

# **SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES**

## **Travel and Transport Policy and Practice**

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*SES Avocet House Ltd (4926028) and SES Turnstone House Ltd (7972485)  
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## 1 INTRODUCTION

In the operation of both Avocet House and Turnstone House there will be a range of travel and transport issues to consider. They may involve our staff, or other adults or both.

Journeys may be short or long (e.g. the local swimming pool or Alton Towers), and at home or abroad (e.g. Norfolk, East Anglia, UK, Europe, Africa). The vast majority of journeys will be via road transport and more often than not by car, however variations may include taxis, staff vehicles, pool cars, or other operators vehicles (e.g. coach or minibus). Some journeys may involve vehicles driven by others e.g. tour operators or public transport. Indeed there may be need to travel by rail, air or sea depending upon destinations and the type of experiences chosen. Interwoven with the whole range above will also be considerations around risk assessment and insurance.

**The SES “Educational, Social and Leisure Visits and Activities Policy and Practice” document becomes a critical document to read and understand in relation to the Travel and Transport Policy and Practice document. It is expected that staff will have knowledge of both.**

## 2 ACCOUNTABILITY

SES must satisfy itself that all travel arrangements, including the hire of private coaches or buses, are suitable for the nature of the visit. This responsibility is delegated to the Principal and Visits Co-ordinator for certain types of journey, where they do not need to seek company approval at Director level. All must, however, comply with all the guidance in this document.

## 3 USE OF TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE CARS

The use of taxis or private hire car may take place for the following reasons:

- Transport to and from Avocet or Turnstone House to a young person’s home at holidays and weekends.
- Transport to and from education elsewhere, e.g. post 16 college attendance.
- As part of a young person’s individual programme in building up experience of semi independent or independent travel.
- In exceptional circumstances as an alternative to the use of pool cars or staff’s own car because of specific reasons.

Decision regarding choice of providers will be based upon interviewing and vetting of the firm in respect of its experience, personnel and procedures. This will involve:

- Preliminary phones calls
- Visit to the firm and full discussion with the proprietor/manager.

### 3.1 ISSUES DISCUSSED AND CLARIFIED ON THE VISIT

- Meeting the proprietor and controller – Key Personnel (Administrator and / or Senior member of Staff)
- Agree policy and procedures including best means of communication
- Check ultimate capacity for required journey times and days
- Importance of consistency of personnel for children
- Photocopies of all possible drivers and escorts, DBSs and badges to go on the SES Approved List.
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Awareness
- Payment arrangements

### 3.2 GENERAL BEST PRACTICE ISSUES TO BE AGREED

- Sharing of schedules
- Changes to schedule communicated as and when they occur
- Confirmation phone call with taxi firm at agreed point in the week.
- Child locks
- Escorts
- Sharing of risk assessments
- SES sharing risk assessments and pen picture/help guides in respect of children.
- No stopping on journey with children unless absolutely necessary.
- SES to support taxi company in respect of any behavioural issues
- Taxi driver and/or company to communicate back any behavioural issues.
- Use of a written log if necessary.

### 3.3 INTERNAL PROCEDURES AND COMMUNICATION

- Ongoing schedule of children's taxi requirements (3 monthly for non regular cycles) forwarded to Taxi firm(s)
- All children who use taxis to have a written risk assessment for taxi travel outlining any special requirements.
- Risk Assessments only formally changed on the back of feedback from journeys and communicated with whole team.

#### 3.3.1 Taxi Departure File

The Taxi Departure File will contain:

- Administration Departure sheet (one per child) for DCM to use as checklist for departure of children.
- Current Risk Assessment for each child travelling
- List of approved Taxi Firms and subsequent Approved Drivers and escorts.

Procedures are:

- File to be ready the evening before travel and given to DCM to locate in the house office.

- DCM to ensure all medication and preparation issues are ready and the Taxi's journeys log is completed.
- File returned to the SES office, the following working day.
- When children return from home, the receiving DCM to ensure that children are received pleasantly and always asked how the journey went.

### 3.4 TRANSPORT ARRANGED BY THE PLACING AUTHORITY

There may be circumstances when the commissioning of transport such as taxis is owned and administered by the placing authority. An example of this would be a child who attends on a daily basis for education only, although because of the nature of our provision such circumstances will be exceptional and rare. However, it is important that there is direct liaison with the transport department of the placing authority. To this end the Head of Education should identify a key person on the care team to link directly with the named person responsible within the placing authority transport department.

## 4 PLANNING TRANSPORT

When considering the journey element of any visit or activity, there are certain constraints that will determine the kind of transport to be used, the planned breaks and whether more than one driver will be required.

