

Transporting Students Policy

More Than Ed | Independent School

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Responsible Person: Alex North

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The issue of transporting children and young people in cars, particularly in an employee's own car, is one which causes concern to some staff. It may be a necessary part of the role, as at More Than Ed, where transition time between home and school is part of the school day due to the therapeutic effect it has on our students.

1. Drivers and their Vehicles

Drivers are responsible for their own vehicle's road-worthiness and appropriateness for the task to be undertaken, and for their fitness to drive. We are responsible for monitoring and verifying this. We will ensure that staff:

- Have an appropriate valid driving licence
- Are insured for the journey (business use)
- Have a valid MOT certificate
- Have valid road tax

Staff will ensure that they:

- Have checked the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition
- Are not excessively tired or fatigued, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Meet the minimum eyesight standards for driving. If they need to wear glasses or contact lenses to meet the minimum standards, these must be worn at all times
- Have no medical condition (including the taking of medication) or infirmity that may affect their ability to drive safely

Additionally, all staff should ensure that they have regular eyesight tests to ensure their eyesight remains within the minimum standards for driving. Staff should also ensure that if their health changes, and this could affect their ability to drive, they inform a member of SLT immediately. Staff are also obliged to notify a member of SLT of any driving convictions, endorsements or disqualifications where they are required, or may be required, to drive for work.

2. Leaders

Leaders will ensure that all members of staff have the necessary competence and experience. Whilst defining driver competence is always a subjective decision, drivers will not normally be deemed competent unless they have at least one year's driving experience after passing their driving test.

Leaders deeming a member of staff competent to drive outside of the parameters above will need to fully justify and record the reasons for this decision. Equally, where a member of staff meets the criteria but Leaders have concerns regarding their competence to drive, the reasons a member of staff is not deemed competent — and therefore not allowed to transport children or young people — should be recorded.

In making any such decision, the needs of the school need to be balanced against the safety of the children or young people and the employee, and where there is any doubt the safety of the children or young people and employee should take priority.

Leaders will check the documentation of all staff and vehicles before they authorise a member of staff to transport a child or young person in their own vehicle, and then periodically when their road tax, MOT or insurance (including business use) is due for renewal. Staff's vehicles will be checked termly by a member of SLT, including tyre pressures and tread, lights, windscreen wipers and wash, seat belts, cleanliness of interior, and other basic safety features.

All staff are provided with a first aid kit for their car, and receive Emergency First Aid training.

3. Children and Young People

Before children or young people are transported in a member of staff's car, the need and reasons for this method of transportation should be clearly established. Once this has been established, a full picture of the needs of the child or young person (including physical, emotional, behavioural and medical) and the risks this may present to them or the member of staff involved when transporting them will be assessed, and a relevant risk assessment completed if necessary.

This should involve gathering and sharing information with all agencies involved in supporting the child or young person. This information is required to inform a specific risk assessment for transporting the child or young person, and will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains valid.

Parents must give their permission for children or young people to be transported in a staff member's vehicle, where this is necessary.

Children and young people must behave appropriately while travelling in the vehicle. If there are any concerns during the journey, a dynamic 'on the spot' risk assessment should be carried out to determine whether there is a significant risk to the driver or passenger, and appropriate action taken.

If the child or young person has a medical condition that is likely to require additional support or medication, a copy of their Care Plan plus appropriate medication will be available. A member of staff who has received training in administering support or medication will accompany the young person in the vehicle.

4. Risk Assessment

We have an overarching risk assessment for all aspects of transporting children. Over and above this, where information gathered on a child or young person poses a significant risk to others during transportation, that child or young person will not be offered transport by the school.

When considering children or young people with medical conditions, their transport and any control measures required during transport should be included in their individual care or treatment plan and used to inform any risk assessment. A second person, trained in administering medication or the relevant medical procedure, should always be provided where necessary.

For children or young people who present with behavioural issues, a range of control measures should be considered: from not transporting the person if it is felt their behaviour is such that doing so is not safe, to providing an escort to ensure the driver can concentrate

safely on driving, or placing the child or young person so they cannot easily distract the driver (diagonally across from the driver in the back seat), amongst others.

5. Travelling

Only pre-planned journeys should be undertaken, and these should always be pre-approved by a Leader, unless there is an emergency situation whereby the journey cannot be avoided (e.g. urgent transport to hospital).

The school's encrypted WhatsApp chat allows staff to confirm their arrival at destinations and that the journey has been completed. Please see the Health & Safety Policy under Lone Working, which gives details of how we will respond if a member of staff loses contact with the school.

All staff know the appropriate response and action to take in the event of an accident or emergency during transport. All staff who transport children or young people should have access to a charged mobile phone or the appropriate means of communication.

The law makes drivers responsible for ensuring those under 14 years of age wear an appropriate seatbelt, child restraint or age-appropriate booster seat. However, where staff are transporting children or young people as part of their job, they will at all times be responsible for ensuring the children or young people they are transporting are wearing a suitable restraint, irrespective of their age. As there are very clear dangers to passengers and drivers if restraints are not worn, if a driver becomes aware of this they should stop the journey as soon as it is safe to do so. If the passenger continues to refuse to wear a seatbelt or restraint, then the contract system should be implemented and the journey ceased until a solution is found. For further details on standards of child restraints, see current guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules>.

Restraints should also be checked before use to ensure they are well-maintained and fit for purpose, with no defects.

Drivers must not use mobile phones (unless hands-free and safe to do so), drink, or smoke while driving on school business, and should be aware of the Highway Code and drive appropriately and within speed limits. In order to facilitate this when planning journeys, adequate time for the journey must be allowed.

No member of staff will be expected to drive an excessive number of hours in a day. All loads should be carried in the boot where possible, or should be suitably secured.

6. Accidents and Incidents

In the case of a road traffic accident, this must be reported by the driver to their own insurance company, and passengers must be advised of the name and address of the insurance company if they wish to make a claim.

All accidents and incidents that occur during working hours must be recorded on the Accident Reporting System, following the usual school procedure.