



SW9 PARTNERSHIP
COLLECTION AND WALKING HOME ALONE POLICY
(Incorporating End of Day, After School Clubs
and Late Collection Procedures)

1. POLICY STATEMENT & PURPOSE

At St. Andrew's CE Primary School and Christ Church Primary SW9, the safety, well-being, and safeguarding of our pupils are our highest priorities. Prompt collection of children is essential to ensure safety and maintain required staff-to-child ratios.

This policy sets out the official procedures for:

- End of day collection from the school playground and after-school activities/clubs.
- Criteria and parental permission for pupils walking home alone.
- Informing the school of collection arrangements or emergency changes.
- Late collection procedures, fee structures, and safeguarding timelines.
- Protocols for contested collections between separated parents.

2. GENERAL COLLECTION & DISMISSAL OVERVIEW

- **End of School Day:** The school day finishes at **3:30pm**, and pupils must be collected promptly from the school playground.
- **After-School Activities & Clubs:** After-school activities finish at **4:30pm**, and After School Club finishes at **6:00pm**.
- **Playground Supervision:** Staff members supervise the playground until all pupils have been collected, maintaining required staff-to-pupil ratios at all times.

Dismissal Option	Eligible Year Groups	Key Requirements and Authorisation
Collected by Authorised Person	All Pupils (Nursery – Y6)	Must be a family member, named emergency contact, or registered person with collection responsibility. Must be aged 16 or over (unless a sibling aged 14–15 is approved in writing by the Headteacher).
Walking Home Alone	Years 4, 5, and 6 ONLY	Mandatory written confirmation/consent signed by a parent/carer held on file.
EYFS, KS1 & Year 3	EYFS, Y1, Y2, Y3	NOT permitted to walk home alone under any circumstances. Must be collected by an authorised person.

3. DETAILED COLLECTION & RELEASE PROTOCOLS

3.1 Collecting a Child on Someone's Behalf

- Pupils will only be released to adults who are registered with the school as having collection responsibility, or who are named emergency contacts/family members on file.
- The school will never release a pupil into the care of an adult who is not a family member or named emergency contact without explicit parental consent.

3.2 Written Permission & Emergency Changes

- **Standard Changes:** If parents wish for their child to be collected by another party who does not have parental responsibility, they must put it in writing to the school or visit the school office in person to update their file.
- **Emergency Verbal Consent:** In an emergency, verbal consent may be given via telephone to the school office for an agreed person to collect the child.
- **Physical Description:** Verbal consent must include a full physical description of the person collecting, unless they are already known to school staff.
- **Identity Verification:** Staff members who are unsure of an adult's identity will ask to see photo identification.
- **Uncertain Identity Escalation:** If uncertainty remains after checking ID, staff will:
 1. Contact the pupil's parents for further advice.
 2. Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
 3. Follow the standard procedure for uncollected pupils if parents are uncontactable.

4. PUPILS TRAVELLING HOME ALONE (YEARS 4, 5, AND 6)

Older pupils in **Year 4, Year 5, and Year 6** are permitted to travel home independently, provided written confirmation from the pupil's parent/carer has been received by the school.

Permission & Discretion:

- **Written Consent:** No pupil in Y4–Y6 will be permitted to walk home alone without a completed, signed consent form on file.
- **School Discretion:** The school reserves the right to discuss concerns with parents and withhold or suspend permission if staff feel a child lacks the maturity, road safety awareness, or vulnerability assessment to walk home safely alone, or during severe weather/dark hours.

5. GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS/CARERS: CHOOSING OPTIONS & ROAD SAFETY

5.1 Legal Boundary of Responsibility

- **School Responsibility:** The school is responsible for the child's safety while on school premises up until the moment of dismissal to an authorised adult or release under an approved walking home agreement.
- **Parental Responsibility:** Once a child is dismissed to an authorised collector or steps off school premises under an approved independent travel permission form, full legal responsibility for their safety, conduct, and journey rests entirely with the parent/carer.

