by the parent of any changes to arrangements either by phone, in person or via a note to the teacher before 2:45pm on the day of the change. If there are any concerns in releasing pupils, the school will get in touch with the child's parents to confirm the arrangements.
- Year 6 children and in the summer term Year 5 children, are not permitted to walk home alone unless the school has been notified. Children should have clear instructions from parents/carers as to their collection or, if in Year 6, the arrangements for walking home by themselves. Parents must give permission by completing the **Independent Travel Form** at the end of this policy. (**Appendix 1**). However, the school may have concerns about a child walking home e.g. the distance the child would have to walk. Everybody is expected to exit the school grounds promptly.
- If a child is not collected they should go immediately to the school office and parents/carers will be contacted, please refer to the section, **'Child Not Collected.'**
- Any children attending extra-curricular activities must safely assemble in the

designated classroom for that activity. Parents/carers will collect their child from the main entrance at the end of the club session and are not permitted to wait inside school for safeguarding reasons. The person responsible for the club will release each child to the designated carer. Parents will be asked to sign to indicate they have collected their child.

Parental Responsibility

- At the point of collection the responsibility for the care of the child is passed to the parent/designated adult. Dangerous play/inappropriate behaviour in the school grounds is not allowed and we respectfully request that parents support the school with this policy.
- Parents/carers should ensure they have provided the school with the most up to date emergency contact numbers.
- **Emergency closing:** Parents/carers should note that the Headteacher might not be in a position to allow children into the school building/playground because of an unforeseen emergency. Parents should check text, the website/radio/correspondence for information of closures.
- Parents/carers are asked to complete a copy of the **Collection Arrangements Form (Appendix 2)**. In the event there is a change to these arrangements, the school must be notified in writing.
- Unless cleared by the school first, staff will only hand over pupils to named adults or older siblings provided the adults or siblings are 14 years old or above for KS1 and KS2 pupils and 16 years old or above for Reception pupils. If parents wish for their child/children to be handed over by a named adult or older sibling, they are to complete the form requesting this (**Appendix 3**).

Child Not Collected from School Policy

In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult at the end of a session, the school will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their child/children will be properly cared for.

If a child is not collected at the end of the session, we use the following procedures:

- If a child has not been collected within ten minutes of the session finishing, the child is taken to the school office. The school office is consulted for any information about changes to the normal collection routines.
- If no information is available, parents/carers are contacted on the numbers they have given to the school.
- If this is unsuccessful, the adults who are authorised by the parents to collect their child from school and whose telephone numbers are recorded on the school database are contacted.
- The child will stay at school in the care of a member of staff until the child is safely collected.
- If a parent/carers is late in collecting their child, they should go to the main office to

collect them.

- At no time will a member of staff take a child home or leave a child alone in the building.
- If no one can be contacted to collect the child after 4.10pm or staff are no longer available to care for the child, the school will contact the Duty Children's Safeguarding Team.
- If no one can be contacted to collect the child after a club in school which has finished later than 4.10pm, then the Duty Children's Safeguarding Team will be contacted at this point.
- A DSL will always be onsite until this time to ensure the relevant procedures can be actioned.
- The DSL should keep detailed, timed records of the action taken and calls made and under no circumstances should staff go to look for the parent/carer or take the child home with them.
- A full written report of the incident will be recorded.

Parents should take account of the following Government Guidance:

"In the event that a child is not collected from the setting by an authorised adult and no contact has been established with the parents/carers within forty-five minutes to one hour of the usual collection time, the school will follow their child protection procedures, i.e. Police will be informed and a safeguarding referral to Children's Services will be made."

School Safeguarding Practice Guidance: Drop Off Collection of Children Successfully – August 2012

Walking Home Alone Policy

This policy is devised for the general health and safety of children.

Parents who wish their child to walk home unescorted by an adult at the end of the school day must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Parents must have registered with the school that they are prepared for their children to walk directly home from school at the end of the day.
- Children should be in Year 6 or summer term in Year 5. Children younger than this are not permitted to walk home unaccompanied.
- It is the parents' responsibility to check the route that their children may walk home in order that they may make an assessment of the appropriateness of the journey. Crossing of fast roads, walking through secluded areas is to be discouraged. It is recommended that a single route is agreed.
- Parents must be certain that children have an awareness and understanding of the green cross code and stranger danger. It is parents' responsibility to ensure they are sufficiently happy that their child is capable of undertaking the proposed journey safely.
- During winter months and/or inclement weather, children must be dressed appropriately.

