



Alder Grove
Church of England Primary School



Pupil Independent Travel Safeguarding Policy

Version Control

Version	Date	Description
1	Summer Term 2026	New Policy

Date: Summer Term 2026
Review: Summer Term 2027

Christian Vision at Alder Grove



Our vision for Alder Grove School is about the importance of roots. Just as a tree cannot grow to be healthy and strong without good roots, so we believe that children need the right conditions to grow and flourish.

Our school community at Alder Grove is rooted in the following values:

Kindness

Service

Truthfulness

Forgiveness

Courage

Perseverance

We see these values in the life of Jesus, and Christians choose to live their lives rooted in him. At Alder Grove, we want to help all our children, whatever their faith background, to grow deep roots which will enable them and the whole community to be strong and healthy learners, and to care for each other.

As we live out these values, we help each other to flourish and grow. Our vision is not just about individuals but about a whole community, so we emphasise the importance of serving each other, and treating each other as we would like to be treated, and we also believe in the importance of caring for the world around us.

When the roots are healthy, we will see fruit growing:

'They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season' (Psalm 1.3).

The right roots will allow our children to fulfil their potential in all areas of life.

Aims:

The aim of this policy is to create a robust approach to safeguard the pupils in our care both before and after school as far as reasonable and practical.

The safety of the children is paramount. This policy is in place to ensure that the responsibilities and expectations of all parties are clear when it comes to children entering and leaving the school premises independently.

Description:

This policy sets out the school's approach to safeguarding pupils who travel to and from school independently, whether before the start of the school day or after dismissal. Its purpose is to establish a robust and consistent framework that promotes pupil safety and wellbeing, while recognising the growing independence of pupils as they develop.

The safety of all children remains paramount at all times. While the school's direct supervision is limited outside the school day, we are committed to taking all reasonable and practical steps to ensure that pupils are adequately prepared, risks are carefully considered, and responsibilities are clearly understood.

This policy outlines the expectations and roles of the school, parents and carers, and pupils themselves in relation to independent travel. By setting clear boundaries and procedures for pupils entering and leaving the school premises without adult supervision, the policy supports a shared responsibility for safeguarding and helps to ensure that independent travel is managed in a safe, informed, and appropriate manner.

Walking to and from School Alone

There are no laws regarding a child's age or the distance they may walk 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 to school."

Parents are legally obliged to ensure their children attend school regularly. This responsibility does not, in itself, prohibit independent travel.

As a school, we have a duty of care for the safety and wellbeing of our pupils. This policy is intended to support parents/carers in making informed decisions regarding their child's safety when travelling to and from school. The school also has a duty to alert relevant authorities should we believe that a child's welfare may be at risk.

Schools are only responsible for pupils' safety on their journey to and from school when transport has been specifically arranged by the school.

Pupils in Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4

Foundation Stage: Nursery and Reception

Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2

Lower Key Stage 2: Years 3 and 4

Our agreed school policy is that pupils in Foundation Stage, Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 must not walk to or from school independently. These pupils must also not be left unsupervised on the school premises before or after school.

Pupils in these year groups will only be released to:

- A named adult, or
- An older sibling, where prior agreement has been given.

Pupils will not be released to any other adult unless the school has been informed in advance of this arrangement. Parents/carers are asked to keep the school informed of any changes. If an unknown adult arrives to collect a child, they will be required to wait until their identity has been verified.

If no one arrives to collect a child in these year groups, the child will remain in school while attempts are made to contact parents/carers.

If a child has not been collected within 30 minutes and the school has been unable to make contact with a parent/carer, the school has a duty of care to make a referral to Children's Social Services.

Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6

For pupils in Years 5 and 6, we recognise that some children may be ready to walk to and from school independently. Where children live within walking distance and have a safe route, the decision as to whether a child is ready for this responsibility rests with parents/carers.

If a pupil attends an extra-curricular activity, we request that they are collected by a responsible adult and do not walk home alone. This is because some extra-curricular activities are led by external coaches or members of staff who may not be aware of individual independent travel arrangements. **Pupils will therefore not be permitted to walk home independently following an extra-curricular activity.**

Pupils attending Breakfast Club and After School Club must be brought to school and collected by an adult.

When deciding whether your child is ready to walk independently, parents/carers should carefully assess:

- The safety of the route to school
- The risks involved
- Their child's maturity, confidence and ability to make safe choices

A useful way to support independence is to walk the route with your child on several occasions to ensure they can do so safely and sensibly.

Mobile Phones

If required, pupils may bring a mobile phone to school only on days they walk independently. Mobile phones must:

- Be switched off on arrival
- Be handed into the school office immediately
- Be collected from the office at the end of the school day

Phones must not be kept in bags, coats or lockers or any place that is not the school office. Any pupil found in possession of a mobile phone that has not been handed in will have their independent travel agreement removed.

It is the pupil's responsibility to bring the phone to the office upon arrival and to collect it from the office after dismissal. We recommend inexpensive 'brick' phones rather than smartphones.

