

Walk Home Alone Guidance

Introduction

We know that many children on base enjoy a lot of freedom and independence, and this is something they enjoy. We also recognise that parents have very busy lives and a lot of demands on their time. For this reason, we often get requests for children to walk home alone.

Whilst we will always try to accommodate families' requests, ultimately, the school has a safeguarding duty to all pupils, and we reserve the right to refuse any collection / drop off arrangement which we deem to be particularly unsafe. However, this guidance document has been produced to help parents to evaluate if this is appropriate for their child.

Scope

The following applies to all 'walk home alone' (WHA) arrangements – whether temporary (e.g. just for one evening), or continual. It is particularly important if parents are granting a 'standing' WHA permission.

Ages

- We do not normally recommend any pupil under the age of Y3 is granted walk home alone permission.

Considerations

When determining whether to grant your child WHA (whether for a one-off, or as a standing permission), please consider the following. Are you confident that:

- 1) Your child has good road safety sense, including if they are with friends and excited etc. – will they remember how to stay safe?
- 2) Your child knows how to deal with any issues that may arise on their way home – e.g. injury etc.?
- 3) Your child has the self-awareness to manage any wider risks (e.g. strangers)?
- 4) Your child knows what to do to stay safe if circumstances change – (e.g. if they got home and found that you had been unexpectedly delayed and weren't in)?
- 5) Your child will obey any rules / parameters you set (e.g. not wandering off around camp without consent etc.)?
- 6) You have appropriate alternative arrangements in place for your child if you are unavailable / not at home (e.g. neighbours / friends / network)?
- 7) You trust your child to behave sensibly around other children?
- 8) You are fully confident that your child knows how to keep themselves safe, make good decisions, and will not get worried / upset if they are WHA and something goes wrong or is unexpected.

Additional Needs

- Pupils with additional needs may be at particular risk if they are walking home alone, or otherwise unsupervised. This could be due to medical issues, managing their behaviour, impulse control etc.
- Parents are advised to consider WHA very carefully for pupils with such challenges.

Conclusion

If you are comfortable with the above, please notify the office if you wish to request WHA permission for your child.