- passenger safety
- passenger tolerance
- the competence and training of the driver to drive the proposed vehicle and whether the driver holds the appropriate valid licence
- number of driving hours required for the journey and length of the driver's day (including non-driving hours)
- capacity and experience of driver to maintain concentration – whether more than one driver is required to avoid driver fatigue
- transport infrastructure – motorway, rail, etc.
- traffic conditions and the route to be taken
- contingency funds and arrangements in case of breakdown
- distance
- cost
- seasonal conditions
- appropriate insurance cover
- stopping points on journey for toilet, comfort breaks and refreshments
- the overall workload of those who are acting as supervisors and drivers (for example, whether they have already done a day's work before setting out).

### 4.1 RISK ASSESSMENT

There is reference to car travel written into the Generic Risk Assessment within the visits and activities section of the staff network area. This is sound generic procedure but each journey is different and each young person may be very different in respect of their responses to travel and the issues this presents.

Each young person has their own full and comprehensive risk assessment that relates to a range of issues and behaviours. Implications regarding risks during travel and transport should be overtly clear within this and where necessary a full management plan should be in place. These plans are reviewed on a monthly basis or immediately in the light of significant events.

Each visit other than those classified as 'day to day' routine visits will have an accompanying visits form completed by the Visit Leader. This form refers to specific risk assessments related to the journey/trip. Although there are specific formats for risk assessment, it must be understood that the totality of risk assessment is actually the full planning process prior to the trip and the ongoing dynamic assessment during the trip/journey in the light of emerging events, unforeseen and otherwise.

The Driver is responsible for the vehicle and its condition throughout the visit.

#### 4.2 SPECIFIC RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE AVOCET HOUSE SITE AND VICINITY

There are specific risks associated with the approaches and exits from the Avocet House site:

- Although the drive entrance ways are kept as clear as possible of shrubbery, sight lines on exiting the property are not ideal. In addition vehicles use school lane as a shortcut and sometimes pass by at an ill considered speed.
- When driving along School Lane towards Hales the single track passes between houses on both sides of the road with one short blind bend in the middle. In order to respond to neighbours concerns it is an expectation that all Avocet House employees travel along School Lane at a maximum of 20 mph when passing between the houses. Not only is this prudent in terms of meeting oncoming traffic, horses and pedestrians, it is important to demonstrate to our neighbours that we are mindful of safety.
- There is a similar situation in leaving School Lane, and turning right to join the B1136. Sightlines to the left are limited and vehicles may approach at speed.
- When using Norton Road (the back road into Loddon) at the other end of School Lane care must also be taken as some bends are completely blind and traffic tends to drive at speeds which disregard safety and stopping distances.

#### 4.3 SPECIFIC RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE TURNSTONE HOUSE SITE AND VICINITY

There are specific risks associated with the approaches and exits from the Turnstone House site:

- When driving along Old Bungay Road in whichever direction, adults need to be mindful that local people often walk their dogs along the lane and there is no footpath. Although the official speed limit for the lane is higher, adults need to keep to a cautious 30 mph to show sensitivity to our few neighbours, walkers, riders, etc.

- Old Bungay Road tends not to be used so much as a short cut for traffic, but is used by farm and estate vehicles, which very often take up the full width of the road.
- When leaving Old Bungay Road at the junction with Loddon Road and Church Road you need to be aware that vehicles do use this route as a shortcut joining the A146 and A143. Some of these drivers pass by at an ill considered speed, and leaving site to join either of these A roads needs caution.
- When leaving the car park on site, staff and visitors must follow signs directing all vehicles to the left (in front of the house), keeping their speed very low.

#### 4.4 SUPERVISION ON TRANSPORT

The level of supervision necessary should form part of the risk assessment for the journey. The Visit Leader is responsible for the party at all times, including maintaining good discipline.

All group members should be made aware of the position of the exit doors, first aid kit and fire fighting equipment on larger vehicles and forms of transport (e.g. coaches, buses, ferries).

The Visit Leader should also be aware of alternative routes or means of travel in the event of delay or cancellation. These should also have been risk assessed as part of the alternative arrangement/contingency plans at the planning stage.

Factors that the Visit Leader should consider when planning supervision on transport include:

- Level of supervision that will be necessary (e.g. differences between single child, single vehicle and double-decker buses/coaches/or trains).
- Safety when crossing roads. Pedestrian crossings, traffic lights and footbridges should be used to cross roads whenever possible.
- Safety on all forms of transportation. The Visit Leader should make clear to young persons how much or how little freedom they have to 'roam'. This should have been agreed with the Visits Co-ordinator prior to departure.
- Misbehaviour is a main cause of accidents to young persons on transport. Appropriate levels of adult supervision and good discipline should be maintained at all times.
- Young persons should, as their age and maturity permits, be made aware of what to do in an emergency and what emergency procedures are.
- Seating arrangements on any form of transport should be considered and where appropriate and possible should be booked well in advance
- Safety of young persons whilst waiting at pick-up and drop-off points and when getting on and off transport – particularly important when using UK transport abroad. Young persons must be made aware of safety rules and expected standards of behaviour.
- Safety while on stops or rests during the journey – Visit Leaders should plan with the Driver sufficient stops at suitable areas to ensure the safety of all group members, including the Driver.
- Safety of the group in the event of an accident or breakdown – the group should remain under the direct supervision of the Visit Leader or other staff, wherever possible.

