



Willow Academy Trust

SEN Home-School Transport

Introduction

The Willows Academy Trust follows the guidelines and principles on transport as set out by the DfE.

Pupil Safety During Arrival to and Departure from the School

The Willows Academy is responsible for pupils during all hours of the statutory school day, in addition to any period in which the school is offering extended services.

The Willows Academy takes no responsibility for the transport of pupils both to and from the school. The responsibility for pupils begins at ***the point of handover***, from escort to staff member, and this must take place within the school's gated entrance at or after 08:30. Pupils may be escorted to the school doors by an escort and handed over to staff in the front entrance to the building, otherwise all pupils will remain in transport vehicles until collected by a Willows Academy staff member. Similarly, at the end of the school day, pupils may be handed over to an escort in or at the entrance to the school foyer, otherwise transport staff shall wait in their vehicles until the pupils are escorted to them by a Willows Academy staff member.

For safeguarding reasons, no child will be handed over to any organised SEN transport without an accompanying escort.

The school is not responsible for pupils once the specified school day is over and once pupils have left the premises, **except on specifically organised school transport.**

Where an LA has arranged transport for pupils, including specialist transport for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities, the LA is responsible for the safety of these pupils during their journey.

Where a parent has independently organised transport to or from school, the parent is responsible for the safety of their child while using the transport.

For example, if a parent/carer chooses to send their child to school in a taxi that is not part of the school's or LA's organised transport service, it is up to the parent to ensure that the taxi service has been appropriately vetted and meets safety requirements. The Willows Academy Trust has no obligation to be involved. This also applies if a parent organises transport for a pupil within school hours. For example, if a pupil needs to go home during the school day and travels in a taxi organised by their parent/carer, the parent/carer assumes responsibility for the pupil on that journey.

If the Willows Academy has any ongoing concerns about the safety and wellbeing of any child on transport, a formal letter may be written to parents/carers setting out concerns and a copy will be sent to the LA. This would demonstrate how seriously the school views the issue and act as a record of the action the school has taken.

The school cannot and shall not force the parents/carers to change their arrangements, however the designated safeguarding lead should raise concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of children on organised transport with social services as they would for other safeguarding concerns. The school could be held to account for failing to tell the LA when they are aware that a child may be at risk of harm.

(Under section 89 (5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the school *may act "to such extent as is reasonable" to regulate pupils' behaviour when they are outside the school premises and not under the lawful control of school staff*, however this does not apply to those pupils on all organised transport, including that organised by parents/carers.)