

Rivendell Flying High Academy



Collection and Walking Home Policy

Adopted- September 2026

Review-September 2028

Policy Statement

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Rivendell Flying High. This policy outlines the school's expectations regarding children travelling to and from school, collection arrangements at the end of the school day, and the circumstances in which children may walk home independently.

The school recognises that developing independence is an important part of a child's growth and development. However, the school also has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children whilst they are in our care.

There is no legal minimum age at which a child may travel to and from school independently. 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 and carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly and travel safely to and from school. Whilst decisions about a child's readiness for independence rest with parents and carers, the school must also consider its safeguarding responsibilities and take reasonable steps to ensure children leave school safely.

In developing this policy, the school has considered safeguarding guidance from the NSPCC and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). Taking this guidance into account, the school has established clear arrangements for pupil collection and independent travel that reflect the age, maturity and welfare needs of our children.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Collection Arrangements

The school expects all parents and carers to ensure safe and appropriate arrangements are in place for the collection of their child.

Children will only be released in accordance with arrangements communicated to the school by parents/carers.

If staff are unsure about collection arrangements, the child will remain in school until satisfactory clarification has been obtained.

The welfare of the child will always be the primary consideration.

Nursery to Years 4

In line with the school's safeguarding responsibilities and having considered guidance from the NSPCC and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), children in Nursery to Year 4 must be collected by a parent/carer or another responsible person aged **16 years or over**.

The school will not permit children in these years being collected by a sibling or other young person under the age of 16. This expectation reflects recognised safeguarding guidance and the school's responsibility to ensure that children are released into appropriate arrangements at the end of the school day.

To ensure the safety and welfare of our children, children in these year groups will not be permitted to:

- Walk home independently.
- Leave the school site unaccompanied.
- Be collected by a sibling or other young person under the age of 16.

Parents/carers must ensure that the person collecting their child is aware of these arrangements and arrives promptly at the end of the school day.

Any requests for alternative arrangements must be discussed with the Headteacher in advance and will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the individual circumstances, safeguarding considerations and the welfare of the child.

Years 5 and 6

The school recognises that some children in Years 5 and 6 may be ready to walk home independently.

Parents/carers wishing their child to walk home independently must complete and sign the school's Walking Home Permission Form.

When deciding whether a child is ready for this responsibility, parents/carers should consider:

- Their child's maturity, confidence and level of responsibility.
- Their child's awareness of road safety.
- The safety and suitability of the route home.
- Their child's understanding of personal safety.
- Their child's ability to seek help when required.
- Their child's ability to deal appropriately with unexpected situations.

Parents/carers should work with their child to develop independence gradually through discussing road safety, practising routes and reinforcing personal safety messages.

Written parental consent must be received before a pupil is permitted to walk home independently.

The school reserves the right to refuse, review or withdraw permission where safeguarding, welfare or behavioural concerns arise

Dismissal Procedures

At the end of the school day, children will be dismissed by a member of staff from the classroom door.

Year 5 and Year 6 children who have approved permission to walk home independently will be dismissed by staff and permitted to leave the school site without being collected. A list of children with these permissions will be displayed at the classroom exit door.

Once a pupil has been dismissed by school staff in accordance with the arrangements communicated by the parent/carer, responsibility for that pupil passes to the parent/carer.

Changes to Arrangements

Parents/carers must notify the school office of any temporary or permanent changes to collection or walking home arrangements before the end of the school day.

The school will not release a child under alternative arrangements unless authorisation has been received from a parent/carer and verified by the school where necessary.

After-School Clubs and Activities

The arrangements outlined in this policy also apply to children attending after-school clubs and activities.

Parents/carers should give additional consideration to weather conditions, reduced daylight and later finishing times when deciding whether independent travel remains appropriate following an extra-curricular activity.

The school reserves the right to require alternative collection arrangements where independent travel is considered to present a safeguarding concern.

Failure to Collect

If a child who is required to be collected is not collected at the end of the school day, the child will remain under the supervision of school staff whilst attempts are made to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts.

Persistent late collection may result in a meeting with school leaders to discuss suitable arrangements for collection.

Where appropriate and in line with safeguarding procedures, the school may contact relevant agencies if collection arrangements cannot be resolved.

Safeguarding

The welfare of the child will always be the school's primary consideration.

Where there are concerns regarding a child's safety, welfare, maturity or ability to travel home independently, the school will discuss these concerns with parents/carers and seek to agree appropriate arrangements.

The school may review independent walking-home arrangements where:

- There are concerns regarding a pupil's safety or welfare.
- A child does not demonstrate the maturity required for independent travel.
- A child fails to follow agreed arrangements.
- There are concerns regarding behaviour at the end of the school day or during the journey home.

Children who have permission to walk home independently are expected to behave responsibly both on the school site and during their journey home.

Where the school believes that a child's independent travel arrangements may place them at risk, concerns will be discussed with parents/carers and appropriate advice sought. If agreement cannot be reached and safeguarding concerns remain, the school may seek advice from relevant safeguarding partners, including Children's Services (MASH), Nottinghamshire Police, the local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) or other appropriate agencies.

Any concerns will be recorded and managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.



Walking Home Independently Letter

Dear Parents and Carers,

At our school, the safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. As children grow older, they naturally develop increasing independence and many families begin to consider whether their child is ready to travel to and from school with less adult supervision.

Our Collection and Walking Home Policy has been developed to ensure that clear and consistent arrangements are in place for the collection of children and for those children who may be ready to walk home independently. It aims to balance the development of independence with our responsibility to safeguard all children whilst they are in our care.

If you wish your child to walk home independently, please read the Collection and Walking Home Policy carefully before completing the permission declaration below. The policy sets out the school's expectations, the responsibilities of parents and carers, and the arrangements that apply to all children at the end of the school day.

We ask all parents and carers to work in partnership with the school to ensure that arrangements for the end of the school day are safe, appropriate and clearly understood by everyone involved.

Should you have any questions about the policy or wish to discuss your child's individual circumstances, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely,

J Worthington

Mrs Julie Worthington

Headteacher



Walking Home Independently Parent Consent

Child's Name: _____

Class: _____

I give permission for my child to walk home independently from school.

I confirm that:

- ☐ I have read and understood the school's Collection and Walking Home Policy.
- ☐ I have considered my child's maturity, confidence and ability to travel safely without adult supervision.
- ☐ I have assessed the safety and suitability of my child's route home.
- ☐ I have discussed road safety, personal safety and what to do in an emergency with my child.
- ☐ I understand that responsibility for my child passes to me once they have been dismissed by school staff in accordance with the agreed arrangements.
- ☐ I will notify the school immediately if these arrangements change.
- ☐ I understand that where safeguarding concerns arise, the school may review these arrangements with me and seek advice from relevant safeguarding agencies where necessary.

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Relationship to Child: _____

Date: _____