



TAXI POLICY

Date of Policy	August 2023
Reviewer(s)	Assistant Principal Boarding and Welfare Director of Safeguarding, Mental Health and Wellbeing Registrar
Approved by	Principal
Next Review Date	August 2024

Introduction

Individual students and small groups of students may require taxi transport for a range of reasons including transport to airports and train stations, travel for sports fixtures, activities and wider-curricular purposes. They may be accompanied by a member of staff or be travelling independently. While most taxi journeys taken within the UK are completed safely, staff must take proportionate steps to safeguard students from harm when travelling by taxi.

School Responsibilities

- The School undertakes to have contractor arrangements in place with at least one local taxi firm. A contractor's letter will be kept on file for such firms and reviewed annually.
- School staff booking taxis for students will only use local taxi firms with whom the School has such contractor arrangements.
- Details of these local taxi firms will be provided to agents, parents and other responsible adults.
- Staff involved in taxi bookings will read and follow Taxi Driver Procedures document (Appendix 1).
- Students aged under 16 (or older students considered in need of enhanced support at that time) who leave the School site by taxi will be accompanied to the vehicle by a member of staff. That member of staff will check the taxi driver's ID and registration number. If that member of staff has any concerns about the driver or vehicle:
 - the student will not be permitted to travel in that vehicle
 - alternative arrangements will be made
 - concerns will be followed up by the taxi firm, this may include rescinding the contractor arrangements in place with that firm
- School staff with oversight of student induction will include in their briefing how to stay safe when travelling by taxi in the UK.
- School staff will follow up on concerns raised by students about taxi journeys in line with other policies including the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Student and Responsible Adult Responsibilities

- All new students will attend the induction briefing
- Students aged under 16 must only use licensed taxis and only leave School by taxi in a vehicle booked by the School or by a Parent. Students aged 16 and over may book their own taxis.
- Parents and other responsible adults are encouraged to use the local taxi firms with which the School has contractor arrangement in place when booking taxis for students to return to School.

Responsibilities of Taxi Companies with Contractor Arrangements in Place

- The Company undertakes to manage taxi bookings by the School in line with the School's expectations and to prioritise the safeguarding of students.
- Taxi journeys departing from School premises will only be accepted if made by School staff.
- Taxi drivers who repeatedly or regularly (generally once or more per week) transport specific Worthgate students are considered to be in regulated activity and so will have additional safeguarding checks carried out by the School.
- Vehicles will be maintained in a clean roadworthy condition. The staff at the taxi depot will be able to communicate with the driver (in accordance with current legislation) and to track the vehicle.
- Taxi drivers will expect that School staff will accompany students aged under 16 to the vehicle, check the taxi driver's licence and confirm the transport plans.

- Taxi drivers will behave in a professional manner towards students and should expect students to behave in line with School expectations.
- Taxi drivers will not offer food, drink, medicine or any other substance to Worthgate students.
- Taxi drivers will not collect additional passengers or make unplanned stops (unless in an emergency, which will be reported to the depot)
- The Company will make the School aware of any breaches in the contractor arrangement and will report any inappropriate behaviour or damage caused by students promptly, recognising that the School is responsible for managing student discipline.

Safe Travel by Taxi

- The School will provide appropriate information pre-arrival and at induction regarding how to use taxis safely in the UK.
- Students will be reminded during the year and informal checks made through Personal Tutors and boarding staff that students are safely using taxis.
- Any concerns raised by students about taxi journeys will be followed up in line with other policies including the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

APPENDIX 1 - TAXI DRIVER PROCEDURES

GENERAL INFORMATION

Canterbury City Council have strict processes in place to ensure a taxi driver is a 'fit and proper person / safe and suitable' before being granted a licence. These checks include an enhanced DBS check, overseas police check if applicable, Child Sexual Exploitation and Safeguarding Training, ID and Right to Work and a medical check.

<https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/licences-and-permissions/taxi-and-private-hire-licences/apply-taxi-driver-badge>

Section 3 of Canterbury City Council's Taxi and Private Hire Policy (available in the Taxi information folder) details the requirements to become a licensed driver. Sections 7 and 8 detail the conditions of being a licensed driver.

The definition of Regulated Activity is that the activity is unsupervised and takes place regularly. Regularly in this regard means either one or more times a week or four or more times in a 30-day period.

'Regulated' will generally only apply where pupils are being taken on a weekly basis to activities, such as the mosque/sports clubs and similar, or regular weekend visits to guardians/parents etc.

NON-REGULATED ACTIVITY

For the majority of taxi drivers, we follow the standard contractors' process. A letter is received on a (minimum) annual basis, confirming that relevant checks have been completed. Written confirmation of checks should include names where possible. For taxi drivers, this check is completed by Canterbury City Council rather than the individual company.

When pre-booked drivers arrive at school to collect students, a member of staff will check the taxi driver badge to ensure the driver is an approved driver.

For students aged 17 and under, the ID and registration of the driver must be checked and recorded within the students' Exeat upon departure using the digital platform Reach. Students aged 16 and over are advised to use one of the three recommended taxi firms. In cases where students have booked their own private hire, the same ID checks and recording of registration processes still apply.

For students aged 15 years and younger, the taxi company must be one of the three recommended companies:

- Kev's Taxis
- Longley's
- A2A

REGULATED ACTIVITY

Drivers who engage in regulated activity are considered by us to be 'third -party staff', unlike non-regulated activity drivers who are treated as contractors (as per paragraph 453 in Commentary). These drivers will have a DBS check and barred list completed by the school (allowable as the taxi drivers are in fact self-employed).

Drivers will be added to the SCR with a minimum of the following checks: ID check and Enhanced DBS and barred list check, along with a copy of their taxi driver badge, which evidences that they have completed the standard Canterbury Council checks including insurance, MOT, medical checks etc.

All verified documents will be saved in the 'Regulated Activity Drivers' folder.

Drivers approved for regulated activity will have a note on the Central Contractor SCR to confirm that this is the case.

When drivers arrive at school to collect students, a member of staff will check the photo ID against the named driver we are expecting from the contractors SCR. The registration and ID check is recorded within the Regulated Activity Exeat on Reach.

Where taxi drivers are known to us, personal recognition can be accepted as the ID check (this should be recorded clearly via a note:

Student left in school approved taxi to attend XXX. Registration number checked – XXX XXX. Driver recorded on SCR and I can confirm that I know the driver XXX XXX well and verified his identity.)

An informal welfare checking conversation will be held after each trip with any pupils having regular contact with a driver to establish whether there are any safeguarding (or other) concerns. A note will be added to Shackleton to confirm the conversation took place ("Return from Exeat" note).

Administration related to taxi driver agreements, licenses etc. can be found here:

[Taxi information](#) (Sharepoint Admin folder)