

Safeguarding Children Policy

Company	URBAN TRANSIT SOLUTIONS LTD
Policy owner	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Version	1.1
Original effective date	06 June 2026
Last reviewed / updated	05 July 2026
Next scheduled review	05 July 2027
Approved by	Director
Primary reviewer	Mohamoud Mohamed, Director / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Training evidence held	DSL Children Level 3; Safeguarding Children Level 2; Safeguarding Adults Level 2; Safer Recruitment in Education

Purpose

This policy sets out how Urban Transit Solutions Ltd protects children during pre-booked passenger transport, including school runs, SEND transport, council routes, vulnerable passenger journeys and related account bookings. The company's role is transport operation, booking, dispatch, driver/vehicle allocation, safe handover and reporting. It does not replace the safeguarding duties of schools, councils, parents, carers or statutory agencies, but it requires staff, drivers, escorts and contractors to recognise concerns, act promptly and report them through the correct route.

Scope

This policy applies to directors, office staff, dispatch staff, managers, TfL licensed PHV drivers, passenger assistants/escorts, subcontractors and any contractor carrying out work for or on behalf of the company. A child means anyone under the age of 18. The term passenger includes children, young people, SEND passengers and any child who may be vulnerable because of age, disability, communication needs, medical needs, behaviour, family circumstances or the journey context.

Where a council, school, NHS body or account client has stricter contract requirements, those requirements will be followed in addition to this policy. The company provides transport operation, dispatch and safe transport support only. It does not provide personal care, clinical care or routine medication administration unless a specific duty is contractually agreed, risk assessed, authorised and trained.

Relevant standards and guidance

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 safeguarding principles.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education, current versions where applicable to school or education transport.
- Local safeguarding children partnership procedures for the area in which the contract or journey is delivered.
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedures where an allegation involves a person working with children.
- TfL private hire operator, driver and vehicle licensing requirements where applicable.
- Contract-specific safeguarding, reporting, handover and route risk assessment requirements.

Named safeguarding and operational responsibility

- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mohamoud Mohamed.
- Deputy Safeguarding Lead: to be appointed before contract commencement where required by the contract or before deployment on routes requiring a named deputy.
- Operations Manager: Mohamoud Mohamed until further appointment.
- Drivers, escorts, office staff and contractors must report concerns. They must not investigate safeguarding matters themselves.
- The DSL receives concerns, decides escalation, keeps safeguarding records and liaises with schools, councils, social care, police, TfL or other safeguarding partners where appropriate.

Emergency and escalation contacts

- Emergency services: 999 for immediate danger, serious injury, missing child at immediate risk or threat to life/safety.
- Company operator / out-of-hours contact.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy.
- Relevant council transport team or contract manager.
- School or setting Designated Safeguarding Lead where applicable.
- Children's social care / MASH for the local authority area where the child is at risk.
- LADO where an allegation meets the threshold against a staff member, driver, escort or contractor.
- TfL where a licensed driver, vehicle or operator compliance issue requires regulatory notification.

Safeguarding principles

- The welfare and safety of the child is the first consideration.
- Transport arrangements must be planned so that risks are identified before the route starts, not left to the driver to solve on the day.
- Children must be treated with dignity, patience and respect, including where behaviour is difficult or communication is limited.
- Concerns must be reported promptly. Staff, drivers, escorts and contractors are not expected to investigate abuse.
- Information is shared on a need-to-know basis where lawful and necessary to protect a child or meet a contract requirement.
- The company will cooperate with councils, schools, safeguarding partners, TfL, police and emergency services where lawful and appropriate.

Types of abuse and safeguarding concerns

Concerns may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, county lines, trafficking, domestic abuse affecting a child, harmful sexual behaviour, bullying, discriminatory abuse, online abuse, radicalisation concerns, honour-based abuse, forced marriage, FGM concerns, unexplained injuries, repeated poor presentation, fear of going home or to school, unauthorised collection, a child being left unsupervised, concerning comments made during a journey, inappropriate behaviour by an adult, unauthorised contact outside the journey, route tampering or any situation where a child appears at risk of harm.

Safer recruitment, vetting and DBS expectations

- All staff, drivers, escorts and contractors must provide evidence of identity and role suitability before working on company routes.
- Drivers must hold a current TfL PHV driver licence and use a TfL licensed PHV vehicle accepted by the operator for the relevant booking, unless a contract lawfully requires another licensing model.
- Enhanced DBS checks, barred list checks, council badging and DBS Update Service checks will be obtained or verified where the role, law or contract requires and where the role is eligible.
- Where a council or school transport contract requires specific vetting, safeguarding training, photo ID, route authorisation, badges or clearance, those conditions must be met before deployment.
- The company records licence expiry dates, insurance evidence, vehicle details, onboarding checks, contract approvals, training and any restrictions relevant to a driver or escort.
- Any safeguarding concern, relevant allegation, licence suspension, police matter, disqualification or change in suitability must be reported to the company immediately.

Driver and escort suitability

The Operations Manager must match drivers, escorts and vehicles to the route risk assessment. Suitability includes licensing status, vetting status, training, route knowledge, reliability, communication style, ability to follow handover controls, ability to manage passenger needs safely and any council restrictions. A driver or escort may be removed from a route while checks are completed or if conduct, reliability or behaviour creates concern.