5.2 Considerations Before Allowing Your Child to Walk Home Alone

Parents/carers are advised to assess the following factors before granting written permission:

- **Route Safety:** Does the route cross main roads or dangerous junctions? Are there pedestrian crossings or school crossing patrols available?
- **Road Safety Competence:** Has your child demonstrated clear road safety awareness (e.g., stopping, looking, avoiding mobile phone or headphone distractions)?
- **Maturity & Personal Safety:** How does your child respond in unexpected situations or if approached by strangers?
- **Distance & Lighting:** Consider the length of the walk and daylight conditions during winter months, especially after 4:30pm or 6:00pm clubs.

Recommended Action Steps for Parents:

1. Walk the route with your child multiple times, highlighting potential hazards.
2. Identify "safe houses" or public spaces (e.g., shops, libraries) along the route where they can seek help in an emergency.
3. Reiterate "Stranger Danger" guidelines and establish a rule that they walk directly home without detours.
4. Ensure your child knows key emergency telephone numbers.

6. POLICY ON LATE COLLECTION & FEE STRUCTURE

Parents must notify the school at the first possible opportunity if they believe they will be late to collect their child, **preferably at least 30 minutes before the end of the school day.**

All late collections are logged in the school's '**Late Collection Record**', including the child's name and the exact time of collection.

6.1 Late Collection Fee Structure

To cover the operational costs of additional staff supervision, a late collection fee will be enforced:

- The fine is levied per family (not per child).
- Fines are allocated to the parent of the child/children on the days they are collected late.
- Late fees are added to ParentPay and must be paid directly.
- Parents are given 30 days to pay the fine. Unsettled payments will result in further action by the school.

Late Duration	Charge	Details
0 – 5 Minutes	No charge	Discretionary grace period for occasional delays.
6 – 15 Minutes	£10	Standard initial late charge.
16+ Minutes	£10 + £1 per minute	Accrues continuously until the child is signed out.

6.2 Late Collection from After-School Activities & Clubs

- Late collection fees apply equally to pupils uncollected after 4:30pm (activities) or 6:00pm (After School Club).
- Any accrued late fees **must be paid before the child attends their next scheduled session.**
- **Withdrawal of Place:** Parents who collect their children late from After School Club on **3 occasions** will have their child's place withdrawn.

7. SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES FOR UNCOLLECTED CHILDREN

Whenever a parent/carer fails to collect a child from school, after-school activities, or After School Club at the expected time, the school maintains a strict safeguarding procedure:

- **5 Minutes Late:** Staff will attempt to phone the primary parents/carers.
- **15 Minutes Late:** Staff will call all authorised emergency contacts listed on the child's file.
- **30 Minutes Late:** If no primary or emergency contact can be reached and no estimated arrival time has been confirmed, staff are required by statutory safeguarding guidance to contact the **Lambeth Children's Social Care Duty Team** and/or the **non-emergency police line**.
- All child welfare concerns arising from uncollected children will be managed in full accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

8. CONTESTED COLLECTION & SEPARATED PARENTS

1. **Parental Responsibility:** Under UK family law, both biological parents hold legal parental responsibility unless a legally binding Court Order explicitly restricts collection access. The school will grant access to both parents unless official documentation is provided.
2. **Court Orders:** If a parent is legally restricted from collecting or contacting a child, the school **must hold a copy of the official Court Order** (e.g., Child Arrangements Order, Prohibited Steps Order, or Injunction) on file.
3. **Disputes at Dismissal:**
 - Staff will not mediate parental disputes.
 - If a collection dispute or conflict occurs on school premises, staff will move the child to a safe indoor area away from the dispute to safeguard their emotional and physical well-being.
 - If parents cannot reach an amicable agreement, staff will contact the Police to ensure the safe resolution of the incident.

WALKING HOME ALONE CONSENT FORM

If you allow your child to walk home alone, please sign below and leave your contact number. Children will ONLY be able to walk home alone once this has been received.

Child's Name:

Class:

Please read carefully before signing:

DECLARATION

- I confirm my child is in Year 4, Year 5, or Year 6.
- I give permission for my child to travel home independently from school at the end of the school day (3:30pm) and/or following after-school activities (4:30pm/6:00pm).
- I have assessed the travel route and am satisfied that my child can travel home safely and independently.
- I have discussed road safety, personal safety, and emergency contacts with my child.
- I acknowledge that once my child leaves the school premises, full legal responsibility for their safety rests with me as the parent/carer.
- I agree to notify the school office in writing if collection arrangements change.

Parent's Signature:

Contact Number: