



### Contextual Statement

**As a school that has been recognised by Surrey LEA as ‘providing for some of the counties most vulnerable children many of whom have been difficult to place’ and recognised by Ofsted as ‘unique’ we are very aware of the importance of our context, we recognise that travel can be highly anxiety inducing.**

**Several students travel to school by LEA Taxi and the relationships they build with drivers and escorts can be highly positive, but also provides an opportunity for those with undesirable intentions to spend time with young people.**

**For short journeys the use of staff cars can be preferable to coach hire as our young people find large groups, even from their own peer group, difficult to deal with, however there are further considerations needed around the higher risk of accusation against staff or indeed risk to young people.**

**Use of public transport is also essential for developing travel training skills but poses additional elements of risk due to the unfamiliar location, noise and the risks around getting lost.**

This policy is part of a safety suite of policies – please read the whole suite.

## **1. Taxi Travel**

### **1.1 Taxi Procedures**

We ask that drivers park and escort the young person to the door upon arrival. This allows for communication as well as ensuring the young person gets to us safely.

We ask that Taxi drivers collect the young person at the end of the day in the same manner.

We ensure that young people are asked how their journey to school was and know that they can talk to us about any concerns. These discussions are important as we have had TWO safeguarding cases related to transport in the past; one relating to inappropriate contact and a further to do with extremist grooming. Staff must be vigilant at all times and report any concerns to the DSL, who will investigate and if necessary, inform the LEA, the LADO and the police.

We encourage a collegiate relationship with Surrey Transport and the drivers, ensuring they in turn feel able to raise concerns around child protection matters.

The brokering of transport services is outside of our control but we will raise concerns and request additional support such as Escorts if we feel it is appropriate.

This policy is part of a safety suite of policies – please read the whole suite.

## **2. Use of Staff Cars**

### **2.1 Context**

For small groups of children on local visits we may offer to transport them via a teacher's or other staff member's car. Parents will be informed and will have signed their consent.

### **2.2 Ratios**

Two staff members should be in each car, including the driver. This ensures that the driver can focus on driving whilst another staff member can offer support to students.

Both staff members should be in the front seats, unless a student has a known sickness issue in which case parental permission to be in the front seat should have been given in writing.

### **2.3 Issues whilst driving**

2.3.1 Cars should follow in convoy so that should an issue arise there is extra support on hand. All cars should have a first aid kit.

2.3.2 If student behaviour deteriorates a safe place to park should be found and the situation resolved. If it can't be resolved, then staff should call the SLT for support and a decision may be made for a parent to collect a young person or the trip to be aborted.

2.3.3 If the car breaks down on an A road ensure that students leave the car and sit on high ground – to avoid being hurt should the car be re-ended. It is therefore important that staff cars used for travel have an emergency triangle and that students have access to drinking water and warm / weatherproof coats.

### **2.4 Insurance and fitness to drive**

2.4.1 Designated drivers must provide us with a valid insurance certificate at the correct level and also regularly have their driving licence checked by the DSL to ensure that they are safe and fit to drive.

2.4.2 Designated drivers sign a declaration that they are safe to drive before every trip. This, and a risk assessment (see Risk assessment policy) must be counter-signed by an SLT member BEFORE the trip takes place.

This policy is part of a safety suite of policies – please read the whole suite.

### **3. Travel Training & Public Transport**

3.1 Students start travel training when we feel they are showing a level of risk assessment awareness and maturity for it to be safe – we do not put an arbitrary age on it. However, in making this decision it is important that staff triangulate evidence from education and mental health aspects, including suicide and self-harm risks.

3.2 Parents will be informed that we are starting travel training and their consent will be requested. Where request is not given, we will meet with parents and discuss the evidence base we have, and their views, to try to come to a common agreement around readiness.

3.3 For students at Arun Court School up to Chronological age Y11 all travel training will be supported (a staff member on the bus or train) although it may be that they are a significant distance from the young people as their confidence builds. For students who are in year 11 but are chronologically year 12 a decision will be made on a case -case-basis, and they may be invited to do travel training with the R-OUT-ES program instead.

3.4 Upon arrival students who are showing increased confidence may be allowed to independently navigate an area or town, with mobile contact established and key check points in place – this should be risk assessed in advance.

3.5 We use ASDAN and AQA materials to inform our travel training programs.

This policy is part of a safety suite of policies – please read the whole suite.

#### **4. Use of mini-bus and Coach Companies**

4.1 When larger trips are organised transport is provided by a fully insured, reputable coach company.

4.2 When travelling by car we will supply and correctly fit a booster seat for any child who is below the regulation age, height or weight. All students must wear a seat belt.

4.3 To ensure the safety of such trips a risk assessment is carried out and recorded. In order to deal with any potential emergency situation, difficult behaviours and also to protect from false allegation, there must be two staff members in the car, and at least 2 children. On coach trips a risk assessment is also carried out and a maximum ratio of 2:6 is maintained.

4.4 Depending on the needs of the students we will hire larger than necessary coach to enable students to have single seats and more room.

Last review: Feb 2021

Next review: Annually