

The ReConnect Programme – Transportation Policy

OWNERSHIP:	The ReConnect Programme
AUTHORISED BY:	Chief Operating Officer
REVIEW:	August 2027

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all transportation arranged or undertaken by The ReConnect Programme is safe, lawful, appropriately supervised and centred on the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people.

Scope

This policy applies to The ReConnect Programme, including all employees, workers, contractors, volunteers, authorised drivers and third-party transport providers. It covers organisation-owned, hired and personal vehicles, minibuses, taxis and private hire vehicles, public transport, walking and cycling where the journey is organised by ReConnect.

Safeguarding commitment

The ReConnect Programme is committed to ensuring that transport never creates an avoidable safeguarding risk. Journey planning, driver approval, supervision, handover arrangements and incident reporting will reflect the individual needs and vulnerabilities of the young people travelling.

POLICY

General Principles

This policy sets out how The ReConnect Programme plans, authorises and manages transport connected with its work. It protects young people, staff, drivers, passengers and the public; supports compliance with legal and insurance requirements; and ensures that transport is consistent with ReConnect's safeguarding duties and trauma-informed approach.

Transport includes journeys in ReConnect-owned, leased or hired vehicles; staff members' own vehicles; minibuses; taxis and private hire vehicles; public transport; and walking or cycling where organised by ReConnect. Ordinary commuting to a normal place of work is outside scope unless a person is transporting a young person, equipment or travelling to another work location as part of their duties.

Principles

The welfare and safety of each young person is the overriding consideration.

Transport arrangements will be planned around the journey, the driver, the vehicle and the individual needs of passengers.

Only authorised, appropriately licensed and insured drivers may drive for ReConnect.

No journey involving a young person will take place without appropriate consent, risk assessment and journey arrangements.

Young people will be treated with dignity. Reasonable adjustments will be made for SEND, disability, medical, sensory, communication and emotional-regulation needs.

Staff may stop, delay or change a journey whenever continuing would be unsafe.

Roles and responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team

Approve the transport framework, resources and authorised-driver arrangements.

Ensure suitable insurance, maintenance, risk assessment and incident-review systems are in place.

Confirm whether any minibus operation requires a Section 19 permit, operator licence, different licence entitlement or specialist advice before use.

Ensure commissioning and safeguarding requirements are reflected in third-party transport arrangements.

Transport lead / designated manager

Maintain the authorised-driver register and vehicle records.

Complete or obtain driving-licence checks and review endorsements, restrictions or disqualifications.

Verify insurance, MOT and other documentation before approving personal vehicles.

Coordinate vehicle servicing, defect reporting, keys, breakdown arrangements and journey records.

Escalate concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Health and Safety Lead or senior management as appropriate.

Journey or visit lead

Ensure consent, attendance lists, emergency contacts, risk assessments and staffing arrangements are complete.

Brief drivers and passengers, including collection and handover arrangements.

Monitor weather, road, behavioural and medical risks and amend or cancel the journey where necessary.

Ensure someone at ReConnect knows the route, destination, expected return time and who is travelling.

Drivers

Comply with the Highway Code, road traffic law, this policy and all reasonable instructions.

Carry out pre-use checks and refuse to use a defective, overloaded or unsuitable vehicle.

Be fit to drive and report anything that may affect their licence, insurance or ability to drive safely.

Ensure passengers use the correct seat belt or child restraint and do not move off until everyone is secure.

Drive calmly and professionally, without rushing or responding to pressure from passengers or schedules.

Report collisions, damage, defects, near misses, complaints, safeguarding concerns and motoring offences promptly.

Passengers and young people

Passengers must follow reasonable safety instructions, wear restraints, remain seated, avoid distracting the driver and treat the vehicle and others respectfully. Expectations and support strategies should be explained in an accessible way. Behaviour that creates an immediate danger may result in the vehicle stopping in a safe place while support is sought.

Driver authorisation and fitness

Before driving for work, a person must be approved by the designated manager and recorded on the authorised-driver register. Approval is vehicle- and activity-specific and may be withdrawn or restricted.

