



**Villa Real School**

*together we achieve*

# Information and Guidelines for School Transport 2023

Responsibility: Scott Wears

Date: February 2023

Signed and Adopted by the Governing Body:

Chair of Governors

Date: 02.02.2023

Date to be reviewed: February 2027

## **INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

We are pleased to welcome you as providers of transport for our pupils and students.

It is advised that you spend some time getting to know the pupils/students and families prior to commencing your transportation contract. We work in partnership with our pupils'/students' parents/ carers and would insist that transport providers do the same where possible. By becoming familiar with our pupils/students prior to taking on a contract parents will have the opportunity to give your drivers and escorts advice on their children, for example potential flight risk and needs full supervision while being escorted to and from transport. If you require further advice regarding a pupil/student, you are always welcome to come into school to discuss pupils and students if needed; we will support and provide clarification on an individual basis.

Due to the high volume of traffic moving through the school twice per day the carpark is a potential area of high risk. It is essential that those who enter the school grounds during these peak times are fully aware that our pupils/students have a wide range of complex needs, physical disabilities and conditions; including medical conditions and challenging behaviour. So, driving with care and adhering to the car parks speed limit is absolutely crucial and we will not tolerate any careless driving on our premises. Our speed limit is **5mph**.

Villa Real School are committed to implementing measures to minimise the risk of injury from traffic to all and are committed to the monitoring of all transport arrangements; ensuring working guidelines are adhered to at all times.

Transport arrangements are reviewed by Villa Real School on a regular basis and when necessary (determined by the level of risk).

We hope we can rely on your support to work with us to provide the professional, respectful service our families have come to expect.

All contract vehicles must be registered with Durham County Council, and pupil escorts must hold a current badge, which should be on display at all times. Please keep us informed of any change in contact details. It is imperative we have up-to-date contact details, in the event of school closure, emergency or change in circumstances. If you feel at any time that your contract agreement is not being adhered to by families let us know (Scott Wears first contact) so we can mediate where necessary.

## **COVID 19**

In addition, we follow the full COVID risk assessment around the transportation requirements for our school.

### **Arrival and Pick Up Times.**

Access for arrival/ drop off to the school's grounds will be granted at **9.00am**, please ensure arrival at school no later than 9.35am. Access for end of day/ collection to the school's grounds will be granted at 3.10pm, please ensure collection no later than 3.45pm. If you arrive before 3pm you are blocking the exit to school visitors and emergency services. If you have an after-school contract with another school, please consider your timing. It is deemed unacceptable to arrive at Villa Real late (**after 3.45 pm**) following a prior run. This impacts significantly on pupil and student welfare and behaviour, the effective running of the School day, staffing, and classroom management. DCC Transport team will be informed via school of consistent lateness and failure to arrive and depart in a timely manner.

Our own school mini buses often require access at 3.00pm, routes into school must be kept clear to return safely and allow pupils/ students to disembark, return into school and complete their school day. School minibuses must be parked in allotted spaces before pupils disembark, it is not safe for them to alight the vehicle and weave through traffic to return to class.

We ask you adhere to the speed restriction of **5MP** while driving into the school ground ensuring you drive with maximum care; there are very many vulnerable pupils and students who have little or no road sense. Despite being well-supervised, pupils/students may sometimes attempt to abscond. Always ensure that there is space in front and behind your vehicle for wheelchair users.

### **Villa Real School Transport Procedure for all staff and visitors**

Villa Real School's transport team supervise arrival/pick up times, the team are there to supervise and control the traffic flow, ensure the safety and welfare of all while in the car park and to ensure the safe loading and unloading of pupils/students who require a wheelchair or walker.

The transport team have been trained in line with the current Durham County Council Accessible Vehicle Training (AVT). The transport team are easily recognised as they all wear Hi-Viz jackets, the team consists of Scott Wears (Transport Lead) and Robin Stokoe (Caretaker)

Transport staff must ensure pupils/ students remain on the vehicle until a member of school staff collects the pupils/ students and escorts them into school ensuring maximum safety at all times. Staff will automatically

commence collecting pupils from the front of the taxi queue at **9.15 am** ensuring traffic can leave premises promptly. Transport staff **MUST NOT** bring pupils/students from vehicle to the front of the school or into the school reception area to await school staff as this causes overcrowding risks. Never carry a pupil/student unless in an emergency situation, alert school staff immediately.

