**Parish Safeguarding Guidance - Provision of Lifts/transport**

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| **No.** | **Question** | **Guidance** |
|  | **Who does this guidance relate to?** | This guidance only applies where transport has been formally organised **on behalf of the church**. It does not apply to private arrangements between churchgoers, including the informal giving of lifts to and from church events. |
|  | **Who can give lifts for organised church activities?** | For the purpose of this guidance, the driver is called an *approved driver*. They must be recruited according to the Safer Recruitment procedure. This includes the requirement for a satisfactory **DBS disclosure** if the driver is carrying children or young people or providing transport for children or vulnerable adults to or from health or social care appointments.  All those who drive children or vulnerable adults on behalf of the church should normally be **over 25** of age and should have held a full current driving licence for over two years.  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 should also be required to demonstrate that they have a suitable driving license, a current MOT and adequate insurance. A Model Volunteer Driver Agreement is included at **Appendix A** of this document.  **Convictions**  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 should consult with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser regarding this person’s suitability to provide transport on behalf of church. |
|  | **What consent is needed for children and young people?** | Children and young people may not be provided with lifts/transport without the prior consent of their parents or carers. |
|  | **What consent is needed for adults at risk?** | If the adult to be receiving the lift has mental capacity, their verbal consent is usually sought before the provision of lifts. An adult at risk (with vulnerabilities) may have difficulty in understanding or expressing their wishes, but you should involve them in decisions about the giving of lifts. If they are unable to give their consent, their representative (e.g. family member, lasting power of attorney, needs to be involved in making the decision). |
|  | **Can our church use a minibus?** | It is compulsory for passengers aged over 13 years to wear a safety belt if provided when travelling in a minibus, bus or coach. The legislation that requires 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.  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 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 they are over 21 and under 70, the minibus has a maximum of 17 seats including the driver’s, and 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 the minibus entitlement is not renewed, or the car licence was obtained after 1 January 1997, the driver may drive a minibus with a maximum of 16 passenger seats, provided:  • It is driven on behalf of a non-commercial body for social purposes but not for hire or reward.  • The driver is aged over 21 and under 70-years;  • The driver has held a car licence (category B) for at least 2-years;  • The driver is providing his/her service on a voluntary basis; and 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, no payment must be received other than out of pocket expenses; no trailer can be towed; and minibuses may only be driven in the UK. 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.  Drivers aged 70 or over will need to make a special application which involves meeting higher medical standards.  Regular drivers of minibuses should be encouraged to take a MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) test, organised by the Community Transport Association U.K. (CTA) which promotes a nationally recognised standard for the assessment and training of minibus drivers. It is a membership-based scheme that has been designed to enhance minibus driving standards and promote the safer operation of minibuses. |
|  | **How does lone working guidance fit with transport?** | Lone worker guidance applies when a person is giving the lift alone. People should not work on their own unless they have a means of communication and have notified a colleague of the details of the work being undertaken and agreed a procedure to ensure their safety is checked on.  When working alone volunteers and staff should be alert to possible dangers and minimise them by undertaking a personal risk assessment with their parish safeguarding officer. They can also:  1. Make sure they tell someone where they are working (ask them to check on you if you are not home when expected and if they can’t contact you, to raise the alarm).  2. Always carry a fully charged mobile phone.  3. Inform the Church Wardens or Vicar of any suspicious behaviour or any threats made. |
|  | **Is there anything else we need to consider? What about emergencies?** | All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults **must not allow strangers to give lifts** to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable.  In addition, for children and young people, church officers or volunteers must not give lifts to children they are supervising, on their own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home). In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity).  Approved drivers should not accept inappropriate behaviour (comments or physical contact) and report any incidents to their Parish Safeguarding Officer.  They should avoid being alone in the house with someone, unless they feel comfortable to do so, and should leave if they feel unsafe. |

**Appendix A: Model Volunteer Driver Agreement**

**Undertaking of Voluntary Driver to transport children and vulnerable adults in private cars on behalf of the PCC of …………………………Church.**

**Name of driver: ……………………………… Phone No: ………………………………………**

**Email: …………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Address:………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**1. Consent**

 Children will not be taken out in transport without the prior consent of their parents or carers

 Vulnerable adults will give permission to being transported themselves, and discretion used in consulting

first with their carers

 I will take care when assisting children or vulnerable adults to board and alight my vehicle, both to ensure

the road is safe to do so, and in following guidelines on physical contact.

**2. The driver**

 I am over 25 and have held a full current driving licence for over two years

 I have/do not have an endorsement of 6 points or more on my licence (if 6 points or more I will share the

details with the Parish Safeguarding Officer or Incumbent.

 I do not have an “unspent” conviction for a driving offence.

**3. The vehicle**

**i) Seat belts:**

* My car is fitted with seat belts (both front and rear), and the numbers of people transported will not exceed the number of seat belts available
* All car passengers will be required to wear safety belts in the front and rear seats
* All children up to 3 years old will be carried in a child restraint
* Rear-facing baby seats will not be used in a seat protected by a front air-bag unless the air-bag has been deactivated manually or automatically
* Children from aged 3 up to 135cm in height (approx 4’5”) or their 12th birthday (whichever they reach first) will use baby/child seats or booster cushions for older children
* All passengers aged 13 years or older will wear an adult seat belt.

 My vehicle is comprehensively insured.

 I have informed my insurance company that I am a volunteer driver for church activities, and if required, I

have obtained a passenger endorsement for the transportation of children or vulnerable adults.

 I understand that in case of any accident, injury or vehicle damage, the church’s liability insurance policy

does not provide primary or direct insurance on my vehicle

 My vehicle is clean and in a road worthy condition

 At no time will the number of people in a car exceed the usual passenger number.

**ii) Escorts:**

 Where possible, another responsible adult will accompany me, to assist with any emergencies

 If in an emergency I have to transport a child or vulnerable adult on my own, the child or vulnerable adult

will sit in the back of the car.

Signed (driver): ……………………………………………. Date: ……………….…………………….

Name of vehicle owner if different: …………………….. Signed (vehicle owner)……………………

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**Verification**

Confidential declaration and Criminal disclosure received Yes/No Date…………….

Driving licence seen and Insurance certificate seen Yes/No Date……………

Car make and model………………………………………. Reg No ………………………….

Signed:…………………………………………………………………Date ………………………

Role/Designation…………………………………………..