

Transporting Children Policy

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Regulations and Standards:

The Children's Homes Regulations 2015:

- Regulation 12 – The protection of children standard.
- Regulation 13 – The leadership and management standard.
- Regulation 32 – Fitness of workers.

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1. Transport Arrangements – General:

For distances in excess of 300 miles or journeys of over 4 hours (whichever is the greater) two drivers are recommended unless sufficient breaks are allocated within the journey, and the children can be supervised by a non-driver during breaks. Consideration must be given for the journey time or distance to be shared equally if two drivers are used.

The following must be considered for every journey:

- Passenger safety.
- Competence of the driver.
- Awareness of driver's hours.
- Traffic conditions.
- Contingency funds and arrangements in case of breakdown / emergency.
- Weather.
- Journey time and distance.
- Stopping off points for long journeys and toilet breaks - refer to the risk assessment for

that journey.

- Appropriate seat belts or restraints must be used and fastened (see Seat Belts / Restraints)
- A mobile telephone should be taken / carried by each member of staff. If mobile phones are not carried, suitable arrangements should be made to enable communication between staff undertaking the activity.
- A First Aid Kit must always be carried on the vehicle.
- Where outdoor activities are planned, suitable First Aid Kits should be carried away from the vehicle.
- Before setting out, staff must ensure that suitable mechanical checks are undertaken in relation to the vehicle.

Seat Belts / Restraints:

NOTE: Page 4 of Child Car Seats: The New Law issued by the Department of Transport.

	Front Seat	Rear Seat	Whose Responsibility
Driver	Adult seat belt must be worn if fitted		Driver
Child under 3 years of age	Correct child restraint must be used	Correct child restraint must be used. If one is not available in a taxi, may travel unrestrained	Driver
Child from 3rd birthday up to 135cms in Height (approx. 4'5") (or 12th birthday, Whichever they reach first)	Correct child restraint must be used.	Correct child restraint must be used where seat belts fitted. Must use adult belt in rear seat if correct child restraint not available: in a taxi; or for a short distance in an unexpected necessity; or if two occupied child restraints prevent fitting of a third	Driver
Child 12 or 13, or over 135cms (approx. 4ft 5ins) in height	Adult seat belt must be worn if available	Adult seat belt must be worn if available	Driver



Adult passengers	Adult seat belt must be worn if available	Adult seat belt must be worn if available	Passenger
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2, Transporting Children:

Where a risk assessment states that a child should be accompanied by 2 staff, the child should not be left alone whilst on an activity. Consideration should be given about toilet breaks and how everybody can be kept safe during this time.

- Children over the age of 12 may be allowed to sit in the front of vehicles if the arrangement is approved and the risk assessment states this by the home's Manager. The children in placement must sit in the back of the vehicle. However, if the temperature is below 3 degrees it is not suitable for a child to sit in the back of the car, therefore they must wait until the temperature has increased before completing their journey or complete a dynamic risk assessment around safety of the child sitting in the front of the car. Please also make on – call aware of the decision making and the reasoning behind this before travelling.
- Children may not hold or be responsible for vehicle keys and may not steer cars or use petrol pumps.
- All vehicle occupants must wear suitable seat belts or restraints at all times when in vehicles.
- Children must not tamper with or use any controls except, at the discretion of the driver, the radio / stereo.
- If it is assessed that a child may be distressed whilst in the vehicle or a child becomes distressed to the extent that the safety of the vehicle or occupants may be compromised, the vehicle must be stopped, preferably in a lay-by or suitable stopping place. However, the vehicle may have to be stopped at the side of the road or on the hard shoulder of a motorway. In these circumstances, the hazard warning lights should be activated, the occupants should get out of the vehicle and stand well away from the road, and the emergency services must be summoned.
- If the safety of the occupants is compromised, with the risk of Injury or Damage to Property, Physical Intervention may be used if required, or the Police should be called to assist if appropriate. If children with a history of violence are being transported, staff must ensure the following:
 - Children must sit in the rear of the vehicle, with each individual supervised.
 - Staff must be clear when it may be appropriate to use Physical Intervention and what techniques may be appropriate.
 - Children ideally should not sit behind or be able to distract the driver (considering individual risk assessment).
 - Staff must be satisfied that no items which could be used as weapons are available to the child. These could include tools, aerosols, pens etc.



- It may be necessary to search the child before the activity starts; see: 'Searching Children / Bedrooms Procedure'.
- Care should be taken when getting in and out of vehicles.
- Some thought should be given to action on arrival at destination - will more staff be needed? Is it easy to get the car close to the destination, and is it possible to avoid other children / young people becoming involved?
- If the potential risks cannot be managed safely, the activity must not go ahead; or must cease and, if necessary, the Police be called to assist.
- All HND Children's Care Ltd vehicles that are used for transporting children must be smoke free. It is the legal responsibility of anyone who drives, manages or is responsible for order and safety on a vehicle, to prevent people from smoking.

