Meadow Pathways Wellbeing and Education Cornwall (MPWEC)

Driving and Transport Policy

Education other than at School (EOTAS)

Responsibility to update: Michelle Pascoe and Zoe Waitz
Applies to: All staff, contractors, volunteers and visiting professionals working with children and young people (CYP) engaged in Meadow Pathways EOTAS packages (including tuition in homes, community venues and online).

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Summary of Changes – October 2026

This policy brings together, in one place, the rules for staff who drive for work and for the transport of children and young people (CYP). It replaces the short "Transporting Children" section of the Safer Working Practice Guidance and the "Transport Policy" referred to in the Health and Safety Policy. Key points:

- Sets out the checks Meadow Pathways makes on every member of staff who drives for work: driving licence, business-use insurance, MOT and vehicle tax, checked at appointment and every year.
- Confirms that transporting a child or young person is not permitted unless it has been authorised in writing by a Director, with a journey risk assessment in place.
- Sets clear rules on mobile phones, alcohol and drugs, fitness to drive, fatigue, dashcams and what to do after an accident or breakdown.
- Includes a Driver Declaration (Appendix A) and a Pre-Journey Checklist (Appendix B), both of which can be completed electronically.

This summary is provided for ease of reference; the detail is set out in the policy below.

Introduction

Meadow Pathways Wellbeing and Education Cornwall Ltd does not have premises of its own. Our staff travel to young people's homes, community venues, outdoor locations such as beaches and woodland, and to meetings across Cornwall, often on rural roads and in changeable weather. Driving is therefore one of the most significant risks our staff face at work.

Meadow Pathways does not own or lease any vehicles. Staff who drive for work use their own vehicle (sometimes called the "grey fleet"). Even so, Meadow Pathways has a duty of care to make sure that work-related driving is as safe as reasonably practicable, both for our staff and for the children and young people we work with.

This policy is informed by:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Highway Code
- Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (including the rules on hand-held mobile phones)
- Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts) Regulations 1993 and the rules on child car seats
- Smoke-free (Private Vehicles) Regulations 2015
- HSE guidance "Driving at work: managing work-related road safety" (INDG382)
- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 (in relation to dashcams and journey records)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- DfE Voluntary National Standards for Non-School Alternative Provision (2025)

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, contractors, volunteers and visiting professionals who:

- drive any vehicle for Meadow Pathways business, including travel between sessions, to meetings, training, venues and outdoor locations; or
- are authorised to transport a child or young person as part of their EOTAS or other package.

Ordinary commuting from home to a regular place of work is not normally work-related driving. However, because most of our staff have no fixed workplace, any journey to or from a session, meeting or venue is treated as driving for work under this policy.

Self-employed contractors are responsible for their own vehicle and insurance, but must meet the same standards as employed staff and provide the same evidence before driving for Meadow Pathways.

Roles and Responsibilities

Directors (Michelle Pascoe and Zoe Waitz):

- Make sure this policy is in place, understood and followed.
- Carry out the driver checks set out in this policy at appointment and annually, and keep records.
- Decide whether any transport of a child or young person is authorised, and make sure a journey risk assessment is completed first.
- Plan sessions and schedules so that staff can travel safely, without unrealistic timings or excessive driving.
- Review accidents, incidents and near misses involving vehicles and act on any lessons learned.

All staff who drive for work:

- Hold a valid UK driving licence for the vehicle they are driving and keep it up to date.
- Hold insurance that covers business use and keep their vehicle roadworthy, taxed and with a current MOT where required.
- Drive safely and legally at all times and follow the Highway Code.
- Tell a Director straight away about any change that affects their ability to drive for work (see “Disclosure of Changes”).
- Never transport a child or young person unless it has been authorised in writing under this policy.

Driver Eligibility and Checks

Before driving for Meadow Pathways for the first time, and every year afterwards, staff must provide the following to a Director:

- **Driving licence:** a valid UK (or recognised) driving licence, checked through the DVLA “View or share your driving licence information” service using a check code provided by the driver. The check confirms the categories held, any penalty points and any disqualifications.