- Head counts, by the Visit Leader or another delegated adult, should always be carried out when the group is getting off or onto transport. It is good practice to double-check this to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the initial check.
- The Visit Leader has responsibility to check that all seat belts are fastened and adjusted appropriately

## 5 USE OF PRIVATE CARS

All staff are required to have personal transport (i.e. a car) available for business use whilst on direct duty with children. However wherever possible, journeys should be made in the two company cars. Where there is more than one journey being considered at the same time, then the company car should be used for the longer one.

SES maintains an insurance policy that covers staff cars whilst on company business. All staff should ensure that their personal motor insurance includes business use cover. Commercial vehicles (i.e. vans) are not covered by company insurance and are not suitable, unless specific personal insurance is in place to allow use with children.

Please also note that SES cannot accept liability for damage to vehicles whilst they are on the premises. Joining a professional union is strongly advised for all staff, with many unions offering malicious damage to cars cover as a benefit to members. Incidents of damage should be discussed in the first instance with the Registered Manager or Head of Education, with final decision-making resting with the Principal.

Staff and others who drive young persons in their own car must ensure their passengers' safety and indeed much if not all of the following section on company vehicles applies equally to the use of private cars.

A mileage allowance is claimable for personal transport use (see Staff Handbook).

An annual check of driving record and vehicle documentation is completed for all staff in January each year. The following documents are required:

- DVLA Licence check printout
- Vehicle insurance certificate
- Current MOT and Tax check printout

The Registered Manager and Head of Education oversee this process. Copies of the above documents should be presented to the Administrator at the Main Office by new staff at their soonest convenience.

**Any change of status in any of these documents should be reported to the administrator immediately and new copies provided.**

All road users have a duty to maintain their vehicles in a roadworthy and safe condition. Staff are reminded of this and appropriate checks should be undertaken prior to use and at regular intervals.

It is important to note that adult behaviour behind the wheel of any vehicle is a useful role modelling opportunity for staff as is courtesy to other road users whilst driving.

There are times when staff are due at work for meetings and are not directly part of the shift team. On such occasions staff are not expected to have a car available, therefore if colleagues want to partake in different modes of transport to work such as car sharing, public transport or cycling then this is something that SES would encourage and welcome. It also has the following potential benefits:

- Cost savings for staff members.
- Environmental benefits in terms of CO2 emissions and traffic volume.
- Less pressure on Car Parking space.

## **6 SEAT BELTS, SEATING ARRANGEMENTS AND THE LAW**

### **6.1 WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY ABOUT SEAT BELTS?**

You **MUST** wear a seat belt in cars, vans and other goods vehicles if one is fitted (see table below). Adults, and children aged 14 years and over, **MUST** use a seat belt or child restraint, where fitted, when seated in minibuses, buses and coaches. Exemptions are allowed for the holders of medical exemption certificates and those making deliveries or collections in goods vehicles when travelling less than 50 metres (approx 162 feet).

The table overleaf summarises the main legal requirements for wearing seat belts in cars, vans and other goods vehicles.

We are in loco parentis and our own policy states that the driver is responsible for ensuring all children, including those over 14 yrs are wearing seat belts. The law stating that it is the passenger's responsibility would not be considered a defence in any disciplinary proceedings involving any negligence in respect of this duty.

With regard to the age and height criteria, (12yr old and 1.35 metres), it is clear that wherever a child sits they require the correct booster seat. Information on admission and ongoing monitoring of height will inform the correct purchase and use of booster/restraint seats.

<b>Seat Belt Requirements</b>	<b>Front seat</b>	<b>Rear seat</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>
Driver	Seat belt <b>MUST</b> be worn if fitted		Driver
Child under 3 years of age	Correct child restraint <b>MUST</b> be used	Correct child restraint <b>MUST</b> be used. If one is not available in a taxi, may travel unrestrained.	Driver
Child from 3rd birthday up to 1.35 metres in height (or 12th birthday, whichever they reach first)	Correct child restraint <b>MUST</b> be used	Correct child restraint <b>MUST</b> be used where seat belts fitted. <b>MUST</b> use adult belt if correct child restraint is not available in a licensed taxi or private hire vehicle, or for reasons of unexpected necessity over a short distance, or if two occupied restraints prevent fitment of a third.	Driver
Child over 1.35 metres (approx 4ft 5ins) in height or 12 or 13 years	Adult seat belt <b>MUST</b> be worn if available	Adult seat belt <b>MUST</b> be worn if available	Driver
Adult passengers aged 14 and over	Seat belt <b>MUST</b> be worn if available	Seat belt <b>MUST</b> be worn if available	Passenger