Required evidence	Minimum ReConnect control
Driving licence	Valid licence for the vehicle category; identity and entitlement verified through an appropriate DVLA check process.
Driving history	Endorsements and relevant collisions considered through a proportionate risk assessment. A non-clean licence does not automatically prohibit driving, but requires management and insurer approval.
Insurance	ReConnect vehicle cover confirmed, or personal policy expressly covering the proposed business use and transport of young people where applicable.
Vehicle legality	Current MOT where required, Vehicle Excise Duty status and roadworthy condition.
Competence	Familiarisation and any required training, assessment or minibus qualification completed.
Safeguarding	Appropriate safer-recruitment checks and safeguarding training for the role and activity.
Health	Driver confirms they meet DVLA medical requirements and disclose relevant changes promptly.

Licence and document checks will normally be completed at least annually and more frequently where the

insurer, risk assessment or management decision requires it. Drivers must immediately report disqualification, licence expiry, new endorsements, significant collisions, insurance cancellation or restrictions, or any health or medication change that may affect driving.

Fitness to drive

A driver must not drive when affected by alcohol, illegal drugs, fatigue, illness, emotional distress, eyesight problems, or prescription or non-prescription medicine that may impair safe driving. A driver who is unsure must seek medical or pharmacist advice and tell their manager that they are not fit to drive, without having to disclose unnecessary medical details.

No-fault stop rule: A driver will not be criticised or disadvantaged for declining or stopping a journey on genuine safety grounds.

Vehicle standards and pre-use checks

Every vehicle used for ReConnect business must be suitable for the passengers and task, legally compliant, correctly insured, maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements, and free from known safety-critical defects. Passenger and load limits must never be exceeded.

Pre-use check

Tyres, wheels, lights, mirrors, windows, wipers and washers.

Brakes, steering, warning lights, fuel or charge level and visible fluid leaks.

Seat belts, head restraints, child restraints, doors, locks and accessibility equipment.

Cleanliness, loose objects, luggage security and clear driver visibility.

First aid kit, high-visibility vest, warning triangle where appropriate, emergency contacts and breakdown details.

Any existing damage, defect or unusual vehicle condition.

Defects must be recorded and reported. A vehicle must be taken out of service where a defect may affect safety or legality. Only an authorised person or competent repairer may confirm its return to use.

Personal vehicles

Use of a personal vehicle is by prior approval, not an entitlement. The owner remains responsible for its roadworthiness, insurance, tax, maintenance, breakdown cover and any insurance excess. Mileage will only be reimbursed where the journey was authorised and the required evidence is current.

Journey planning and risk assessment

Driving for work is assessed using the safe journey, safe driver and safe vehicle approach. The level of written assessment must be proportionate to the journey and passenger needs. Routine arrangements may be covered by an approved general assessment; unusual, higher-risk or off-site visits require a specific assessment.

Purpose, route, distance, timing, parking, collection and handover points.

Weather, road conditions, roadworks, congestion, daylight and remote locations.

Driver familiarity, working hours, fatigue, breaks and alternative drivers.

Vehicle size, accessibility, luggage or equipment, fuel or charging and breakdown arrangements.

Passenger numbers, ages, child restraints, supervision, SEND, medical needs, mobility, communication, sensory needs and known triggers.

Behaviour and safeguarding risks, including absconding, conflict, allegations, inappropriate boundaries and lone-working considerations.

Communication arrangements, emergency contacts and what to do if delayed.

Drivers should normally take a meaningful break before two hours of continuous driving, and earlier where fatigue, conditions or individual needs require it. Work and journey schedules must not create pressure to speed or drive when tired.

Transporting young people

Authorisation, consent and records

Only authorised staff or approved providers may transport young people on behalf of ReConnect.

Appropriate parent or carer consent and emergency contact information must be available, subject to any lawful placement or care arrangements.

The journey must be linked to an approved timetable, visit, activity, emergency plan or individual transport arrangement.

A passenger list and journey record must identify the driver, vehicle, passengers, collection and destination points, planned times and any significant change.

Collection and handover must be to the agreed person or place. A young person must not be left without safe, agreed supervision.

Supervision and safeguarding

Staffing will be determined by risk assessment, not by a fixed assumption. A second adult should be used where needs, behaviour, medical risk, route or safeguarding considerations make this necessary. One-to-one transport may take place only where authorised and supported by recorded safeguards.

Use planned routes and avoid unplanned stops unless required for safety or welfare.

Where practicable, seat young people in the rear of a car and maintain appropriate personal boundaries.

Do not share personal contact details or communicate privately outside approved systems.

Do not photograph or record passengers except under an approved safeguarding or incident procedure.

Record and report any significant conversation, disclosure, allegation, concerning behaviour or unexplained delay promptly.

Never use physical restraint in a moving vehicle. Stop safely and follow the individual risk plan and emergency procedures.

Seat belts and child restraints

The driver must ensure that the legal requirements for the vehicle and passenger are met. ReConnect's normal standard is that every passenger uses an individual seat with a fitted seat belt, and the correct approved child restraint is used where required. A journey must not begin if lawful and suitable restraint arrangements are unavailable.

Current GOV.UK guidance states that children normally use a child car seat until they are 12 years old or 135 cm tall, whichever comes first, subject to limited legal exceptions. The driver and journey lead must check the current rule for the vehicle type rather than relying on an exception as normal practice.

Behaviour that affects safety

Support should be proactive and consistent with the young person's plan. Where behaviour distracts the driver or creates danger, the driver should remain calm, avoid confrontation, stop at a safe location when necessary, contact ReConnect for support and call emergency services if there is an immediate risk to life. The incident must be recorded and the transport plan reviewed before the next journey.

Minibuses and larger passenger vehicles

A minibus is generally a vehicle with 9 to 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver's seat. ReConnect will not operate or hire a minibus until management has confirmed the correct driving-licence entitlement, insurance, maximum authorised mass, maintenance regime and whether a Section 19 permit, public service vehicle operator licence or other permission is required.

Drivers must be specifically approved for the exact vehicle and comply with any insurer age, experience and training conditions.

Where category B licence exemptions are being relied upon, all statutory conditions must be checked and recorded before the journey. Employment status and whether driving is truly voluntary can affect the entitlement required.

MiDAS or equivalent training and assessment will be required where management or the insurer determines it appropriate.

The Section 19 permit disc, where required, must be valid and displayed as required. It does not remove driver-licensing, insurance, maintenance or safety duties.

A passenger assistant will be provided where the risk assessment identifies supervision, accessibility, medical or behaviour needs that the driver cannot safely manage.

Management approval required: Minibus licensing and permit rules are fact-specific. Staff must not assume that holding a car licence or hiring a vehicle makes its use lawful.

Taxis, private hire and commissioned transport

ReConnect will use licensed operators and, where journeys are regular or commissioned by ReConnect, will establish a written arrangement setting out safeguarding, conduct, identity, vehicle and incident-reporting expectations. Local-authority-arranged transport remains subject to the commissioner's contractual controls, with ReConnect reporting concerns through the agreed route.

The booking must state the correct passenger, collection point, destination and any agreed passenger-assistant or accessibility requirement.

A responsible staff member will verify the expected vehicle and driver identity where ReConnect is handing over a young person. Any material mismatch must be checked before travel.

Young people under 16, and older young people assessed as requiring enhanced support, will be accompanied to the vehicle and supported through handover.

Drivers must not make unplanned stops, carry unauthorised passengers, offer medicine or substances, or contact young people outside the transport arrangement.

Concerns about driving, boundaries, identity, vehicle condition, route or passenger welfare must be acted upon immediately. Travel will not proceed where safety cannot be confirmed.

Repeated or regular drivers may be in regulated activity with children depending on the legal frequency and activity tests. ReConnect will ensure the correct organisation completes and records the appropriate safeguarding checks, including barred-list information only where legally permitted and required.

Parents, carers and young people's own transport

A parent or carer transporting their own child is normally a private arrangement. ReConnect will not direct a parent or carer to transport other young people on its behalf unless senior management has expressly authorised the arrangement following checks of licence, insurance, MOT, vehicle suitability, safeguarding status and consent.

Young people must not drive themselves or other young people as part of a ReConnect-organised journey or visit. Independent travel by an older young person may be agreed as part of an individual plan with appropriate consent and risk assessment, but it is not treated as driving on behalf of ReConnect.

Public transport, walking and cycling

Where ReConnect organises travel by public transport, walking or cycling, the journey lead must assess route, crossings, stations, crowding, supervision, accessibility, weather, visibility, communication and the risk of separation. Cycle journeys require roadworthy cycles, suitable helmets, competent leaders, visibility equipment and route-specific approval. Individual independent-travel plans must identify the support and review arrangements.

Distractions, mobile phones, smoking and conduct

Handheld mobile phones or other handheld interactive devices must never be used while driving, including when stationary in traffic.

Hands-free calls should be avoided. If communication is necessary and may distract the driver, stop legally and safely first.

Navigation must be set before moving and adjusted only when safely parked.

Drivers must not eat, smoke or vape while driving. Drinking should be limited to what is safe and must not distract.

Headphones, unsafe footwear, loose items and any activity that impairs control are prohibited.

Staff must not accept unreasonable time pressure, use a vehicle aggressively or discuss confidential matters where passengers may overhear inappropriately.

Medication, medical needs and accessibility

Transport plans must identify known medical or accessibility needs, emergency instructions, required equipment and who is competent to support them. Medication must be carried, stored and administered in line with ReConnect's Medication Policy. Wheelchairs, specialist seating and mobility equipment must be secured using approved systems by trained staff. Emergency exits and aisles must remain clear.

Breakdown, collision, missing person and emergency response

Immediate priorities

Stop in a safe place, switch off the engine where appropriate, use hazard warnings and assess immediate danger.

Call 999 where anyone is injured, the road is obstructed or there is immediate danger. Follow police and emergency-service instructions.

Account for all passengers and provide first aid within competence. Do not move an injured person unless necessary to prevent greater harm.

Contact ReConnect as soon as it is safe, using the emergency or on-call route. ReConnect will notify parents, carers and commissioners as appropriate.

For a breakdown, move passengers to the safest available place and follow the provider's recovery instructions. Never leave young people unsupervised.

Collision information

The driver must meet legal duties to stop and exchange details. Where safe, record names, contact and insurance details, vehicle registrations, location, time, road and weather conditions, witnesses, police reference and photographs of the scene without compromising anyone's dignity or safety. Do not admit liability or speculate

about fault.

Missing or absconding young person

If a young person leaves a vehicle or becomes missing during transport, staff must follow the Missing Young Person Procedure and individual risk plan immediately, including contacting police where the threshold is met. The safety of remaining passengers must also be maintained.

Reporting and review

All collisions, injuries, damage, breakdowns, motoring offences, complaints, safeguarding concerns and near misses must be reported before the end of the working day, or immediately where serious. Management will consider insurer notification, statutory reporting, commissioner notification, safeguarding referral, driver suspension, investigation, lessons learned and revision of risk assessments.

Data protection and confidentiality

Journey and driver records contain personal data and will be accessed only for legitimate operational, legal, insurance and safeguarding purposes. Records will be accurate, stored securely and retained in line with ReConnect's retention schedule. Passenger information shared with a driver or provider will be limited to what is necessary for safe transport. Staff must not leave passenger lists, medical details or contact information visible in an unattended vehicle.

Training, monitoring and non-compliance

Authorised drivers will receive induction on this policy, safeguarding, incident response and vehicle-specific arrangements.

Additional training or assessment may be required following a concern, collision, extended absence from driving or change of vehicle.

ReConnect will periodically sample journey logs, driver documentation, defect records, risk assessments and provider performance.

Any person may raise a transport concern through safeguarding, health and safety, whistleblowing or management routes.

Unsafe practice may result in immediate withdrawal of driving authority and may be addressed under disciplinary, capability, contractor or safeguarding procedures.

Records and minimum retention controls

Record	Owner / control
Authorised-driver register	Designated manager; current status, licence category, review date and restrictions.

