



Wednesday, 9th September, 2026

RE: End-of-Day Collection Arrangements

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we start the new academic year, I am writing to confirm our arrangements for children leaving school at the end of the day.

The safety and wellbeing of our children is our highest priority. As part of our ongoing safeguarding responsibilities, we regularly review our procedures to make sure that they are clear, consistent and appropriate for the age of our children. Our arrangements are informed by Department for Education (DfE) safeguarding guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education, and NSPCC guidance on children travelling to and from school safely. We also recognise the importance of gradually developing children's independence as they get older.

Following the changes introduced last academic year, I would like to clarify the arrangements that will apply from the start of this academic year.

Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 4 and Year 4

Children in these year groups must be collected at the end of the school day by a parent, carer or another responsible adult authorised by the parent or carer. This may include an older sibling in secondary school where the parent or carer has given permission for them to collect the child.

Year 5

Year 5 children will not be permitted to walk home independently during the Autumn or Spring terms. We recognise that some Year 5 children may already appear very responsible and that some families may feel their child is ready to walk home alone. However, as a school, we have decided that independent walking for Year 5 children will begin from the Summer Term.

From the Summer Term, Year 5 children will be able to walk home independently where their parent or carer has provided written permission to the school. This is a whole-year-group safeguarding decision and is not a judgement about an individual child's maturity, responsibility or a parent's ability to assess their child.

St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

When you love to learn, you learn to love

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Headteacher: Mrs K Garrett BA (Hons) NPQH

Walking home independently requires children to be able to make safe decisions, judge and respond to traffic, follow their route safely and know how to respond if something unexpected happens. NSPCC guidance similarly encourages parents to consider a child's maturity, responsibility, route, distance and ability to deal with unexpected situations when deciding whether they are ready to go out independently.

We also take into consideration the time of year. During the Autumn and Spring terms, journeys home take place during the darker, wetter and often busier months. We therefore feel that the Summer Term provides a more appropriate time for Year 5 children to begin walking home independently.

Our aim is not to prevent children from developing independence, but to introduce that independence gradually and at an appropriate stage. Year 5 children will therefore have the opportunity to continue developing these skills with the support of their families before independent walking begins in the Summer Term.

Year 6

Year 6 children may walk home independently, provided that their parent or carer has given the school written permission.

We recognise that Year 6 is an important year for developing independence and preparing children for the transition to secondary school. For some children, walking home independently is an appropriate part of this preparation. Parents should consider carefully whether their child is ready, including their route home, road safety awareness, ability to respond appropriately to unexpected situations and what they would do if they encountered a problem on the journey.

Collecting Younger Children

Children who are walking home independently must leave the school site independently and may not collect younger children from school.

Younger children must continue to be collected by an authorised adult in accordance with the arrangements above.

Mobile Phones

Only children who have permission to walk home independently may bring a mobile phone to school. Any mobile phone brought to school must be handed in at the

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beginning of the school day. Phones are stored securely in a locked cupboard throughout the school day and returned to children at the end of the school day when they leave school site. This ensures that mobile phones are not used during the school day and that they remain securely stored.

Breakfast and After School Provision

We understand that changes to end-of-day arrangements can create practical challenges for families, particularly where parents and carers are working. Our Simply Out of Schools St John Fisher provision is now fully operational and offers:

Breakfast Club: from 7.30am

After School Club: until 6.00pm

Please contact the school office for further information about the provision and booking arrangements or visit our website.

Working Together to Keep Children Safe

Our approach is intended to balance two important responsibilities: keeping children safe and helping them to become increasingly independent.

I appreciate that some families, particularly those with children in Year 5, may have hoped that their child would be able to walk home independently from the beginning of the academic year. However, this is a consistent safeguarding approach for the whole year group and is intended to provide a clear and gradual pathway towards greater independence.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation as we work together to keep our children safe while helping them to develop the confidence, responsibility and independence they will need as they grow.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K Garrett
Headteacher