- **Insurance:** a current certificate of motor insurance that includes business use (often called "Business Class 1"). Social, domestic and pleasure cover, or commuting-only cover, is not sufficient. Where a child may be transported, the policy must cover carrying passengers for business purposes.
- **MOT:** a current MOT certificate for vehicles over three years old (this can be checked online using the vehicle registration).
- **Vehicle tax:** confirmation that the vehicle is taxed (this can also be checked online).
- **Driver Declaration:** a signed copy of the Driver Declaration at Appendix A.

Records of these checks are kept securely in line with the Data Protection Policy and are kept only for as long as needed. Staff without the required checks in place must not drive for work.

Additional requirements apply before a member of staff can be authorised to transport a child or young person (see "Transporting Children and Young People"). As a minimum, drivers transporting CYP should normally have held a full licence for at least two years and have no more than six current penalty points; any exception must be agreed by both Directors and recorded.

Disclosure of Changes

Staff must tell a Director as soon as possible, and before their next journey for work, if:

- they receive any penalty points, a fixed penalty for a driving offence, a driving ban, or are charged with or convicted of a driving offence;
- their insurance is cancelled, changed or no longer includes business use;
- their vehicle fails its MOT, is untaxed or is otherwise not roadworthy;
- they develop, or are told about, a medical condition, disability or medication that may affect their ability to drive safely. Staff must also tell the DVLA about any notifiable medical condition, as required by law.

Disclosure will be handled sensitively and confidentially. Where a health condition is involved, Meadow Pathways will consider reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Vehicle Safety

Staff are responsible for making sure their vehicle is safe and legal whenever it is used for work. This includes:

- keeping the vehicle serviced in line with the manufacturer's recommendations;
- carrying out simple regular checks: tyres (pressure, condition and legal tread depth), lights, brakes, windscreen, wipers and screenwash, oil and coolant (see the Pre-Journey Checklist at Appendix B);
- keeping the vehicle clean and tidy, with loose items, equipment and resources stored securely in the boot so they cannot move in a sudden stop;
- for electric vehicles, planning journeys to allow for charging, and never trailing charging cables across public paths where they could cause a trip hazard.

Meadow Pathways recommends that staff carry a basic emergency kit, particularly in winter or on rural routes: a torch, high-visibility vest, warning triangle, blanket, water, a phone charger and de-icer.

Safe Driving Standards

When driving for work, staff must:

- follow the Highway Code and keep to speed limits, driving at a speed that suits the road and weather conditions – this is especially important on narrow Cornish lanes, single-track roads and coastal routes;
- make sure they, and every passenger, wear a seatbelt for the whole journey;
- never drive while over the legal alcohol limit or after taking illegal drugs. Meadow Pathways expects staff not to drink any alcohol before driving for work, and to be aware that alcohol can remain in the body the morning after drinking;
- check with a pharmacist or GP whether any prescribed or over-the-counter medication may affect their driving, and not drive if it does;
- not smoke or vape in a vehicle when driving for work, and never when a child or young person is in the vehicle (smoking in a private vehicle with anyone under 18 present is against the law);
- not eat, or do anything else, that takes their attention away from driving;
- pay any fines or penalties for driving or parking offences themselves – these will not be reimbursed by Meadow Pathways.

Mobile Phones and Distractions

It is illegal to hold and use a mobile phone, sat-nav or any other device that can send or receive data while driving, including when stopped at traffic lights or queuing in traffic. Staff must:

- never hold or use a phone while driving, for any reason;
- not make or take work calls while driving, even hands-free. Calls should go to voicemail and be returned once safely parked with the engine switched off;
- only use a sat-nav or phone navigation if it is fixed in a holder, does not block the view of the road, and is set before the journey starts;
- not send or read messages, emails or social media while driving.

Directors and colleagues will not expect staff to answer calls or messages while they are driving.

