**West Sussex – Practice Guidance**

IROs are qualified social workers with at least five years’ experience, and who have acquired the right skills to carry out this role.

**Transporting children**

* Most WSCC children’s homes have their own vehicles to transport children in the community. Where a child has additional needs that prevent them from easily accessing public transport, the allocated vehicle can be crucial to the smooth running of the home.
* All children will have risk assessment that includes transport arrangements and is regularly updated with any significant changes or incidents and this should guide all staff on how to support a child while transporting them.

**Important things to remember**

* In order to be approved to drive the home’s vehicle/s, the driver must provide the following information:
* