



POLICY DOCUMENT

Child & School Trip Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

Albatross Bus & Coaches Ltd (“the Company”) recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people when providing transport services.

This policy sets out the Company’s commitment to ensuring that all reasonable measures are taken to protect children from harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation while using our services.

The Company acknowledges that safeguarding is a shared responsibility between the transport provider, schools, organisations and supervising adults.

2. Legal and Regulatory Compliance

This policy is implemented in accordance with relevant UK safeguarding legislation and guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

The Company operates in a manner consistent with its legal duty of care and safeguarding expectations within the transport sector.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all services provided by the Company involving children (any person under the age of 18), including:

- School transport services
- Educational trips and excursions
- Private group bookings involving children
- Youth group and club travel

It applies to all employees, drivers, contractors, and any individuals acting on behalf of the Company.

4. Safeguarding Commitment

The Company is committed to:

- Providing a safe and secure travel environment for children
- Ensuring staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities

- Responding appropriately to safeguarding concerns
- Working cooperatively with schools, parents and authorities
- Promoting a culture of vigilance and accountability

Safeguarding considerations are integrated into operational planning and service delivery.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Company Responsibilities

The Company will:

- Ensure appropriate recruitment checks are carried out, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where required
- Provide safeguarding awareness training to relevant staff
- Maintain clear safeguarding procedures and reporting lines
- Ensure vehicles are safe, compliant and suitable for transporting children

5.2 Driver Responsibilities

Drivers are responsible for:

- Maintaining a professional and appropriate standard of behaviour at all times
- Ensuring the safety of passengers during boarding, travel and disembarkation
- Not engaging in inappropriate communication or conduct with children
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns immediately

Drivers must not assume responsibility for supervision unless explicitly agreed.

5.3 Hirer / School Responsibilities

The hirer (e.g. school, organisation, or group leader) is responsible for:

- Providing adequate supervision of children throughout the journey
- Ensuring appropriate staff-to-child ratios in line with legal and organisational requirements
- Managing behaviour and discipline of children
- Ensuring children follow safety instructions

The Company does not assume responsibility for supervision unless specifically agreed in writing.

6. Supervision and Duty of Care

Children must be supervised at all times by responsible adults provided by the hirer.

Supervising adults must:

- Be present during boarding and disembarkation
- Be distributed appropriately throughout the vehicle
- Ensure children remain seated and behave safely

The Company's duty of care is limited to safe transport and does not extend to continuous supervision or care of children.

7. Safe Travel Requirements

To ensure safety during travel:

- All passengers must remain seated with seatbelts fastened where fitted
- Aisles and emergency exits must remain clear
- Children must not distract the driver
- Boarding and disembarkation must be conducted in an orderly manner

Drivers have the authority to stop the vehicle if safety is compromised.

8. Acceptable Behaviour and Conduct

- Children are expected to behave in a respectful and safe manner at all times.
- Unacceptable behaviour includes:
 - Bullying, harassment, or intimidation
 - Vandalism or damage to the vehicle
 - Standing or moving unsafely during travel
 - Distracting the driver
- The driver may take appropriate action, including refusing travel where behaviour poses a safety risk.

9. Safeguarding Concerns and Reporting

Any safeguarding concerns must be taken seriously and reported immediately.

Drivers and staff must:

- Remain calm and professional
- Avoid making assumptions or conducting investigations
- Report concerns to the designated safeguarding lead within the Company

Where necessary, concerns may be escalated to appropriate authorities in line with safeguarding obligations.

10. Transport of Vulnerable Children

Where children have additional needs, disabilities, or vulnerabilities, the hirer must inform the Company in advance.

The Company will make reasonable adjustments where possible; however:

- Specialist care must be provided by the hirer or accompanying staff
- Drivers are not responsible for personal care or medical supervision

11. Photography and Data Protection

Staff and drivers must not:

- Take photographs or videos of children
- Share personal information about passengers
- Use personal devices to communicate with children

All personal data must be handled in accordance with the Company's data protection policies.

12. Emergencies and Incident Handling

In the event of an emergency:

- The driver will follow emergency procedures
- Supervising adults must assist in managing children
- Emergency services will be contacted where necessary

All incidents must be reported and recorded in accordance with Company procedures.

13. Training and Awareness

The Company provides safeguarding awareness training to relevant staff to ensure they:

- Understand safeguarding risks
- Recognise signs of harm or abuse
- Know how to report concerns

Ongoing training ensures compliance with evolving safeguarding standards.

14. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective, compliant, and aligned with best practice. Updates will be made in response to:

- Changes in legislation
- Operational experience
- Feedback from clients and stakeholders

Approved by

Managing Director: _____

Signature: _____

Approval Date: 15 April 2026