Fatigue, Journey Planning and Lone Working

Tiredness is a major cause of serious road accidents. Staff and Directors should plan schedules so that:

- there is realistic travel time between sessions, allowing for rural roads, holiday traffic and weather;
- long journeys include a break of at least 15 minutes every two hours;
- staff do not drive if they feel too tired to do so safely – if they become sleepy, they should stop somewhere safe and rest;

- staff are not expected to drive after an unusually long or emotionally demanding day without considering whether it is safe to do so.

In line with the Lone Working Policy, staff must share their schedule and locations with a Director, carry a charged mobile phone and check in as agreed.

Bad weather:

Staff should check the weather forecast and any Met Office warnings before travelling. Where conditions make a journey unsafe (for example snow, ice, flooding or high winds on exposed routes) and no safe alternative route is available, staff should not travel and should contact a Director. A new plan will then be agreed. No member of staff will be criticised for deciding a journey is not safe.

Transporting Children and Young People

Transporting children and young people is not permitted unless it has been explicitly authorised in writing by a Director.

Transport will only be authorised where there is a clear benefit to the young person (for example, to access an outdoor learning location that is part of their package) and the risks can be managed. Before any journey is authorised, all of the following must be in place:

- the driver has completed the driver checks in this policy, including business-use insurance that covers carrying passengers;
- the driver has an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check, in line with the Safer Recruitment Policy;
- a journey risk assessment has been completed, taking account of the young person's needs, behaviour, medical needs, the route and the length of the journey;
- written consent has been given by the parent or carer, and the commissioning school or local authority has agreed the arrangement;
- the young person's emergency contact details and any relevant medical information (and emergency medication, if prescribed) will travel with them.

During the journey, staff must:

- make sure the young person sits in the rear of the vehicle, on the opposite side to the driver where possible, with child locks on. Front-seat travel is only allowed if agreed in the risk assessment;
- use an appropriate child car seat or booster seat for any child under 12 years old or under 135cm tall, as required by law. Drivers are legally responsible for making sure passengers under 14 wear a seatbelt or the correct child restraint;
- share their location with a Director using the Life360 app (or with the agreed contact) so the journey can be followed from start to finish, and keep a record of the date, times, route and mileage;
- go directly to the agreed destination, with no unplanned stops, detours or personal errands;
- not carry any other passengers (including the driver's own family, friends or pets) unless this has been agreed in advance as part of the risk assessment;

- not transport a young person on their own unless this is unavoidable and has been specifically risk assessed and agreed, or the young person has been agreed as 1:1 provision;
- never leave a child or young person alone in a vehicle, even for a short time;
- not take a young person to the driver's own home.

If a young person becomes distressed or their behaviour makes it unsafe to continue, the driver should find a safe place to stop, switch off the engine and use de-escalation strategies from the young person's plan. If the situation cannot be made safe, the driver should call a Director and, in an emergency, 999. Physical intervention must follow the Safe Touch Policy. It must only be used in an emergency, as a last resort when all other strategies have been tried, and to keep the young person and others safe.

Any concern about a child's safety or wellbeing that arises during a journey must be reported to the DSL in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Journeys with a young person can be a time when they choose to share worries or disclosures; staff should respond as they would in any other setting.

Dashcams and In-Vehicle Recording

Some staff vehicles have dashcams. Forward-facing dashcams recording the road may be used. However, any interior-facing camera or audio recording must be switched off whenever a child or young person is in the vehicle. Footage must not be used, kept or shared for work purposes except where it is needed following an accident or incident, and then only in line with the Data Protection Policy.

Accidents, Breakdowns and Incidents

If you are involved in an accident while driving for work:

- stop the vehicle safely, switch on hazard lights and make sure everyone is safe. Call 999 if anyone is injured or there is a danger to other road users;
- if a child or young person is with you, their safety and welfare come first. Contact their parent or carer and a Director as soon as it is safe to do so;
- exchange names, addresses, vehicle registration and insurance details with anyone else involved, as required by law. If you cannot do this, or if anyone is injured, report the accident to the police as soon as possible and within 24 hours;
- do not admit fault; take photos and note the time, location and any witnesses if it is safe to do so;
- report the accident to a Director the same day and complete the Accident & Emergency Form;
- tell your own insurer – this is the driver's responsibility, as the vehicle and insurance belong to them.