Pupils'/students leaving school; classes are notified of transport arrival at 3.20pm. If you are running late contact school on 01207 503651 with an estimated arrival time. Pupils leave school premises in order of contractor's arrival- from the front of the queue. All pupils and students will be escorted to their vehicle by a member of school staff and handed over safely to vehicle escort. If for any reason a pupil/student is unable to leave school promptly a member of their class staff will contact a member of the transport team who will in turn inform your escort or driver. Please be aware that due to the nature of our pupils/students at times there could be a medical or behavioural issue that could prevent them from leaving school promptly we would kindly ask for your patience at these times.

**Engines must be switched off and keys removed whilst waiting for pupils/students in the school carpark and school transport team will direct a vehicle to move to a side space if required to wait due to an issue.**

#### **Report of incident/issues protocol for all staff, visitors and taxi firms**

Villa Real School transport team continuously work in close partnership with parents/carers, taxi firms (drivers and passenger assistants) and Durham County Councils Transport Team to ensure that any incidents or issues related to the transportation of our Pupils/Students are dealt with as swiftly and professionally as possible. It is therefore important to take note of the incident/issue reporting protocols to ensure this continues.

**In the event that an incident/issue has occurred regarding the transportation of our pupils/students the schools transport should be informed immediately. Parents/Carers and Taxis Drivers/PA's can do this by alerting a member of the school transport team or by calling a member of the transport team directly on 01207 503651. If there is no team member available Reception staff will contact SMT.**

Please note that if it is deemed necessary the transport team may direct you to park your vehicle in a safe space, out of the flow of traffic, and invite you into the schools' meeting room to continue the conversation in a private setting. This could be in relation to an issue with a pupil that requires privacy to maintain dignity. The Transport Team may request that the Senior Management Team

attend if they feel it is required. At no time should private information be shared in the school car park or reception.

All staff must adhere to the following protocol if they are witness to or need to report an incident/issue regarding transport. If a parent/carer or Driver/PA alerts you to an incident/issue that you feel needs to be dealt with urgently you must alert a member of the Transport Team immediately. This must then be logged onto CPOMS within **24 hours** and Transport should be tagged. All non-urgent issues should be logged onto CPOMS within **24 hours** and transport should be tagged. If it is a safety or safeguarding issue the Safeguarding Team must also be contact immediately.

Staff should not under any circumstances attempt to deal with or discuss any incident/issue themselves. All incidents/issues should be dealt with by a member of the transport team, this includes speaking to taxi drivers and PA's regarding lateness, safety protocols around the clamping and fixing of wheelchairs or directing vehicles where to park in the carpark. If staff wish to share information regarding a child's health, behaviour etc. relevant to transport they must inform Transport staff so that the taxi can be moved to the side and a meeting room allocated for the discussion.

### **Loading and Unloading**

All vehicles are prohibited from loading or unloading pupils/students outside of the 'SAFE ZONE'. The safe zone is marked with white lines on the ground in the school carpark; indicating the area which is deemed safe. Traffic will be directed to move into the safe zone by staff on duty wearing a high visibility jacket.

**Please allow enough space for tail lifts and ramps to be lowered when your vehicle is parked up, allow sufficient space for the vehicle in front. Please allow enough space to pupils/students are able to disembark from their transport safely.** If you have an issue with your tail lift please inform a member of the Transport Team, who may if it is possible ask you to move your vehicle to the side to a safe space until the issue is rectified or provide additional support or staffing to ensure safety is not compromised.

If you are transporting younger pupils, please ensure you have; where required the correct booster or pupil seat, one size fits all seatbelt mechanisms are correctly fitted before departure (buses). We ask that seat belts are in good condition, positioned correctly and are in good working order. As a school we would also advise that where necessary that seatbelt locks are in place for pupils that may have a tendency to unlock their own seat belt during transit. Pupils/students may be unable to be transported if the afore mentioned are not deemed inappropriate, are evident or are not in working order

Regarding pupils and students in wheelchairs the correct clamps and harnesses are essential. It is essential that clamps are not mixed and that AVT training is fully implemented. From time to time, members of the transport team who are fully AVT trained may, if they deem it necessary, check that wheelchair users are secured safely in vehicles. If it is deemed that our Risk Assessment and Safe System of Work are not being adhered to we will ask you to remain on the premises until the situation is corrected; There are several Moving and Handling experts in school who are always happy to offer advice. LA Transport team will also carry out spot checks regarding safety and adherence of protocols.