## 6.2 WHERE SHOULD CHILDREN SIT?

Firstly there is no fixed rule to this and there are a number of factors and variables to consider:

- The Law in respect of age and height
- Age, maturity (size and behaviour)
- The number of children
- The mix of children and their relationships with each other and with respective adults
- Individual children's Risk Assessments and Daily Care
- The size and nature of the vehicle
- Adult confidence and authority

All advice and safety guidance in the event of an accident is consistent and suggests the rear is the safest place for children:

*“Children are best carried in the rear. The most common type of accident involves an impact to the front of the car, which means that the back seat is a safer place to travel.*

*The centre rear seat is the safest place of all - assuming the child is properly restrained in a suitable child seat - because here they are less likely to hit or be hit by deforming, intruding structures in the most common frontal and side impacts.”*

(AA Website August 2014)

However in respect of **one adult and one child** being in the car the AA also state:

*“Having said that the back is the safest, if it's just you and one child in the car then it might be best for the child to ride up-front - as long as they use an appropriate child restraint. The closer contact may be more reassuring for the child and less distracting for you, therefore reducing the risk of an accident.”*

(AA Website August 2014)

Our experience in the work with young children who have severe emotional and social and mental health problems suggests that this issue is even more magnified. Relationships are key, as are messages of trust in relation to minimising risks of poor behaviour, *the front seat is usually more conducive in this respect.*

Any history of challenging behaviour, anxiety and unpredictability with our children will influence driver awareness and risk assessment, therefore it is preferable to have the child in peripheral vision, alongside in the front seat. Also, in the rare event of dangerous behaviour or interference it is easier to control and make safe if the individual is next to you as opposed to behind you.

To be absolutely clear:

**One adult one child:** child in the front seat, unless the child’s individual Risk Assessment states differently. If that child is under 12 yrs old and less than 1.35m in height a correct booster seat must be used PLUS the passenger airbag must be turned off and the seat pushed as far back as it will go.

**Two adults one child:** If the assessment is that a second adult is required then the second adult occupies the seat directly behind the driver and the child occupies the rear passenger seat.

**Two adults two children:** This configuration is identical to the one above with the second child in the front seat taking into account the age and height issue.

### Considerations and Variations

As always adults are expected to make dynamic risk assessments and common sense judgements that have a clear rationale and commonsense logic for decisions according to circumstance.

For example in case of an older child where there is a very low level of concern it might feel much better with the young person in the front and the extra adult in the back.

The adults on duty are best informed to know the children, the dynamic at the time and will therefore make the decisions about seating on that basis, bearing in mind the above guidance.

### Preparing Children

Preparation of the children prior to getting into the vehicle is key to the success of the journey. Adults clearly need to be in charge. Individual and peer conflict should be avoided by having clear criteria, expectations and rationale that is explained to the young people. It is better to have this conversation in the building rather than in the vehicle.

## **7 USE OF COMPANY VEHICLES**

There are two company owned cars available for use by staff. All staff members have a detailed vehicle familiarisation session as part of their induction and are offered any further training if required. It is an expectation that you look after company cars as you would your own vehicle. Although the Principal is ultimately responsible for the pool vehicles, the Visit Leader and driver are responsible for the vehicle during the visit/journey/activity.

The driver must be qualified to drive, be aged over 21 (any staff under 21 may be accepted at the discretion of the company insurers) and have a current driving licence that complies with the criteria outlined within SES insurance arrangements. There will be an annual check of documentation (see Use of Private Cars above) relating to the driving responsibilities outlined in staff contracts.

The Visit Leader should ensure that staff driving company vehicles are rested enough to drive. Staffing levels should be such that where longer journeys are involved an allowance needs to be made for the driver to have adequate rest before undertaking supervisory duties. Drivers must always adhere to Highway Code guidance and legislation.

Drivers must ensure they use the specific individual vehicle logs to record the time and destination of every journey they undertake using the company cars. This needs completing prior to leaving site.

A driver must:

- observe company guidance where appropriate;
- have held a driving Licence for at least one year
- not drive while taking medication or undergoing treatment that might affect their ability or judgement;
- know what to do in an emergency;
- know how to use first-aid and fighting equipment (if available);
- avoid driving for long periods and ensure that rests are taken when needed;
- clarify and comply with transport regulations and insurance requirements;
- take into consideration the effects of the working day;

- if they have doubts about health such as eyesight to communicate this and action necessary health checks

If a staff member is guilty of a road traffic offence whilst in charge of children and/or a company vehicle then disciplinary procedures will be implemented. Each offence will be considered individually. The outcome of these procedures will depend on a number of factors some of which may be:

- The previous track record of the employee
- The seriousness, nature and context of the offence together with the employee's recognition of such.
- Any other mitigating circumstances.

