

### 10.Pastoral Transport

(This policy is based on advice from the CofE Safeguarding Manual and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations.( <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/>)

These guidelines apply to all ‘approved drivers’ involved on behalf of the church in the transportation of children, young people and vulnerable adults. They do not apply to private transport arrangements made between friends.

- All approved drivers will be safely recruited.
- All approved drivers will hold a DBS check certificate.
- An approved driver must give a signed undertaking that s/he will comply with the parish safeguarding policy, the Code of Safer Working Practice, and specific guidance regarding transport.
- They must demonstrate that they have a suitable driving license and adequate insurance.
- They must inform their insurance company of their activity and ensure that they have adequate insurance cover. (Most insurance companies charge no greater premiums, providing they are told.)
- All those who drive children or vulnerable adults on behalf of the church should be over 25 and should have held a full current driving licence for over two years.
- All approved drivers must ensure that their vehicle is roadworthy and fitted with seat belts.
- Any person providing or seeking to provide transport on behalf of church who has an endorsement of 6 points or more on their licence must inform the parish safeguarding officer.
- Any driver who has an “unspent” conviction for a drink driving offence or for Dangerous Driving or Racing on the Highway may not transport children. The parish safeguarding officer will consult with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser regarding this person’s suitability to provide transport on behalf of church.

#### Minibuses

- All hired minibuses must have a small bus permit, the necessary insurance and a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive a minibus.
- When using a minibus, whether owned, hired or borrowed, all drivers must hold the correct permit on their driving licence or take the appropriate driving test. Drivers with entitlement to drive cars prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 1997 (shown as group A, B for automatics on an old-style licence, or as category B and D1 not for hire or reward on a new style licence) can drive a minibus provided
  - a. they are over 21 and under 70,
  - b. the minibus has a maximum of 17 seats including the driver’s,
  - c. is not being used for hire or reward.
- This minibus entitlement remains valid in the UK and on temporary visits abroad until the licence is next renewed. When this happens, the minibus entitlement can only be

- issued by making a special application which involves meeting higher medical standards. Minibus entitlement is normally renewed for 3 years.
- If minibus entitlement is not renewed, or the car licence was obtained after 1<sup>st</sup> January 1997, the driver may drive a minibus with a maximum of 16 passenger seats provided:
    - a. It is driven on behalf of a non-commercial body for social purposes, but not for hire or reward;
    - b. the driver is aged over 21 and under 70 years.
    - c. the driver has held a car licence (category B) for at least 2 years
    - d. the driver is providing his/her service on a voluntary basis
    - e. the minibus maximum weight is not more than 3.5 tonnes excluding any specialist equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers.
  - When driving a minibus under these conditions,
    - a) no payment must be received other than out of pocket expenses.
    - b) no trailer can be towed.
    - c) minibuses may only be driven in the UK.
    - d) If payment is needed, for example to cover the costs of the trip as a whole, then the driver will need a permit. This can be obtained from the Community Transport Association.
    - e) Drivers aged 70 or over will need to make a special application which involves meeting higher medical standards.
    - f) Regular drivers of minibuses should be encouraged to take a MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) test, organized by the Community Transport Association U.K. (CTA) which promotes a nationally recognized standard for the assessment and training of minibus drivers.
  - The legislation that re-quires baby/child seats and booster cushions to be used in cars does not apply to minibuses, buses and coaches; commercial companies do not have to provide this equipment.

### **Transporting Children**

Our practice for transporting children is as follows:

- Parental consent must be given for all journeys.
- At least two people will be present when transporting children as part of their church role, including one safely recruited employee or volunteer.
- All children and young people will be returned from an outing to an agreed drop off point.
- Leaders will make sure children are collected by an appropriate adult.
- Children will never be left on their own at collection or drop off points.
- In an emergency, if a leader finds themselves alone with a child who needs transport, the church leadership and the child's parents or legal guardians should be informed, as soon as possible and ideally before the child is transported.