If you break down:

Pull over as far off the road as you safely can, switch on hazard lights, and leave the vehicle by the side away from traffic if it is safe to do so. On a motorway or dual carriageway, wait behind the barrier. Contact your breakdown provider and a Director. If a young person is with you, keep them safe and with you at all times, and contact their parent or carer. Meadow Pathways strongly recommends that all staff who drive for work have breakdown cover.

Near misses and any incident where a young person was put at risk during a journey must also be reported to a Director, so that lessons can be learned.

Mileage and Expenses

Business mileage is reimbursed at the rate agreed in the member of staff's contract or terms of engagement, which will not be more than the HMRC Approved Mileage Allowance Payment rates. Claims must be supported by a mileage record showing the date, start and end points, purpose and miles travelled. Parking charges incurred on business may be claimed with a receipt. Fines and penalty charges cannot be claimed. Staff must complete the Daily Invoice/Session Staff Log, which must be accurate and complete.

Training and Support

All staff who drive for work will be made aware of this policy during induction. Any member of staff who is worried about any part of their work-related driving should speak to a Director.

Breaches of this Policy

Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously. Depending on the circumstances, this may lead to a member of staff being stopped from driving for work, or to disciplinary action, in line with the Staff Conduct Policy. Driving a child or young person without authorisation, or without the required insurance, will be treated as a serious matter and may also be a safeguarding concern.

Review and Monitoring

- This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner following a serious incident, a change in the law or guidance, or a change in how Meadow Pathways delivers its work.
- Vehicle-related accidents, incidents and near misses will be reviewed by the Directors to identify any patterns or lessons learned.

Related Policies

- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Safer Working Practice Guidance
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Safe Touch Policy
- Staff Conduct Policy

- Data Protection Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Declaration

All staff, volunteers and contractors who drive for work must read, understand, and act in accordance with this policy. Breaches will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action. Signed confirmation of receipt will be retained on individual personnel files.

Appendix A – Driver Declaration

To be completed by every member of staff who drives for work, at appointment and every year.

Name:

Vehicle make, model and registration:

Driving licence number:

DVLA check code (valid 21 days):

Insurer and policy expiry date:

MOT expiry date (if applicable):

I confirm that (tick each box):

- ☐ I hold a valid driving licence for the vehicle I will use for work.
- ☐ My insurance includes business use (Business Class 1) and, if I am authorised to transport young people, covers carrying passengers for business purposes.
- ☐ My vehicle is taxed, has a valid MOT (where required) and is kept in a safe and roadworthy condition.
- ☐ I am not aware of any medical condition or medication that affects my ability to drive safely, and I will tell the DVLA and a Director if this changes.
- ☐ I will tell a Director straight away about any penalty points, driving offence, disqualification or change to my insurance.
- ☐ I have read and will follow the Meadow Pathways Driving and Transport Policy.

Signed (type full name):

Date:

Checked by (Director):

Date checked:

Appendix B – Pre-Journey Checklist

A quick check before setting off, especially before longer journeys or when transporting a young person. Tick each item once checked.

Name:

Vehicle registration:

Date of journey:

Journey / destination:

- ☐ Tyres – pressure looks right, no damage, legal tread depth
- ☐ Lights and indicators working; windscreen clean and undamaged
- ☐ Oil, coolant and screenwash topped up; no warning lights on the dashboard
- ☐ Fuel or charge sufficient for the journey
- ☐ Loose items and equipment secured in the boot
- ☐ Route planned; weather and traffic checked; sat-nav set before moving
- ☐ Phone charged and set to driving mode / do not disturb
- ☐ Schedule shared with a Director; check-in times agreed
- ☐ If transporting a young person: authorisation in place, child locks on, correct seat/booster fitted, emergency details and medication with you
- ☐ I am fit to drive – not tired, unwell, or affected by alcohol, drugs or medication

Signed (type full name):