A staff member holds personal responsibility for the payment of any fines or charges incurred by road traffic offences whilst on company business.

## 7.1 MAINTENANCE AND CHECKS OF COMPANY VEHICLES

The Principal holds overall responsibility for company vehicles.

Whilst the vehicles are based on site the handyperson physically checks and fuels them on a weekly basis, (see appendices for Weekly Car Checks). If the vehicle is being used on an extended visit or journey then the Visit Leader carries the responsibility for checking the vehicle. Staff using the vehicles are responsible for ensuring that they are clean and tidy on the inside after each journey. A weekly internal and external clean should ideally be undertaken by the children, supported by the adults. If this is compromised then the handyperson should ensure that the cleanliness of the vehicles is maintained.

A delegated adult will check both company vehicles at the end of every day. The check and its findings will be recorded on the daily handover sheet and signed by the delegated adult. When checking the vehicles the following criteria will be applied:

- There should be no evidence of food, sweets or drinks being consumed within the car.
- All evidence of previous activity should be removed.
- The vehicles should be free of personal items.
- Excessive interior mud or dirt needs to be rectified.

If the vehicles condition is in anyway compromised, then it will be temporarily removed from service and the last adult to use the car will be required to resolve the situation immediately. This may involve requesting an adult to return to site after completing a shift. In this event other means of transport will be required, or the event/activity cancelled.

Any driver should report in writing as soon as possible any defects or maintenance problems. This would need to be recorded on the overall Weekly Car Checks logs. If the defect compromises the roadworthiness of the vehicle in any way then this should be reported to the duty DCM immediately and subsequently the Principal.

The person(s) responsible for maintaining the vehicles should:

- ensure proper servicing by a reputable garage;
- maintain the record-of-use book with the service history, insurance and other relevant documents;

All staff are responsible for completing the necessary visual checks before embarking on a journey, regardless of how small the journey. Any defects discovered within the course of these checks should be recorded in the specific Weekly Car Checks log and the DCM alerted verbally to the nature and extent of the defect. The vehicle will then be removed from service and the last adult to previously use the car will be required to resolve the situation immediately. Any defects that occur or become apparent whilst under the care of a staff member should be reported in the same way.

If a defect occurs at any time that is of a serious nature to compromise the roadworthiness and/or safety of the vehicle then the journey in that particular vehicle should be suspended and alternative contingency plans implemented.

## 7.2 PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT

The law requires that you stop if there is injury or damage to any person or vehicle, property or certain animals, including dogs and horses. You must give your name, address and insurance details to anyone with reasonable grounds for asking – whether there is injury or not.

If the vehicle does not belong to you, you must give the registration number and the name and address of the owner.

If an accident involves injury to people or certain animals or causes damage to property you must report it to the police as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours.

The following appendices will help you deal with things more effectively in the event of an accident:

Appendix A: Ten Simple Rules To Help You After An Accident

Appendix B: Vehicle Accident Sheet

## 8 CONTROL ISSUES IN DOMESTIC VEHICLES

At all times the driver of the car is the person in control of all decisions appertaining to the operation and seating of the vehicle. It is important that adults set or remind children about expectations and limits before getting in to the vehicle. If there are any problems whatsoever with this, the journey should not start. Equally if problems arise during the journey, the driver must decide whether to stop to address the issues.

The person (s) responsible for completing car induction for new staff should:

- ensure that drivers of the company cars are aware of their responsibilities.
- understand basic control issues within vehicles

Care should be taken to be aware of individual risk assessments in case they have a bearing on seating, numbers, etc. Where there is an identified risk and two adults are required to be with the young person, one adult should be seated in the rear behind the driver. If at any time there are concerns about a child's behaviour in transport, the duty DCM must be informed and advice taken.

Issues around any form of physical intervention must be referred to the Team Teach sub-committee in order for this to be considered and incorporated into training where appropriate.

## 9 USE OF MINIBUSES

In order to preserve the domestic feel of Avocet and Turnstone House the decision has already been taken that transport would be by car. It is highly unlikely that a minibus would ever be purchased. Therefore company cars have been provided as well as the use of private cars being a contractual requirement for staff employed by SES.

Equally the legislation and guidance about the use of minibuses is complex.

Drivers who passed a category B test (normal car test) before 1 January 1997 were **granted automatically** category D1 (passenger carrying vehicle - not for hire or reward) entitlement. Since 1 January 1997 drivers **no longer** receive automatic category D1 entitlement when they pass a category B car test. A driver who holds a passenger carrying vehicle D licence (for hire or reward) can drive any bus with more than 8 passenger seats.