3. Transport Arrangements: Personal vehicles:

All staff wishing to use their own vehicles to transport children must:

- Hold a valid current UK driving license.
- Have an appropriate and current certificate of motor insurance for the vehicle used, which explicitly states Class one business use. Fully comprehensive is not adequate to carry children / young people.
- A valid and current MOT certificate for the vehicle used.
- All of these documents must be shown to the Manager and copies stored on the member of staff's personal site file.
- Staff must obey the Highway Code and the Road Traffic Act at all times.
- Staff may not smoke in their own vehicles whilst transporting children. - Staff may not use mobile telephones (including hand free) whilst driving.
- Staff may not play age-inappropriate music whilst transporting children / young people.
- Staff should ensure that any personal items are stored safely before transporting children to prevent damage, theft, or the disclosure of personal information such as home address.
- The use of staff's own vehicles to transport children is intended for local use only. The authorisation of the manager is required for all other journeys.
- Staff should not transport children not in the care of HND Children's Care Ltd at the same time as transporting Looked after Children. This could lead to confusion about legal responsibility and indemnity.
- Staff should not transport members of their own family, or their friends, at the same time as transporting Looked After Children.

4. Risk Assessment:

It is not necessary to undertake a separate Risk Assessment for each activity / trip. Where a range or series of activities may be undertaken (the transporting of children to and from school, a series of supervised contacts, the undertaking of routine activities), the manager may approve a Risk Assessment and associated arrangements such as staffing levels for a



period; and then set a date for the review of the assessment / arrangements.

The manager or person delegated to oversee the activity must approve a completed a risk assessment in advance.

A risk assessment for a visit need not be complex but it should be comprehensive. It does not generally require technical information or professional health and safety expertise, but specialised information for some visits may be necessary and Managers must ensure that the person assessing is competent to do so.

A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on an activity should have the aim of preventing the risks or reducing them. Children must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety and protection of all concerned must always be the prime consideration.

If the risks cannot be contained or managed, the activity must not take place:

- The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:
- Care Plan, Placement Plan, or other relevant plans
- Recent / relevant events / incidents
- Group dynamics, staff / child relationships
- Child Protection Issues
- Violent or other offending behaviour
- The healthcare or mental health needs of the children
- Level associated with Drug / Alcohol etc. misuse.
- Level of disability and associated special needs.
- What are the hazards?
- Whom might they affect?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level?
- Can safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

In undertaking the risk assessment, all staff taking part and children who are capable of making informed decisions should be consulted and a record of the risks should be made and seen / approved by the manager.

Frequent activities / visits to local venues such as swimming baths or where a child is transported to and from school may not need a risk assessment for each trip; but the manager must ensure that a risk assessment is completed for the series / range of activities / visits; and a date set for the review of the risk assessment.

Alternatively, a risk assessment which has been agreed for a series or range of activities / visits must be reviewed immediately after any information becomes known or any event / incident which compromises the safety of the children / staff. In such circumstances, the activities / visits must be suspended until a review has taken place and the manager is satisfied that a suitable new risk assessment has been completed.



The staff should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- The type of visit / activity and the level at which it is being undertaken.
- The location, routes, and modes of transport.
- The competence, experience, and qualifications of the staff.
- Ratios of children to staff.
- The group members' age competence, fitness, and temperament, and the suitability of the activity.
- The healthcare needs of the children
- The quality and suitability of available equipment.
- Seasonal conditions, weather, and timing.
- Emergency procedures
- The need to monitor risks throughout the activity.
- The children's backgrounds. I.e., offending, health, absconding, child protection, drugs.

When approving the Risk Assessment and subsequent plan for the activity, the manager should determine what latitude staff must change the plan, the need for a contingency plan, an 'on call' or backup procedure to provide support, advice, or direction to the staff once the activity / trip has started.

4. Road Traffic Accidents:

When a vehicle is involved in a road traffic accident, the driver must stop the vehicle and check if any of the passengers have sustained injuries. If the car is in an unsafe position, all staff and children must stand a safe distance from the road.

In the event that injuries have been sustained the emergency services will be contacted to request assistance. They will be made aware of the exact location of the incident, the nature of injuries to passengers or damage to the vehicle and given some information about the accident.

The driver must also contact the home manager / on call as soon as is appropriate. They should be given the details of the accident and the nature of any injuries or damage. The manager / on call will then make arrangements for alternative staffing and/or transport if required.

Injuries to staff or children will be dealt with according to the nature of the injury as follows:

- Minor scratches, cuts and bruises will be dealt with by staff using the first aid kit.
 - More severe injuries will be referred to the nearest hospital accident and emergency department.
 - The ambulance services will deal with those who have sustained more serious injuries.
- Any child taken to hospital by ambulance will be accompanied by a member of staff.

The driver of the vehicle will supply the following information to the driver of any other vehicle involved or the owner of any property damaged:

- Driver's name and address



- Name and address of vehicle owner
- Registration number of the vehicle
- Details of company vehicle insurance
- The driver will obtain similar details from any other driver involved.

The driver of the vehicle must complete the relevant forms for themselves and the children with details of the accident and send to the manager / Director within 24 hours of the incident.

End.