Licence and insurance evidence	Administration; secure staff record with expiry and review alerts.
Vehicle maintenance and defects	Transport lead; servicing, MOT, repairs, checks and return-to-use evidence.
Journey and passenger record	Journey lead / administration; proportionate detail and secure retention.
Consent and individual transport plan	Young person's secure record; reviewed when circumstances change.
Risk assessments	Health and safety / visit record; reviewed after incidents and material changes.
Collision, incident and near-miss records	Incident system; linked to safeguarding and insurer records where relevant.
Transport provider assurance	Contract record; licence, safeguarding, insurance and performance evidence.

Equality, SEND and complaints

ReConnect will not unlawfully discriminate in transport arrangements and will consider reasonable adjustments. A safety restriction will be based on evidence and individual assessment, not diagnosis or assumption. Young people and families will be told how to raise a concern or complaint and will not experience adverse treatment for doing so.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner following a serious incident, significant near miss, change to vehicles or services, commissioner feedback, insurance requirement, or change in law or national guidance. Operational forms and risk assessments may be updated between formal policy reviews where this improves safety and remains consistent with the policy.

Appendix A: Pre-journey authorisation checklist

- ☐ Journey is necessary, approved and linked to an agreed activity or transport plan.
- ☐ Correct driver, licence category, insurance and authorisation confirmed.
- ☐ Vehicle suitable, legal, roadworthy and pre-use check completed.
- ☐ Passenger list, consent and emergency contacts available.
- ☐ Individual medical, SEND, behaviour, safeguarding and accessibility needs reviewed.
- ☐ Correct seats, seat belts, child restraints and equipment available.
- ☐ Route, collection, handover, timing, breaks, weather and parking considered.
- ☐ Supervision and second-adult / passenger-assistant decision recorded.
- ☐ ReConnect contact knows the route and expected return time.

[] Contingency for delay, breakdown, distress, unsafe behaviour or emergency agreed.

Appendix B: Driver declaration

I confirm that I have read and will follow this policy. I will immediately report any matter that could affect my legal entitlement, insurance, fitness or suitability to drive for ReConnect. I understand that authorisation may be restricted or withdrawn in the interests of safety.

Field	To be completed
Driver name	
Driving licence check date	
Vehicle category / restrictions	
Insurance checked	
Training / assessment	
Signature	
Date	
Manager approval	
Review date	

Policy Context

AP context (non-school AP): The ReConnect Programme operates as a non-school Alternative Provision (AP). We apply current road-safety, safeguarding and transport law and adopt relevant school-sector guidance as a good-practice benchmark where appropriate. Transport arrangements are also aligned with commissioner requirements, individual risk assessments and the needs of each young person.

Legislation & Standards	• This policy is informed by the following framework, as amended from time to time. The list is not exhaustive and does not replace case-specific legal, insurer or commissioner advice. • Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. • Road Traffic Act 1988, Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and associated vehicle, seat-belt and child-restraint legislation. • The Highway Code and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency requirements. • HSE: Driving and riding safely for work, including the safe journey, safe driver and safe vehicle approach. • Department for Transport: Driving school minibuses; Section 19 and 22 permit guidance; statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards. • Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and current Disclosure and Barring Service guidance on regulated activity with children. • Equality Act 2010, UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
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	• Current Department for Education safeguarding and educational visits guidance used by ReConnect as an AP benchmark where relevant. Current official guidance: • hse.gov.uk/roadsafety • gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules • gov.uk/government/publications/driving-school-minibuses-advice-for-schools-and-local-authorities • gov.uk/government/publications/section-19-and-22-permits-not-for-profit-passenger-transport • gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-guidance-leaflets/regulated-activity-with-children.
Related Forms & Documents	• Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy • Health and Safety Policy • Educational Visits Policy or procedure • Behaviour and Relationships Policy • Missing Young Person Procedure • First Aid Policy • Medication Policy • Data Protection Policy • Lone Working Policy and relevant individual, activity and journey risk assessments.

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Change Summary	Author/Reviewer	Approved by:
1	28/08/2026	Policy	Naomi Hamer	Director