



17th September 2020

St Mary Cray Primary Academy

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Dear Parents and carers

Re: Walking Alone Safely

Yesterday we were made aware of an attempted abduction which occurred last week at Crofton Primary School. Luckily no one was harmed and the Police are currently investigating the incident.

With this in mind, please find below some points to consider and discuss with your child when allowing them to walk to and from school alone:

- **Always have a safety plan:** Think worst case scenario; what course of action would you like your child to take if they found themselves in danger? Does your child have a way of contacting you and the emergency services should they need to? If they do not how could they overcome this?
- **The journey itself:** Evaluate the distance to and from school; what type of roads do they need to cross, and how safe are they? How well-lit is the area? (Areas where shops and houses are close-by are safer than parks/wooded/secluded areas). **Remember that the quickest route is not always the safest.**
- **Think Road safety:** Check, double-check and triple-check the route yourself; designate areas where it is safe to cross and take note of any potential dangers your child may need to be aware of. If they are walking/riding to school whilst it is dark outside how visible is your child to any traffic?
- **Walk in groups:** Where possible ask your child to walk as much of the journey as they can with a friend or two.
- **Safe adults:** Consider whether it is possible for you or someone trusted to meet your child half-way, or for them to acknowledge your child as they walk by. This will provide you with a list of checkpoints of when your child was last seen.
- **Navigation and getting lost:** Talk to your child about what they should do if they get lost or end up on a road that they do not know well. Ensure that you have walked the route with your child a couple of times so that they are familiar with it. Try and pickout local landmarks which can help with navigation.

Some more general tips to remind your child:

- Stick to well-travelled streets, use the same route every day and avoid shortcuts through wooded areas, car parks or alleyways.
- Carry backpacks and bags close to their body, not dangling by the straps.
- Put their purse or wallet in an inside coat or front trouser pocket, not a back pocket.
- Don't wear movement restricting shoes or clothing.
- Cross streets only at safe points (i.e. at zebra crossings), never enter streets from between parked cars or from behind shrubbery.
- Always look both ways before crossing the street. "Stop. Look. Listen. Live."
- Walk - don't run - across crossings, and only when the man is green.
- Switch direction or cross the street if they think someone is following them or if they feel unsafe. Walk towards an open shop, restaurant or yell for help.
- Be aware of strangers. If a stranger approaches, tell a teacher, the head teacher or another trusted adult.



Ofsted Inspection
September 2017 Good.
EYFS Outstanding and
Leadership Outstanding.



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I hope that this has helped you to better understand how you can help keep your child safe when they are walking alone.

If you have any questions or concerns please come and speak to me.

Kind regards,

Mr Else
Family Services Worker