- Preferably children should walk in a group and not alone.
- Children should know their home phone number (plus one other emergency contact) and preferably have their own mobile phone. This should be kept in the school office during the day. **The school cannot take any responsibility for the mobile phone.**
- There should be someone at home to meet the child on their arrival.
- Any child must be capable of arriving home within 30 minutes of the end of the school day (3.45pm). Journeys over 30 minutes are not considered appropriate for children to walk at this age.
- **If any child does not arrive home within a reasonable timeframe, parents must immediately notify the school in order that appropriate action can be taken.**
- If any child does not arrive home within a reasonable timeframe and direct contact with the child has not been established by either school or parents, the school will instigate the missing person's procedure in conjunction with the relevant authorities.
- If the missing person procedure is initiated there must be a point of contact remaining at both the home and school location until further advised by the relevant authorities.
- If your child does arrive home after the missing person procedure has been instigated, immediate notification to the relevant emergency services and/or authority and school must be made. This is to enable the missing person procedure to be stood down.
- Once the missing person procedure is initiated responsibility will pass to the relevant authority to further any enquiries. Both parents and the school will be guided by them in order that a successful outcome is achieved.

Preparing your child to make an independent journey

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 finding their way 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.
- Do not use a mobile phone whilst walking along and do not listen to music whilst crossing roads as it is difficult to be attentive to traffic noises
- 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 a pedestrian, even if they can see the driver.
- Remember that it is hard to judge the speed of a car so caution should be taken.
- Never, ever, follow someone who is either a stranger or someone who 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 should consider the following:

1. Do you trust them to walk straight home?
2. Do you trust them to behave sensibly when with a friend?
3. Are they road safety aware?
4. Would they know what to do if a stranger approaches them?
5. Would they have the confidence to refuse to do what a stranger asked?
6. Would they know the best action to take if a stranger tried to make them do something they didn't want to do?
7. Would they know what to do if they needed help?
8. Would they know who best to approach to get help?

If you are not confident about how your child would react then you should 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 by email or by completing the **Independent Travel Form (Appendix A)**. A version of this is available on the website. Your child will be prevented from walking home unless this permission has been given in writing.

No child is permitted to play ball games, ride scooters or bikes or play on playground equipment in school grounds before or after school.

Should a child's behaviour not be acceptable, either on or off school premises, you will be asked to accompany or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted again. This is in line with the school's Behaviour Principles.



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Old Hale Way, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1XT

www.ourladys.herts.sch.uk

admin@ourladys.herts.sch.uk

Tel: 01462 22555



Head Teacher: Sarah Snowball NPQH

Appendix 1

Independent Travel Form

Please complete and return to the School Office.

Note that this form is only applicable to children in Year 6 or those in the summer term of Year 5.

I confirm that my child _____

in Class _____ at Our Lady Catholic Primary School may walk home from school alone.

I confirm that I have read and understood the school's **Walking Home Alone** guidelines in the Child Drop Off, Collection Policy and Independent Travel Policy.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____



The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales 07944160, registered address Vaughan House, 46 Francis Street, London SW1P 1QN.



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Collection Arrangements Form –Appendix 2

Please complete and return to the School Office.

I, (insert your name) give permission for my child
..... in Class to be collected after school by the
following people.

Name of adult(s)	Relationship to Child	When, which days to pick up if known

Please note that we are unable to hand a Reception Class child over to an older sibling. Pick up by siblings of secondary age will only be allowed by prior arrangement. Any further unexpected pick up arrangements will be allowed as they occur, as long as we have your written permission or you have phoned the school to advise the main office before the end of the day-see appendix 3 below.

Signed:

Date:



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Appendix 3

Request for permission for another person under the age of 16 to pick up a child after school

Please complete and return to the School Office.

Dear Parent

From time to time you may find it necessary for someone else to pick up your child from school. In order to ensure the safety of all children in our care, we are unable to hand your child over to any sibling under the age of 16, unless you have discussed this with the Headteacher and have the attached form signed. (Appendix C).

Thank you.

I, (insert your name) request an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss the collection of for my child in Class to be collected after school by a sibling under the age of 16.

Signed: Date:



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