



BURWELL VILLAGE COLLEGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Dear Parents/Carers

Walking to school alone.

Would your children know what to do if approached by a person offering them a lift?

Sometimes the school is made aware of incidents where children are spoken to or offered lifts on the way to or from school. These incidents are incredibly rare and the school takes all such reports seriously, following the agreed procedures by liaising with the Local Authority and police. We have had a recent report and would urge parents to remain vigilant and speak to their children about remaining safe and, if concerned, to immediately report any such incidents directly to the police.

Reported incidents tend to have happen to children who walk to or from school alone or in small groups without an adult. As a school we support the NSPCC guidelines which suggests that children are only mature enough when aged 10. We know that our parents ensure their children are mature enough and know how to walk safely to school, how to cross roads and what to do if they are approached, worried or concerned. If you have not done so, we would urge you to talk to any child who walks alone about keeping safe, not talking to strangers, what to do if they are worried and who to tell when they get to their destination. This life skill is equally important as it is just as likely to happen at weekends or holidays, going to the shops, a friend's house, club as well as walking to school.

Staying Safe and personal safety are part of the school curriculum. As part of this our pupils are taught to use their "5 Finger Friends" with each finger representing a different person they can share their concerns or worries. If the first one is not available they move on to the next one and so on. We also ask them who they would tell at school and who they would tell at home. Children need to feel confident that they can tell a parent or adult and they will be listened to. Older children who walk to school need to know that it is fine to immediately tell the teachers, TA or office staff of any concerns they may have had coming to school.

Whilst it remains the parents' responsibility to ensure their children arrive safely at school it is worth reassuring you that the school follows these procedures:

- If a child has not arrived for registration they are marked absent by the teacher. If a parent has told the teacher why the child is absent the teacher will put in the correct absence code (usually sickness or doctors appointment).
- The registers are then sent to the main office who also check whether the office has received a phone message or the parent has spoken to the staff explaining the absence.
- Most of the time we know why a child is absent but on those occasions where we have received no reason then the school office will phone the parents as soon as these checks have been completed. This is our way of ensuring the safety of any child who has not arrived at school.

It is also worth reminding parents that they do not have to wait overnight to let the school know about incidents. If a child is approached by a stranger we would always suggest that you immediately contact the police. Parents can always come to tell the school at any point during the day or return to school in person as staff are usually available until at least 5.30 or 6.00 p.m. each evening.

If you ever have a concern please feel free to let the school know.

Yours sincerely

Mr N Smith
HEAD TEACHER



Burwell Village College Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.