



Title: Arrival and Departure of Children Policy

Adopted: September 2021

Reviewed:

For Review: September 2023

Section One: Contextual Information

Your child's safety is of great importance to the staff at Upton Meadows, therefore procedures for bringing and collecting children are followed to ensure your child's safety.

There are no laws around the 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 judgements for parents to decide when children can play out on their own, walk to the shops or school.'

Parents 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 school we are responsible for the welfare of our pupils and therefore have to consider what we believe to be good practice in ensuring the safety of our pupils. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.**

Section Two: Access into school

Parents/carers/children are asked to use the front pedestrian gate into school from The Square. There is no entry via the car park or back gate other than for pre-agreed arrangements where the school believe exceptional circumstances apply – evidence may be required in these situations. **The car park is for authorised vehicles only.** The main front pedestrian gate is open all day with access to the school via intercom. The internal green gates are locked at 9.00am and re-opened at 3.10pm. Parents/carers who are collecting their child before the end of the normal day or bringing their child into school after the start of the day will need to report to the main office using the intercom at the main gates. Further information on this can be found in this policy under **Section Five** 'Late Arrivals and Early Collections'.

Children are not to be left unaccompanied on the playground or in school before the start of the school day. It is the parent's responsibility to supervise their child until they enter their classrooms at the start of the school day.

Timings:

Registration start time: 8.45am (children expected to be in school by 8.50am)

Finish time: 3.15pm

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All children should be in their classrooms by 8.50am. A register is taken at the start of the morning session and again at the start of the afternoon session. **It is vitally important that your child is on time.**

It is equally important that you inform the school if you are sending another adult to collect your child who does not normally do so (other than yourself or other responsible adults to whom you have granted permission to). The staff at Upton Meadows will not hand your child to any other adult without your permission. Please refer to **Section Four** on how to inform the school that some else is collecting your child.

Our agreed school policy is that **no pupil in Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4** should walk to or from school on their own or be left on the premises either before or after school. As well as being a safeguarding concern, it is also important for your child's emotional wellbeing that they have that safe and secure handover between adults in the morning – older siblings under the age of 16 should not be given the responsibility of supervising younger children coming into school in the mornings. Where younger children are repeatedly noted as being left to walk into school by themselves, it will be raised with Designated Safeguarding Leads and parents will be spoken to.

At the end of the day we will only hand over pupils to named adults or older siblings provided they are 16 years old or above. Pupils will not be handed over to other adults unless the school has been informed by the parent. If no one turns up to collect a child they will be kept in school and the parents will be contacted. We will not allow older brothers and/or sisters in school to collect younger siblings.

Years 5 and 6 only

There is no set age when children are ready to walk to school or home on their own. It very much depends upon their maturity, confidence and also the distance from school taking into consideration main roads etc. We believe that you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for this responsibility. We would still highly recommend that pupils in Year 5 and 6 are still brought to and collected from school.

In deciding whether your child is ready to walk to school you should assess any risks associated with the route and your child's confidence. Work with your child to build up their independence while walking to school through route finding, road safety skills and general awareness.

If, after careful consideration of the above information, you still wish for your child to walk home alone at the end of the day, then you will need put it in writing to the school office that you give permission for this to happen and that you understand that once school have released the child from the classroom, they are your responsibility. Further information can be found under **Section Eight** of this policy. Children will NOT be permitted to walk home from after school clubs between October and February when the nights are darker.

Bikes and Scooters

Children travelling to school on bikes or scooters are expected to wear appropriate protective items, such as a bike helmet. They should dismount their bikes/scooters **on the The Square** before entering the front gate of the school – this also applies to any younger siblings accompanying you on the school run.



Section Three: Routines

Start of the day

Classroom doors will open promptly at 8.45am and children should be taken directly to their classroom where school staff will be waiting. Children are encouraged to say good morning to the teacher at the door before putting their belongings onto their pegs. Parents are not allowed to enter the classrooms or cloakroom areas. Teachers will complete the school register, which will close at 9am. The staff in the classroom will record the numbers of children and adults present on the evacuation card, which is kept on the class board.

Children who arrive late need to be signed in at the school office and a reason for the lateness will be recorded on the system. Children will then be escorted to their classes by a member of school staff. The staff in the classroom will then amend the numbers present on the evacuation card on the class board.

End of the Day

Parents/carers collecting children must wait outside the classroom doors and children will be dismissed directly into their care by school staff. Once a child has been handed over to the person collecting, they become the responsibility of that person, even whilst still on school grounds. Staff in Year 5 & 6 have a list of children who have signed parental consent to walk home unaccompanied. Please see **Section 8** for further information.

Section Four: Is some else collecting your child from school?

Please give as much notice as possible if someone other than yourself is collecting your child from school. For changes to the collection of your child that are made over the telephone we may ask you for some security questions. We may also give you a password for the collecting adult.

Section Five: Late Arrivals and Early Collections

Any child who arrives late for school must report to the office and be signed in by a parent for their mark. It is vitally important that all children arrive on time and we would not expect children to be regularly late for school. Children arriving at school after the registers have closed will be marked as an unauthorised absence and repeated occurrences of this may lead to formal attendance monitoring in-line with our attendance policy.

All parents/carers must provide notice in advance and with a relevant reason if you are collecting your child early from school. Please note you will be asked to provide proof of appointments. Please report to the office where the admin staff will arrange for your child to be brought to you and sign your child out of school. Children are not allowed to leave school alone during school hours even if they normally walk home alone at the end of a school day.



Section Six: Before/After School Activities

In-school Breakfast Club

The school offers a breakfast club for invited children which is open from 8.15am. Children arriving for breakfast club should arrive at the main school gate promptly at 8.15am where school staff will meet them. Children arriving late for breakfast club should ring the breakfast club bell (not the school intercom) so that staff know you are waiting. Children in Y3-Y6 are sent from breakfast club to their classrooms, inside the school building, at 8.45am. Children from Reception through to Year 2 are escorted to their classrooms by a staff member.

Before School Clubs

Children arriving early for a before school club should come to the main gate where they will be met and registered by the staff running the club. Children arriving after the club has started will need to ring the breakfast club bell and staff will ensure they are handed over to club staff and registered.

After School Clubs

A letter will be provided to any child whom is eligible to apply for a place in the club and clear instructions will be given about the collection of children along with any other relevant information at the time.

Y5/6 children will NOT be permitted to walk home from after school clubs between October and February when the nights are darker, even if they ordinarily walk home at 3.15pm.

Section Seven: Children who are not collected from school on time

We understand that very occasionally, circumstances out of your control may mean you are late collecting your child – we ask that where at all possible you let the school office know if this is the case. We do not expect this to be a regular occurrence. Children who are not collected **by 3.25pm** are escorted to the Main Office. An adult will stay with your child until you arrive. Late collections are monitored closely and any patterns of lateness will be investigated by the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

If a pupil has not been collected by 4.15pm, school have an obligation to report this to the appropriate authorities. Where children are repeatedly not collected on time, parents may be charged for the after school care that school staff are being required to provide.

Section Eight: Permission to walk home alone - Years 5 & 6 only

Written permission must be completed and signed by the parent/carers before a child is allowed to walk home alone at the end of school day or from an after school activity. The school reserves the right to challenge any request made that they feel could put a child at risk. The school also reserves the right to withdraw the permission to walk home and to insist that a child is collected by a parent/responsible adult.