Professional boundaries and conduct

- Drivers and escorts must not have unauthorised contact with children outside the booked journey.
- Personal phone numbers, social media contact, gifts, photographs, videos or private messaging with children are not permitted unless expressly authorised for a contract-specific safety reason.
- No child may be diverted, dropped at an unauthorised location or handed to an unauthorised adult.
- Physical contact must be avoided unless required for immediate safety, agreed assistance, seatbelt support or contract-authorised support and must be proportionate and recorded where necessary.
- Drivers and escorts must never discuss a child's personal information in public, on social media or with unauthorised persons.

Recognising concerns during transport

- A child is unusually distressed, fearful, withdrawn, injured, hungry, unclean or reluctant to enter the vehicle without an obvious explanation.
- The child discloses abuse, neglect, bullying, exploitation, unsafe home circumstances or fear of a person.
- A parent, carer, school staff member or other adult behaves aggressively, makes threats, appears intoxicated or attempts an unauthorised handover.
- The driver or escort notices repeated failed handovers, unexplained route changes, missing equipment, concerning messages, inappropriate contact or pressure to break route controls.
- The child's behaviour creates a safety risk to themselves, the driver, escort, vehicle or other passengers.

Responding to a disclosure

1. Listen calmly and take the child seriously.
2. Do not promise secrecy. Explain that information may need to be shared with people who can help keep them safe.

3. Do not ask leading questions, investigate, challenge the child or contact the alleged abuser.
4. If immediate danger exists, stop safely if driving, contact emergency services and then the operator.
5. Record the child's words as accurately as possible, including date, time, location, who was present and what action was taken.
6. Report to the operator or Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as safe and before the end of the working period.

Reporting procedure

7. Driver, escort or staff member identifies the concern and ensures immediate safety.
8. Driver or escort contacts the operator by phone as soon as it is safe. Office staff log the time and details.
9. The operator informs the DSL or deputy the same day. If the DSL is unavailable and the concern is urgent, escalation must not wait.
10. The DSL decides the correct referral route: council transport team, school DSL, children's social care/MASH, LADO, police, emergency services or contract manager.
11. A safeguarding/incident record is completed and stored securely with restricted access.
12. The company follows up any route control changes, driver/escort restrictions, contract notifications or risk assessment updates required.

Allegations, low-level concerns and whistleblowing

- Any allegation that a staff member, driver, escort or contractor has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, committed a possible offence against a child, or behaved in a way indicating they may pose a risk must be reported to the DSL or Director immediately.
- The person concerned may be removed from the route or suspended from company work while facts are clarified. This is a protective measure, not a finding.
- The company will notify the council/client and follow local safeguarding procedures, including LADO referral where the threshold is met.
- Low-level concerns about professional boundaries, comments, reliability, attitude, favouritism, contact outside the journey or unusual behaviour must be recorded and reviewed even where the LADO threshold is not met.
- Staff, drivers, escorts and contractors may use the Whistleblowing Policy where they believe a concern is not being handled properly.

Record keeping and information sharing

Records must include the concern, dates and times, journey details, passenger reference, driver, escort, vehicle, witnesses, immediate actions, people contacted, advice received, decisions made, further actions and closure notes. Safeguarding records are kept separately from routine booking notes with restricted access.

Safeguarding information is confidential but not secret. It may be shared where necessary to protect a child, comply with a contract, meet legal obligations or cooperate with safeguarding partners. WhatsApp or messaging apps may only be used where authorised by the company and must not contain unnecessary sensitive detail.

Training, monitoring and review

- Staff, drivers, escorts and contractors working on child transport must receive safeguarding information and any contract-required training before deployment.

- The DSL will maintain training records and review whether additional training is needed following incidents, complaints, route changes or contract audit findings.
- The Operations Manager and DSL will review safeguarding records for patterns, repeated handover issues, driver conduct concerns, route risks or training needs.
- This policy is reviewed annually and sooner after a serious safeguarding incident, contract audit finding or material change in law, statutory guidance, TfL licensing requirement or local authority contract requirement.

Records kept

Safeguarding concern forms, incident reports, driver/escort vetting evidence, training records, route risk assessments, council/client notifications, referral logs, allegation records, policy review notes and corrective action records.

Reviewer safeguarding qualification evidence

The reviewer holds the following recent training evidence. Certificates are retained by Urban Transit Solutions Ltd and can be supplied to the Authority on request or attached with this policy as part of the safeguarding evidence pack.

Qualification	Date	Certificate verification
Designated Safeguarding Children Lead Level 3	Completed 16 June 2026	ELC-1781569621-127349-195048
Safeguarding Children Level 2	Completed 04 July 2026	ELC-1783205524-37788-195048
Safeguarding Adults Level 2	Completed 18 June 2026	ELC-1781752098-33387-195048
Safer Recruitment in Education	Completed 18 June 2026	ELC-1781753806-704780-195048

Approval and review declaration

I confirm that this policy has been reviewed on **05 July 2026** by Mohamoud Mohamed, Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead of Urban Transit Solutions Ltd. The review considered the company's role as a TfL licensed private hire operator delivering pre-booked passenger transport for children, young people, adults at risk, schools, councils, social care and non-clinical healthcare-related journeys. The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following any safeguarding incident, audit finding, contract requirement, change in law or relevant guidance.

Signed by	Mohamoud Mohamed
Position	Director / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Organisation	Urban Transit Solutions Ltd
Date	05 July 2026
Signature	