



01 Health and safety procedures

01.22 Transporting Children Policy

This policy details the legal requirements and other safety considerations necessary when transporting children. It is intended to support safer care and working practices and is relevant to all adults who transport children, including agency staff.

Guidance is provided in relation to the child's risk assessment, suitability of vehicles and drivers, responding to emergency situations, and how to manage situations where a child's behaviour poses a risk of accident, injury or allegations being made against the driver.

Legal Requirements

Vehicles used to transport children must be registered with DVLA, have a current MOT certificate and vehicle tax and be roadworthy. A vehicle with a valid MOT certificate may not be roadworthy and the owner of the vehicle should ensure regular checks of the following:

- Windscreen
- Lights
- Brakes
- Tyres
- Engine oil
- Water in the radiator
- Brake fluid level

We recommend that all vehicles are serviced by a suitably qualified and experienced motor vehicle technician in line with the manufacturer's recommendations, and that drivers refer to the vehicle handbook for routine checks.

Regular servicing and routine checks can help prevent accidents and breakdown. Members of staff will be asked to provide evidence of MOT and vehicle tax before they are allowed to transport children in their vehicle.

Managers should check that staff vehicles are road legal at: <https://www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-tax>.

Drivers

All drivers must hold a valid UK driving licence suitable for any vehicle that they are driving. Holders of a photocard driving licence must renew the licence every 10 years.

Staff must sign to say that they have informed the manager of any penalties on their licence. Any penalties incurred between any routine checks should be notified to the line manager immediately.



Drivers must drive within the legal speed limit at all times when transporting children.

Any failure by agency staff to do so could result in disciplinary action being taken.

Car seats

It is a legal requirement for a child to be in an appropriate car seat/booster seat (appropriate to their age, height and weight) until 12 years old, or 135cm in height, whichever comes first. It is the driver's legal responsibility to ensure that the correct car seat/booster seat and seat belt for the child are used.

When transporting children, the following guidance must be followed:

- An appropriate child car seat or booster seat must be used, depending upon the child's age, height, weight, and any disability or additional needs.
- A child car seat must be rear-facing until the child is over 15 months old. A forward-facing car seat can be used when the child is over 15 months old.
- It is safest for a child car seat to be used in the rear seat of the car. A forward facing seat can be used in the front passenger seat, but the vehicle handbook should be referred to for checking whether installation is possible and safe. A rearward-facing car seat should never be used in the front seat if there is an active passenger airbag.
- Car seats and booster seats should be approved seats, fitted and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Checks should be made to ensure compatibility with the make and model of the vehicle.
- Guidance regarding the type of car seat/booster seat required and ensuring it is appropriately fitted is available at <https://www.gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules>.
- Codicote Pre-School will not transport children in their care if an appropriate car seat or booster seat is unavailable. The only exception to this is in the case of an emergency.
- Whilst car seats do not have an expiry date in the UK, please refer to the manufacturer's recommendations with regard to how often they should be replaced.
- Second hand car seats will not be used for transporting children.

Advice on car seat safety can be found here: <https://www.rosipa.com/policy/road-safety/advice/vehicles/car-seats>.

Smoking

When children and young people are present in a private vehicle, no smoking is permitted. It is illegal:

- For a person of any age to smoke in a private vehicle that is carrying someone who is under 18;
- For a driver not to stop someone smoking in these circumstances. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'smoking' also includes vaping and the use of electronic cigarettes.



Drugs and alcohol (including legal medication)

The law on driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol can be consulted here:

<https://www.gov.uk/drug-driving-law>

<https://www.gov.uk/drink-drive-limit>

It is illegal to drive if:

- you're unfit to do so because you're on legal or illegal drugs
- you have certain levels of illegal drugs in your blood (even if they have not affected your driving)
- you are above the legal limit for alcohol
- Drivers are therefore not permitted, under any circumstances, to transport children if they have consumed any illegal drugs.
- Drivers are not permitted, under any circumstances, to consume any alcohol prior to transporting children
- Drivers who are taking prescription medication that can cause drowsiness or impair driving ability should obtain medical advice with regard to their safety to transport children.

Mobile phones and Satnavs

Drivers should carry a mobile phone with them when transporting children, but on no account are they to use the phone whilst driving.

It is illegal to hold and use a phone, Satnav, tablet or any device that can send or receive data whilst driving.

Hands-free use of mobile phones and satnavs whilst driving is permitted only in exceptional circumstances.

