

09 Early years practice procedures

**09.16 Walks**

### 1. Start with the basics of road safety for young children

* **Hold hands or use walking ropes** so children stay together.
* **Always stop, look, and listen** before crossing.
* **Use safe crossing points** wherever possible (zebra crossings, pedestrian lights).
* **Adults go first and last** – one leads, one follows, so no child is ever in the road alone.

### 2. Explain the “one person in the road” idea clearly

* The **purpose** is not to leave someone in danger but to *create a safe barrier between children and traffic*.
* When crossing with a group, especially little ones who walk slowly, cars may approach before the last child is safely across.
* Having **one responsible adult step into the road first and remain there until everyone is across** signals clearly to drivers that the whole group is still crossing.
* This prevents cars from trying to squeeze through or moving forward before the last child has stepped onto the pavement.

### 3. Emphasise risk management

* **The adult standing in the road should always be an experienced staff member**, not a volunteer or someone unsure.
* They should make sure **traffic has stopped** before the group begins crossing.
* The role is about **visibility and authority**, not confrontation — making eye contact with drivers and using clear body language (e.g. hand raised to signal “stop”).

### 4. Reassure them with reasoning

* Children are unpredictable — they may drop something or slow down. One adult acting as a buffer buys them a few safe seconds.
* It’s a widely used group-crossing technique in early years and schools because it balances **child safety with traffic awareness**.
* The key idea: **no child should ever be the last one in the road** — the adult always is.

# Nursery Outings and Road Safety Policy

### Purpose

This policy sets out the safety measures all staff must follow when taking children on walks in the local town. The aim is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of every child while out in the community.

### 1. Preparation Before the Walk

* **Risk assessment** must be completed before each outing, taking into account route, road crossings, and group size.
* Staff-to-child ratios must be maintained in line with statutory requirements. Additional adults may be used to ensure safety.
* Children must wear **high-visibility vests** if available.
* Each child must be accounted for before leaving and on return using the register.
* All children should be toileted and appropriately dressed for the weather.

### 2. Supervision and Group Organisation

* Children must walk in pairs or small groups, holding hands or using a walking rope where appropriate.
* An **adult must lead the group** at the front.
* An **adult must be positioned at the rear** to ensure no child is left behind.
* When crossing roads, **one designated adult stands in the road** (once traffic has stopped) until the last child has crossed.
* No child should ever be the last person on the road — this is always the responsibility of an adult.

### 3. Crossing the Road

* Cross only at designated pedestrian crossings wherever possible.
* If no crossing is available, choose a straight stretch of road with clear visibility both ways.
* The lead adult steps into the road first, making eye contact with drivers to ensure they stop.
* The group crosses together, led by the front adult and followed by the rear adult.
* The designated **“road guard” adult** remains on the road until the group has fully crossed and is safely on the pavement.

### 4. Expectations for Children

* Children are reminded before the walk:

	+ Walk together, no running.
	+ Hold hands or rope at all times.
	+ Stop at every kerb and wait for instructions.
* Positive reinforcement and praise should be used for safe walking behaviour.

### 5. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

* **Lead Adult**: Guides the route, ensures crossings are safe.
* **Rear Adult**: Ensures no child lags behind.
* **Road Guard Adult**: Steps into the road at crossings and stays until all children are safely across.
* All staff are responsible for vigilance, supervision, and immediate intervention if a child strays or is at risk.

### 6. Emergency Procedures

* If a child becomes separated, staff must follow the nursery’s **Lost Child Policy**.
* One adult remains with the main group while another manages the incident.
* Staff should carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, and emergency contact details.

### 7. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any incident on a walk.