



Queen Eleanor's Church of England Junior School
*An Academy in the Good Shepherd Trust**
Queen Eleanor's Road, Onslow Village, Guildford, GU2 7SD
Tel: 01483 561323
E-mail: office@queen-eleanors.surrey.sch.uk



Head of School: Jo Davies
Executive Head Teacher: Louise Johnson

Dear Parents/Carers,

22nd November 2018

After School Arrangements

It has come to our attention that clarification is needed on how the children are getting home/being collected at the end of the school day.

Currently, the school expects all year 3 and year 4 children to be collected by an adult (parent or carer) from outside their classroom doors in the playground. Should your child need to be collected by an adult other than their regular, arranged adult for any reason (eg. a play date or unavoidable circumstance) we ask that you notify the school office on the day and a note will be sent to the class teacher allowing your child to be released to the named adult only. Should you fail to notify the office, the teachers will not release your child from the classroom until they receive confirmation from you. Long standing pick up arrangements by other adults that are already in place need not be phoned in.

At Queen Eleanor's we consider children in Year 4 and below to be too young to leave the school site unaccompanied and we take every precaution to ensure that they are collected by an adult. We do, however, recognise the importance of children developing a level of independence in preparation for secondary school and later life, so we do permit year 5 & 6 children to leave unaccompanied or with an older sibling with your permission. **Attached to this letter is a permission slip that you will need to return to school even if your child has been leaving school alone to date.**

We also require permission if you allow your child to be collected by an older sibling who is under 18.

If you arrange for your child to meet you a short distance away, for example if you regularly wait in your car round the corner etc., we still require your permission to release them from the school site unaccompanied.

Please complete one form per child.

If you choose to let your Year 5/6 child travel from school independently, it is important that you have assessed the risks associated with the school route and your own child's confidence. It would be good practice to work with your child to help build up their independence, while walking to and from school together, through route finding, road safety skills and general awareness.

It is also advisable to consider the suitability of a sibling caring for a younger child carefully against a range of factors on a case by case basis, by a judgment of the potential risks of this arrangement; the maturity of the child collecting/being collected, the length and nature of the journey home and the behaviour and relationship of the children collecting/being collected. In order to assist you in assessing the risks and possible implications of your child being unaccompanied or with an older sibling, there is a checklist enclosed with this letter with further factors to consider.

Whilst there is no law prohibiting a child from being out on their own or home alone at any age, either with or without an older sibling, it is a matter of judgement for parents / guardians to decide when this is appropriate and safe for their child. There is no minimum age set in law when a young person is allowed to remain in charge of another child, however, it is an offence to leave a child alone if it places them at risk. The most important factor to consider about suitability of a child being unsupervised is any risk to the child.

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The NSPCC advise the following:

- children under 8 should not be outdoors for a considerable length of time unaccompanied
- children under the age of about 12 should not be home alone for more than a very short period of time
- no one under 16 should be left to care for a younger child (also recommended by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents)

Please note that the school does not provide supervision of children before the gates open at 8.30am (unless they are attending breakfast club or pre-school club by prior arrangement) or after 3:15pm (unless they are attending an after school club organised by the school) and therefore the welfare of children until 8:30am and after 3:15pm is the responsibility of parents / guardians. This walking home alone permission will not apply to collection during the school day, for appointments, illness etc. an adult must collect in these circumstances.; nor for after school clubs and activities for which you may give separate consent.

For after-school activity clubs separate permission will be required for children to leave unaccompanied. Please consider that at later dismissal times the children are walking home in smaller numbers or possibly alone, where they would usually be leaving with the whole school and that during the winter months it can be almost dark after 4pm when clubs end. Permission to leave alone will form part of the paperwork for Year 5 and Year 6 children on signing up for the club.

We appreciate that we as a school share the responsibility of teaching the children the importance of keeping safe. With the afternoons becoming increasingly darker, we feel it necessary to remind both parents and children of the importance of remaining vigilant when walking home and where possible, considering an alternative arrangement. In the coming weeks before Christmas we will be dedicating an assembly to both road safety and 'stranger danger' awareness.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in keeping all our children safe.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Louise Johnson & Mrs Jo Davies
Executive Head Head of School

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Checklist - Unsupervised Children

Parents / Guardians should consider the following factors when children are travelling to/from school alone, left unsupervised at home, or in the care of a sibling:

Has the parent/guardian considered the risk/s posed by walking to/from school, leaving their child alone, or in the care of a sibling?

How old is/are the child/ren?

How mature is/are the child/ren? What is their level of understanding/awareness about being unsupervised/walking to or from school?

How comfortable is the child with the arrangements (this includes the younger child and the older child who is acting as 'guardian')?

Where will the children be left? Is this a safe place?

How long, and how often, will the child/ren be left?

Is the home environment safe and secure? Has the parent/guardian assessed the home environment/journey to or from school for risks? Has the older child or 'guardian' been involved in this risk assessment?

How far will the child/ren have to walk / cycle (if appropriate)?

If cycling, does the child have appropriate training, protective clothing, lights and a cycle helmet?

How far away will the parent/guardian be? Will they be easily contactable?

Do any of the children (this also includes the older sibling or 'guardian') have additional needs – medical, emotional, behavioural, learning difficulties/disabilities and how will these be met in the parents/guardian's absence?

Does the child or sibling caring for another child know what to do in an emergency? Does the child know who they can contact in case of an emergency? Have instructions been left e.g. in case of a fire?

What are the expectations of the child/ren during this time? i.e. are they expected to cook for themselves etc.?

Does the child have knowledge about how to keep themselves and younger siblings safe e.g. road safety, not answering the door to strangers, cooking etc.?

What is the level of knowledge when it comes to first aid?

How well do the siblings get on? How will tension be managed in the absence of the parent/guardian?

Are the children clear about rules and boundaries of what they can and can't do while parents/guardians are out?

If they are looking after a younger sibling, do they have the confidence and authority to implement these rules consistently? What will they do if the younger child misbehaves?

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After School Arrangements
Permission Slip – Unsupervised Children

Sign applicable section(s):

Child's Name..... **Class**.....

I have read and considered the advice and guidance within this letter and give permission for the above named child to leave the school site **unaccompanied by an adult.**

Signed

Print Name.....
 Parent/Guardian

Date.....

Or / and:

I have read and considered the advice and guidance within this letter and give permission for the above named child to leave the school site **accompanied by an older sibling.**

Name of older siblingClass.....(where applicable)

Date of birth

Signed

Print Name.....
 Parent/Guardian

Date.....

Please note that it will only be children for whom we have a signed permission slip that will be allowed to leave the school site unaccompanied.

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