Bodies that are deemed to be commercial, e.g. independent schools which lack charitable status are normally only allowed to use category D1 drivers to drive their minibuses. Independent legal advice is necessary to ascertain if drivers who only have category B licences can be used. The interpretation of the establishments' status will be the primary objective of this legal advice.

Some private schools having private business status, operate their minibuses on a commercial operator's (PCV) licence. In these circumstances, the driver would not be permitted to drive the minibuses on a standard car licence. Current opinion is that the driving of students in minibuses for non-social purposes such as field trips is **likely to be viewed by a court of law** as being for 'hire and reward'. If the minibus is to be used for 'Hire and Reward', then a Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) - Category D Licence is generally required.

It is therefore very unlikely that SES would use minibuses. Any consideration of such use would have to be referred to the Directors.

## 10 **COACH AND BUS TRAVEL**

The Visit Co-ordinator and Visit Leader are responsible for ensuring that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company. Coach companies may be able to supply the names of previous users who may provide a reference.

When arranging travel by coach, it is important to carry out the following procedures.

These must be attended to by the Visit Leader or another responsible member of staff:

- Make sure seat belts are fitted (whilst seat belts must be fitted on coaches which carry groups of children, they are not legally required on buses. Buses where seat belts are not fitted are not appropriate for visits involving a long journey).
- Before allowing young people on board, check the general appearance of the coach to make sure it appears to be in a serviceable condition and draw any obvious defects to the Driver's attention.
- Ensure young people remain seated and wear seatbelts.
- Make sure luggage is stowed safely without blocking emergency exits.
- Make sure staff sit in different areas of the coach to ensure supervision of young people.
- Make sure there is a mobile phone on the coach (if you are going abroad, take a mobile phone that works where you are going.).
- Remember that UK coaches will have exits that open to roadsides abroad not pavements as in the UK.
- Follow any specific safety guidelines or protocols issued by the provider.

For a longer journey, and especially with younger children, it is best to use a coach that has a toilet on board. It is wise to check the location of the toilet and the surrounding area, for example, is there a side exit door that could accidentally be opened?

The Visit Leader should check the interior condition of the coach when young people disembark at the end of a journey, to ensure that no damage has been carried out during the hire period.

All coaches taken abroad from the UK must meet the above guidelines. Foreign transport arranged for use while abroad must come as near as possible to these standards and must be in accordance with local legislation. Where this results in a different specification, parents/carers must be made aware of this before the journey to ensure Informed Parental Consent.

## 11 **TRAVEL BY SEA**

A ship or ferry can offer a variety of risks. To minimise these, Visit Leaders should:

- brief young people about procedures before the journey and give a reminder to all participants prior to embarkation;

- ensure that all participants know what to do if they become lost or disorientated on board;
- agree safety procedures and socially acceptable standards of behaviour;
- arrange a permanently staffed meeting point for young people in the group;
- arrange check-in times well before docking;
- determine how the group should split up to move around, as determined through the assessment of risk process, including on-going risk assessment;
- indicate to young people any areas to be off-limits and check that this is observed – especially when sea conditions are bad;
- if appropriate, plan on-board activities;
- if possible, arrange an agreed group seating area.

## **12 TRAVEL BY RAIL**

Wherever possible, seats should be booked in advance to reduce costs. Visit Leaders should:

- brief young people beforehand about procedures and make them aware of dangers, for example, from standing too close to the edge of the platform, leaning out of windows, moving between carriages, etc.
- agree safety procedures and socially acceptable standards of behaviour.

Some children may travel independently as part of a growing social skills programme or to travel home and back at weekends and holidays. In such cases this is fully underpinned through risk assessment, care planning and growing independence evident within care planning structures.

## **13 TRAVEL BY AIR**

In general, air travel is more rigidly controlled, leaving less opportunity for young people to misbehave. Much of the information for travel by sea or rail applies.

- Young persons should be reminded about aviation regulations relating to the taking of items not belonging to themselves.
- Young persons need to comply willingly with all security measures.
- Visit Leaders should ensure sufficient time to book in. Some airlines will open a special desk to book large groups in – check with the operator.
- Young persons and parents should be made aware of the aviation restrictions pertinent with regard to size/weight of luggage and hand baggage.

## **14 TRAVEL ABROAD**

Consideration for journeys abroad is automatically referred to the Principal via the Visits Co-ordinator and will also involve approval from the Directors. Much of the above guidance applies to visits abroad, but equally each trip under consideration will require additional, specifically tailored discussion and advice with the Visit Leader and staff team, including advice from the foreign office with regard to particular countries or regions.

It is highly likely that such arrangements will involve tour companies or adventure activity operators and many factors will be considered in the Risk Assessment and Planning and Preparation.

