

24th September 2020



Dear Parents and Carers,

Walking Home Alone

I would like to ask for your support and help regarding children who have been granted permission to walk home alone. Walking home alone is a privilege granted to our Year 5 and 6 children with your permission. Ordinarily we rarely have any issues as the children and parents see this as a privilege and behave in a respectful manner. However we are all aware that we are currently living through very different circumstances and we need to behave in different ways.

The three classes involved are currently operating as three separate bubbles as determined by our risk assessment. It is essential that these bubbles do not mix during the school day and generally that is the case with the majority of children understanding and respecting this. We know that children do mix from different bubbles outside of the school day and that you will be following appropriate social distancing measures. However we are experiencing a number of issues with some children who are walking home alone waiting for friends from other classes and certainly not practicing social distancing.

I really understand how challenging this is for children to understand the need for bubbles not to mix in school or at the end of the school day. Questions I have answered are 'I can see my friend at home so why can't I see them in school' and that 'My friend at another school has a really big bubble why can't we?' We have tried to explain that we need to follow rules to keep everyone safe and that different schools operate in different ways. We have repeatedly asked children to head home and keep their distance from each other.

Tomorrow each of the three classes will go through the Site plan for parents to help the children understand that the whole school community has a part to play in keeping our school safe. They will pay particular attention to the points below.

« Parents must NOT gather at gates or on school grounds; as soon as your child has entered school, please leave the premises.

« Do not arrive too early. It is imperative that we avoid overcrowding on the school site. Once you have dropped off your child, please leave the school site immediately

« Please do not allow your child to play on school grounds before or after school; it is important to minimise the mixing of children from different classes.



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If children continue to wait for each other on the school site and not follow social distancing measures when walking with friends, then I will need to review arrangements, this may include staggered start and finish times for the classes, removal of the privileged to walk home alone or accepting that the children are unable to act in a responsible manner. This would involve changing the bubble arrangements with approval from the Trust which in turn would mean that if we were to close a bubble due to a positive case of COVID then all three classes would close rather than just the class that was immediately impacted.

We recognise that walking home alone is an important part of developing independence and preparation for transition into secondary school. With this, we entrust children to act in a responsible and respectful manner at all times both on school premises and when leaving it. In these uncertain times this also includes separation, for now, from friends and peers. I hope that with your support in making this clear with your child, we can continue to work together and that there will be no need to change arrangements.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Hayes-Smith".

Helen Hayes-Smith

Head of school