**We have a duty of care to our pupils and students and are responsible for their safety.**

### **Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers who drop off and collect pupils/students are kindly asked to remain in their vehicles and a member of school staff will come and collect your child. The school reception area is to be kept clear at all times. Parents/carers will be asked to park their vehicle appropriately and safely before entering the school building. If unsure where to park, please ask staff on transport duty and they will direct you to an appropriate place to park until your child is called. Parents and carers must not leave vehicles unattended, this may often cause the obstruction of other vehicles departing school grounds. If your child leaves school early for an appointment or is sent home unwell it is parents/carers responsibility to contact the taxi provider as soon as possible to inform them that their child will no longer need collecting from school.

Please follow the instruction of the staff on transport duty at all times.

### **Arriving on foot or other means of arrival**

We ask those parents/carers with children who walk to school or arrive by alternative means access the school premises by the top gate and use the safe footpath provided. We request this for the arrival and departure of pupil's/students. The carpark is not to be used to access the school premises at arrival or departure times as it is very busy and potentially hazardous area with the constant arrival and leaving of vehicles.

### **Medical Conditions**

At Villa Real we have many pupils and students with epilepsy and other at times complex medical conditions that need to be monitored closely to ensure the well-being of our pupils/students. Some may not have had a seizure for years yet are still prescribed emergency medication as they have not been given the "all

clear". It is essential that drivers and escorts are aware of all pupils/students with current or historical epilepsy. More importantly, and with special regards to pupils or students whose epilepsy is still prominent, please have an action plan in place should you have to manage an epileptic episode.

If your driver or escort does not feel confident in following a Medical Management Plan, then it is very worthwhile considering whether you are able to fulfil the contract. We can also offer specialist training in epilepsy awareness which will make both transport staff and families more confident in knowing that the pupil and student is receiving good care. If you feel that this could be appropriate for your drivers/escorts, please do not hesitate to contact School and we will happily make arrangements to provide this support. In the event that a pupil/student is needing assistance regarding illness, a medical condition or you need first aid support while in the school carpark please alert a member of the Transport Team or a member of SMT Villa Real Staff as soon as possible.

### **Distressed Behaviour**

Pupils/students at our school may sometimes become distressed showing both low level a higher level of behaviour that could become difficult to manage. This includes while in transit to school/home and while being escorted from home/school to their transport. This can be danger to those in the vehicle and others on the road. If you are transporting a pupil/student who can sometimes display distressed behaviour it is essential to consider a safe seating plan. For example; the pupil/student being seated in the furthest seat from the driver while in a five-seater car or the rear of the vehicle so other children, the driver and escort are out of reach. If you have any concerns about transporting a pupil who has the potential to display behaviour that challenge, please ask a member of the transport team or SMT school staff for advice. They will in turn be able to offer where possible support and strategies for the safe transportation of said pupil/student.

### **COVID 19**

In addition, we follow the latest COVID risk assessment around the transportation requirements for our school.

### **SAFEGUARDING**

All providers must attend Durham Local Authority Safeguarding training and adhere to Keeping Safe in Education, September 2022.

## Summary of the Seat Belt Laws for Cars, Taxis and Private Hire Cars

	Front Seat	Rear Seat	Who is responsible?
<b>Driver</b>	Seat belt MUST be worn if available		<b>Driver</b>
<b>Pupils Under 3 Years Old</b>	Correct pupil restraint MUST be used	Correct pupil restraint MUST be used If one is not available in a taxi, then the pupil may travel unrestrained in the rear	<b>Driver</b>
<b>Pupils and students aged 3 and above, until they reach EITHER their 12th birthday OR 135cm in height</b>	Correct pupil and student restraint MUST be used	Where seat belts fitted, correct pupil and student restraint MUST be used MUST use adult belt if the correct pupil and student restraint is not available in three scenarios: - in a in a licensed taxi or private hire vehicle - for a short distance for reason of unexpected necessity - two occupied pupil and student restraints prevent fitment of a third In addition, a pupil and student 3 and over may travel unrestrained in the rear seat of	<b>Driver</b>



		a vehicle if seat belts are not available	
<b>Pupil and student over 135cm, or 12 to 13 years</b>	Seat belt MUST be worn if available	Seat belt MUST be worn if available	<b>Driver</b>
<b>Adult passengers (i.e. 14 years and over)</b>	Seat belt MUST be worn if available	Seat belt MUST be worn if available	<b>Passenger</b>

At Villa Real, we recognise the driver and the escort are jointly responsible for pupils/ students wearing seatbelts.