## **15 INSURANCE**

The Visits Co-ordinator and Visit Leader must ensure, well before the group departs, that adequate insurance arrangements are in place. SES has worldwide travel insurance and the Visits Co-ordinator will check that all aspects of the proposed journey are within the remit of the insurance cover. The Visits Co-ordinator can only check against the details and plans forwarded for approval, therefore it is important that the visit leader keeps the Visits Co-ordinator fully informed of any changes to itinerary and/or travel arrangements and updates the field file accordingly.

A copy of the travel insurance policy is kept centrally in the SES office.

The Company's travel policy covers all authorised trips carried out anywhere in the world and for any authorised activity. The policy year normally runs from 1 April to 31 March. The policy covers all authorised members of the party, including staff, volunteer helpers and young persons.

Other members of the party, such as a relative of one of the adults who is on the trip but not acting in a supervisory role, are not insured under the travel policy. Such circumstances would be rare. However, these people should make their own insurance arrangements. The Company does not allow supervisory adults to take their own children on a visit or journey.

The Visit Leader should inform parents and placing authorities about the levels of insurance cover in place and the scope of what is included and excluded from the policies. It is recommended that a copy of the travel policy be given to the parents and placement authorities of each young person on the trip as early as possible in the booking process.

When third parties are used to organise parts of the trip, such as travel companies, coach hire businesses or activity providers, the group organiser should check each of the bodies have public liability insurance. A minimum of £5 million is recommended.

There are restrictions within the company's insurance in respect of staff that accumulate points on their license in relation to traffic offences. Currently staff with more than 7 points are required to cease driving pool cars, and their own cars under the occasional business user scheme, until the insurer makes a decision regarding continued cover for the individual concerned. To facilitate this, a copy of the driving license is sent to the insurers. Their response will depend on the nature of the offence but could, for example, lead to an increase in the excess charged. The staff member will therefore be liable for paying the additional excess charge should the company have to pay the excess following an accident.

Should a member of staff accumulate penalty points that cause them to be uninsurable for a period of time in respect of company business, then the matter will be considered under the companies disciplinary procedures.

## **16 APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Ten Simple Rules To Help You After An Accident

Appendix B: Vehicle Accident Sheet

Appendix C: Weekly Car Checks

## TEN SIMPLE RULES TO HELP YOU AFTER AN ACCIDENT

In an accident most people freeze or panic. This guide gives you clear things to do to ensure you respond effectively.

- 1 **Switch off the engine.**
- 2 **Don't let anyone at the scene smoke** – *there may be a fuel leak.*
- 3 **Unless they are seriously injured, get all passengers to leave the car and go to a place of safety.**
- 4 **If anyone is injured, call an ambulance and the police.**
- 5 **Do not move a seriously injured person.** *Loosen any tight clothing and cover the person with a coat or rug.*
- 6 **Do not move vehicles (unless there is a danger to traffic) until police arrive.** *If the police are not attending, do not move vehicles until an independent person has noted their positions.*
- 7 **Take steps to warn other traffic of an obstruction** – *use hazard warning lights or warning triangle. At night, ensure that no one stands near the car – it is dangerous and they could cover up the lights.*
- 8 **Record the important information in the accident record sheet** (*see below*)
- 9 **Do not apologise or admit to any fault.** *Who is to blame will be decided later.*
- 10 **Call the duty DCM** *to inform them and get advice.*

## Specialist Education Services: Vehicle Accident Record Sheet

### Did anyone see the accident?

Ask for bystanders details, particularly anyone who was not involved in the accident.

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Tel. No. ....

### Were there other vehicles involved?

Record registration numbers first (owners can be traced if they leave without giving information)

Reg. No. ....

Vehicle Type: .....

Driver's Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Tel. No. ....

Damage: .....

.....

.....

Insurers: .....

### Was anyone injured?

Try to get their details if possible.

Name: ..... Name: .....

Address: ..... Address: .....

.....

.....

Tel. No. .... Tel. No. ....

Where seated? What injuries? ..... Where seated? What injuries? .....

.....

.....

**Was there any property damage?**

Include street lights, bollards, trees, fences, etc.

Type and Nature of Damage: .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**What happened?**

Make brief notes. Include street and place names.

.....

.....

.....

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.....

.....

.....

**What did the accident scene look like?**

Draw a rough map of the scene showing the relative placement of vehicles on the road, and clearly showing where vehicles came from and ended up. Show any lane markings.

**Where and when was the accident?**

Date: .....

Time (24 hr clock): ..... Daylight ..... Twilight ..... Dark .....

Visibility: .....

Place: .....

Nearest Town: .....

Weather conditions: .....

Road conditions: .....

Road width: .....

Speed limits: .....

Street lights:                None ..... On ..... Off ..... Good ..... Poor .....

.....

Did police attend?                Yes ..... No .....

Was the accident reported?    Yes ..... No .....

