

ProDrive Travel Ltd — Safeguarding Policy

1. Purpose

ProDrive Travel Ltd is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk who use our services. This policy sets out how we prevent harm, recognise concerns, and respond appropriately, including during lone transport of minors.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, drivers, controllers/dispatchers, contractors, and volunteers
- All journeys where a passenger is a child (under 18) or an adult at risk
- All services including school/SEND transport, airport transfers, corporate travel, events, and ad-hoc bookings

3. Key external frameworks we align to

This policy is designed to align with:

- West Sussex County Council (WSCC) professional practice expectations and relevant documents published in its Professional Zone (Policy – Strategies – Frameworks)
- Sussex Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures
- West Sussex Children's Services safeguarding procedures
- Chichester District Council (CDC) taxi/private hire licensing requirements, including safeguarding expectations for licensed drivers and operators

Where a contract, commissioner instruction, or licensing condition sets a higher standard than this policy, the higher standard will apply.

4. Principles

- Safety and welfare come first
- We act in the best interests of the child or adult at risk
- We maintain professional boundaries at all times
- We take all concerns seriously and report them promptly
- We share information appropriately to protect people from harm

5. Definitions

- **Child/Minor:** Anyone under 18.

- **Adult at risk:** An adult who may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to care and support needs.
- **Safeguarding:** Protecting people's health, wellbeing, and human rights, enabling them to live free from abuse, harm, and neglect.
- **Lone transport of minors:** A journey where a child is transported without a parent/carer or other responsible adult present.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- ProDrive will appoint a DSL and a Deputy DSL.
- The DSL is responsible for receiving concerns, deciding next steps, making referrals, and maintaining safeguarding records.

6.2 All staff and drivers

- Must complete safeguarding training as required by ProDrive and any commissioning body
- Must follow this policy and report concerns immediately
- Must maintain professional conduct and boundaries

6.3 Controllers/dispatch

- Ensure bookings involving minors/adults at risk are flagged
- Confirm authorised pickup/drop-off arrangements
- Support drivers in real time if an issue arises

7. Safer Recruitment and Vetting

ProDrive will maintain safer recruitment and ongoing compliance checks, including:

- Enhanced DBS checks (with appropriate workforce/role) and re-checks at a defined interval
- Right to work checks
- DVLA licence checks and periodic re-checks
- References and employment history checks
- Mandatory safeguarding and child sexual exploitation awareness training
- Clear code of conduct signed by drivers

8. Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries

All staff and drivers must:

- Treat passengers with dignity and respect
- Use appropriate language and behaviour at all times

- Avoid physical contact unless it is necessary for safety and in line with agreed support needs
- Never exchange personal contact details with minors
- Never communicate with minors via personal social media
- Never offer gifts, money, or favours
- Never take photos/videos of passengers
- Never allow unauthorised passengers in the vehicle
- Never deviate from the planned route unless required for safety or instructed by dispatch

9. Lone Transport of Minors — Mandatory Controls

When transporting a minor alone, ProDrive will apply the following controls.

9.1 Booking and authorisation

- Lone transport of minors must be pre-authorised by the parent/carer or commissioning body.
- The booking must record:
 - Child's name and age
 - Parent/carer contact details
 - Any medical/SEND needs and agreed support requirements
 - Authorised pickup and drop-off locations
 - Authorised handover person(s) at destination and any password/passphrase system if required
 - Any restrictions, triggers, or behaviour support plan requirements

9.2 Pickup and handover

- Drivers must not accept a child from an unauthorised person.
- Drivers must not leave a child unattended at pickup.
- At drop-off, drivers must:
 - Handover only to the authorised person or authorised setting
 - If no authorised person is present, follow the “No Safe Handover” procedure

9.3 Seating and supervision

- The child should sit in the rear passenger seat unless safety needs require otherwise.
- Drivers must not allow a child to sit in the front seat unless risk assessed and authorised.
- Drivers must maintain appropriate professional distance and avoid unnecessary conversation of a personal nature.

9.4 Communication and tracking

- Dispatch must have live journey visibility where available.
- Drivers must not use personal phones for non-essential communication while driving.
- Any incident must be reported to dispatch immediately.

9.5 “No Safe Handover” procedure

If the authorised adult is not present or the destination is unsafe:

1. Driver contacts dispatch immediately.
2. Dispatch contacts the parent/carer or commissioning contact.
3. Driver remains with the child in a safe location.
4. Driver does not leave the child unattended.
5. If there is immediate risk, call emergency services.
6. Record actions taken and outcomes.

10. Lone working and driver safety (aligned to WSCC lone working guidance)

ProDrive recognises that lone working increases risk for both staff and passengers. We will:

- Risk assess lone transport of minors and adults at risk as part of booking acceptance
- Ensure drivers can contact dispatch at all times during a job
- Maintain clear escalation routes for drivers who feel unsafe or observe safeguarding concerns
- Review incidents and near misses to improve controls

11. Recognising abuse and exploitation

Staff should be alert to:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Child sexual exploitation
- Criminal exploitation and county lines indicators
- Domestic abuse indicators
- Radicalisation concerns
- Human trafficking indicators

12. Reporting a concern (internal)

- If a child or adult at risk is in immediate danger, call emergency services.
- Report concerns to the DSL immediately.
- If the DSL is unavailable, report to the Deputy DSL.
- Do not investigate. Record facts, observations, and exact words used.

13. External reporting and referrals

ProDrive will make referrals to the appropriate safeguarding bodies in line with local procedures and commissioning requirements. Where we are operating under contract, we will follow the reporting routes specified by the commissioner.

14. Allegations against staff (including drivers)

Any allegation or concern that a staff member or driver has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or adult at risk
- Possibly committed a criminal offence
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk

must be reported immediately to the DSL and senior management.

- The individual may be suspended from duties pending investigation.
- ProDrive will cooperate with any external investigation.
- Records will be kept securely.

15. Whistleblowing

All staff have a duty to raise concerns about unsafe practice. Concerns can be raised to the DSL, senior management, or via an alternative route if the concern relates to management.

16. Information sharing and confidentiality

- Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis.
- Records will be stored securely.
- We will follow data protection requirements while prioritising safeguarding.

17. Training and competency (including CMT learning)

ProDrive will provide and maintain:

- Induction safeguarding training for all staff
- Regular refresher training
- Specific training for lone transport of minors and professional boundaries

- Training updates aligned to commissioner requirements and learning from incidents, complaints, audits, and any CMT learning shared with us

18. Record keeping

- All safeguarding concerns and incidents must be logged.
- Records must include date/time, people involved, what was seen/heard, actions taken, and outcomes.
- Records will be retained in line with legal and contractual requirements.

19. Quality assurance and continuous improvement

ProDrive will:

- Review safeguarding incidents and near misses
- Implement learning and corrective actions
- Audit compliance with this policy
- Update procedures in line with changes to local authority guidance, licensing expectations, and commissioning requirements

20. Reference documents (links)

- WSCC Professional Zone — Policy / Strategies / Frameworks — Documents:
<https://www.westsussexconnecttosupport.org/professional-zone/policy-strategies-frameworks/documents/>
- Sussex Safeguarding Adults Procedures:
<http://sussexsafeguardingadults.procedures.org.uk/>
- West Sussex Children's Services Procedures:
<https://westsussexcs.trixonline.co.uk/>

21. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner if:

- There is a significant safeguarding incident
- Local authority procedures change
- Contract requirements change

Policy owner: ProDrive Travel Ltd (Senior Management) **Approved by:** Managing Director

Next review date: 12 months from approval