The school will not contact parents to confirm that a child has arrived safely. If this reassurance is required, the school believes that the child may not yet be ready to walk independently.

Expectations for Independent Walkers

Children who walk to school independently must wait in the designated Key Stage 2 area upon arrival and behave in a way consistent with the school's expectations. If a pupil is unable to do this without a supervising adult, their independent travel agreement will be withdrawn.

If the school has any concerns regarding a child walking independently, the school reserves the right to refuse or withdraw permission at any time. Decisions will be made by the school leadership team in consultation with the class teacher. Parents/carers will be informed of the decision.

Parents/carers may reapply at any time. Any refusal or removal of an independent travel agreement will be discussed during a meeting between parents/carers and a member of the school leadership team.

Parents/carers must ensure that their child understands that, when wearing school uniform, they are representing the school within the community and can be identified as an Alder Grove pupil. We expect children to represent the school in the best possible way when in public. The school reserves the right to withdraw an independent travel agreement if a pupil's behaviour does not meet these expectations.

Things to Consider

When deciding whether your child is ready to walk to and/or from school independently, you may wish to consider the following:

1. Can your child be trusted to walk directly to school or straight home using the agreed safe route?
2. Are there roads to cross, and how safe and busy are they?
3. Are there suitable pavements or crossings along the route?
4. Can your child behave sensibly when walking independently or with friends?
5. Is your child road-safety aware?
6. Does your child know what to do if approached by a stranger?
7. Would your child know how to seek help if needed?
8. Does your child understand how to keep themselves safe and avoid risky behaviour?

Parents/carers should not feel pressured to allow independent travel if they do not believe their child is ready or if they do not want to. Parents/carers know their children best and are therefore best placed to make this judgement. Every family and child is different.

If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility, please complete the attached permission form.

Completing the Permission Form

- Circle *Yes* or *No* for each statement
(Please note: circling 'No' for any item may indicate that your child is not yet ready.)
- Read, sign and date the section relating to walking to school
- Read, sign and date the section relating to walking home from school
- Return the completed form to the school office before any independent travel begins
- Notify the school in writing if arrangements change at any time

To support safeguarding and emergency procedures, parents/carers are also requested to provide a copy of the intended walking route for school to keep on record.

You will receive written confirmation once the school has received and approved the permission form, including the intended walking route. Only after this confirmation may your child begin walking independently.



Independent Travel Agreement Application

Child's Name: _____

Child's Class: _____

The route to school is <i>within safe walking distance</i>	Yes	No	
I consider the route to school to be a <i>safe route</i>	Yes	No	
I have provided school with a map of my child's route to and from school	Yes	No	
My child does not need to cross any busy/main roads	Yes	No	
My child does need to cross a busy/main road(s) and I have taught them to cross safely at a crossing labelled on the map of the route	Yes	No	
My child is aware of the potential dangers regarding roads/ traffic and how to avoid dangers and stay safe	Yes	No	
My child understands and follows the green cross code	Yes	No	
My child knows what to do if they need help	Yes	No	
My child knows what to do in an emergency	Yes	No	
My child will have a mobile phone which will be handed into school on arrival	Yes	No	
My child will have my number, the school number and an emergency contact on their phone or in their school bag	Yes	No	
I acknowledge that there will be other risks	Yes	No	
When walking home, my child will go straight home or an agreed place	Yes	No	
When walking home my child will not wait in public buildings or public spaces	Yes	No	
There will be someone at home to supervise or has access to a key	Yes	No	Key

Please tick relevant boxes

- ☐ I wish for my child to walk to school on their own
☐ I wish for my child to walk home on their own
☐ I have read and understood this policy on my child walking to and from school.
☐ I fully understand that it is my responsibility to ensure my child gets to and from school safely including getting to school on time.
☐ I fully understand that if they are at an extra-curricular activity/Breakfast Club/After School Club they should always be dropped off/collected by an adult.
☐ I have provided a map of the route to/from school
☐ This is in agreement of all parents/carers who have parental responsibility for this child

Name of parent/carer _____ Date _____

Relationship to pupil _____ Signed _____

Office use only:

SLT member's name: _____ Signed _____

☐ Application approved
 ☐ Application rejected

Date approved/rejected: _____

Rejection reason: _____

As a school we have a duty of care for the safety and well-being of our children we also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.



THE GREEN CROSS CODE

Simple steps to keep you safe on your journey

Use the Green Cross Code every time you cross the road.

1

STOP

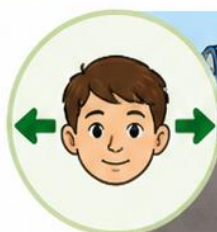
Stop at the edge of the pavement.



2

LOOK

Look all around for traffic – look left, right and left again.



3

LISTEN

Listen for traffic – can you hear any vehicles coming?



4

THINK

Think – is it safe to cross? Check that all traffic has stopped.



5

GO

When it is safe, walk straight across the road. Keep looking and listening as you cross.



Stay safe. Be aware. Look out for others.

Always follow these steps – every time, every journey.

Your safety is important!