**WEEKLY CAR CHECKS**

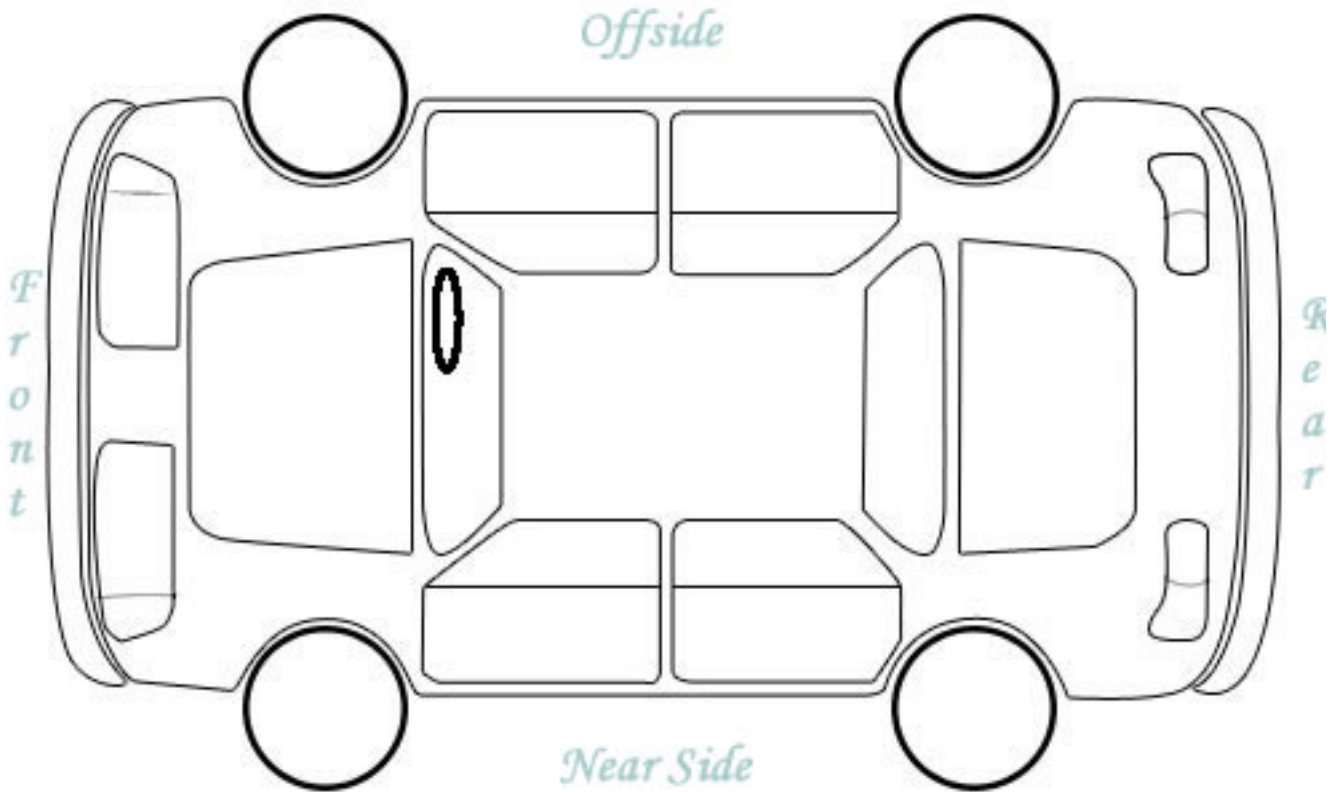
<b>Registration Number:</b>		<b>Week Commencing:</b>	
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	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>Fluid levels:</b>		
<b>Oil</b>		
<b>Water/anti freeze</b>		
<b>Washer bottles</b>		
<b>Power steering</b>		
<b>Brake</b>		
<b>Clutch</b>		
<b>Tyre pressures</b>		
<b>Tyre condition &amp; Tread Depth</b>		
<b>Windscreen</b>		
<b>Engine oil leaks</b>		
<b>Fan &amp; air con</b>		
<b>Wipers working &amp; blade condition</b>		
<b>Lights:</b>		
<b>Low/high beam</b>		
<b>Fog</b>		
<b>Indicators</b>		
<b>Brake</b>		
<b>Hazard</b>		
<b>Horn</b>		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> aid kit present</b>		
<b>Fuel</b>		
<b>Bodywork</b>		

<b>Above Checks Completed By:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
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## Bodywork

The position of all damage to the outside of the car must be indicated on the chart, by the person who does the weekly check. This is an incremental process and markers from previous check, where the damage remains unresolved, must be carried forward. Any adult identifying new damage must mark it on the chart and report it below.



## Maintenance Concerns

Any adult identifying a concern must report it below.

DATE	REPORTED PROBLEM	ADULT