# Spires Federation

# Policy

## Walking Home Policy

Date : September 2026

Review Date: September 2028

This policy is devised for the general health and safety of children and should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for the Spires Federation.

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."

Parents/carers 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 Federation 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 have a duty of care to the pupils when they are on site and need reassurance that they will be safe once they leave our care at the end of the day. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child’s welfare is at risk. Therefore the following guidance has been developed to ensure that every child’s welfare is at the forefront of our minds.

Parents of children who wish them to walk home unescorted by an adult, at the end of the school day (Please see the individual finish time for each school), must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Parents must have completed and signed a written permission form (See Appendix A) and this must have been received by the school, to provide permission for their children to walk directly home from school at the end of the day including after school clubs (excluding WAC) . Children are NOT permitted to walk home alone with only verbal permission.

- Children MUST be in year 5 or 6. Children in other year groups are NOT permitted to walk home alone.

- The school office will keep a list of those children who have permission and all adults will be clear that they are permitted to walk home alone.

- It is the parent’s 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. A single route must be agreed.

- Parents must be certain that children have an awareness and understanding of the green cross code and stranger danger. It is parent’s 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.

- Your child will also be responsible for their behaviour whilst on the school premises either before or after school. Should their behaviour not be acceptable you will be asked to accompany them or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted again.

• We will not allow children to walk home alone in the dark. Please bear in mind that if they are attending an after school club it may be dark when the club finishes.

• 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. Journeys over 30 minutes are not considered appropriate for children to walk alone at this stage.

• If any child does not arrive home within the agreed timeframe, parents/carers must immediately notify the school in order that appropriate action can be taken.

• If any child does not arrive home within the agreed timeframe and direct contact with the child has not been established by either school or parents/carers, 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 authorities/emergency services 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/carers and school will be guided by them in order that a successful outcome is achieved.

Requests for permission for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils to walk home independently will be considered on an individual basis, accounting for additional needs, the proposed route, distance, road and environmental risks, time of year and any known safeguarding concerns. Written parental consent does not remove the school's responsibility to act on safeguarding concerns.

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

Appendix A

Permission slip

***Return to the School Office***

SpiresFederation

Digby Church of England School
Dunston St Peter's Church of England School
Nocton Community Primary School

**CONFIRMATION THAT MY CHILD MAY WALK HOME ALONE**

I confirm that my child _____
who is in Year _____ at Nocton/Dunston/Digby (delete as appropriate) may walk home from school alone.

I confirm that I have read and understood the Spires Federation **Walking Home Alone Policy.**

**Name of parent/carer**: _____

**Signature:** _____

**Date**:_____