A summary of the law can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/using-mobile-phones-when-driving-the-law>

Appropriate driver

When driving children, it is important that the driver is sufficiently experienced in driving to be both safe and confident in managing unexpected or emergency situations. Some journeys will require careful consideration of who should be the driver, and if additional adult support is required in the car.

All drivers must conduct themselves appropriately whilst in the car with the child. It is completely unacceptable to use inappropriate or foul language, or play explicit music in the presence of children.

Dash cams

Any use of a dash cam to record outside and inside the vehicle must be in line with Codicote Pre-School's data protection policies.

Anyone affected by the use of this equipment should be made aware of its existence. In the case of a child under the age of 16, their parents must be informed and give consent.



Transporting groups of children

Where large groups of children are being transported by minibus or people carrier (e.g. group outing or day trip), the following guidance should be followed:

- Any minibus or people carrier to be used must have safety belts fitted, and these must be used at all times during the journey.
- The appropriate adult to child ratio based on EYFS guidance (minimum) should be maintained for the journey. A higher ratio may be required for vulnerable children and/or those with additional needs.

The adults are responsible for remaining in contact with their allocated children when using public transport.

Safer sleeping

- Current EYFS guidance will be followed for Safer Sleeping.
- Babies should be taken out of the car seat after a maximum of 2 hours, so stop for a rest break on long journeys. Take the baby out of the car seat and let them stretch and move around. The Lullaby Trust provides [useful information on car seats and sleeping](#).
- It is important to check on the baby regularly while they are asleep.

Disabled children

- Disabled children may have particular safety and comfort requirements beyond those of other children their age.
- Consideration should be given to any special needs or behavioural needs that could influence how the child behaves whilst in the car. Consideration should be given to this and a risk assessment should be carried out prior to the child being transported.

Managing problems and reducing risk

The driver must ensure they are able to safely drive and maintain control of the vehicle at all times. Whilst it may be safe and appropriate to ignore certain behaviours in the home environment, the same behaviour could be distracting or dangerous in the car. If a driver feels it is not possible to safely drive due to the actions of a child, then the car must be stopped at the first safe place until the issue has been resolved.

Details of the incident should be recorded and discussed with the relevant line manager as soon as practicable. The manager should consider if risk assessment and/or care plan for journeys may need to be created in response to any changes of behaviour or risk.

- There is a potential risk of allegations being made when transporting children. Consideration should be given to whether it is appropriate for a driver to transport any particular child alone, or whether an additional person may be required to act as an escort.
- Drivers should ensure that sufficient stops are undertaken as and when the need arises, including planning in a sufficient number of toilet stops on long journeys.



Managing emergencies – Accidents

In the event of an accident, the following guidance is to be followed:

- If it is safe to do so, move the vehicle to a nearby, safe location.
- All persons should exit the vehicle if and when it is safe to do so. Drivers should take into account, based on their paediatric first aid knowledge, if it safe to move any passengers.
- If anyone is injured, call 999 or 111 for advice, depending on the severity of the accident.
- Move children to a safe area away from the road, if possible, and do not leave them unattended unless absolutely necessary (such as in the case of a child needing to be taken by ambulance while you are caring for the other children).
- Administer first aid where possible.
- Talk to the children to reassure them and to keep them calm.
- Exchange details with the other driver(s) involved.
- Inform your line manager as soon as practically possible and follow their instructions on what to do next.
- If necessary, call your breakdown recovery service.

Any accidents where children have been involved should be communicated to the manager at the earliest opportunity and a written account of the events as soon as possible.

Where medical treatment has been necessary this should be communicated immediately (or as soon after the accident when it is practical to do so) to the manager who will notify the child's parent/carer.

Managing emergencies - Vehicle breakdown on a motorway

In the event of a motorway breakdown, the following guidance is to be followed:

- Move to the hard shoulder (where provided) or an emergency refuge area if you can (clearly marked with blue signs featuring an orange SOS telephone symbol).
- If you cannot get to an emergency refuge area, move it as close to the nearside verge or other nearside boundary as possible.
- Switch on hazard warning lights.
- All persons should exit the vehicle from the passenger side and move to a place of safety, behind barriers and away from the traffic.
- Wear high visibility clothing, if available.
- Do not leave children unattended.
- If you are in a safe place, contact National Highways (0300 123 5000) and then your breakdown service.



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- If you are in an unsafe place (e.g you cannot exit the vehicle, are in a live lane), keep your seatbelt on, call 999 and wait for assistance.
- Contact your line manager to inform them of the situation, including the location where the breakdown has occurred.
- Only return to the vehicle when it is safe to do so.

The National Highways website provides helpful emergency information:

<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/road-safety/breakdowns/>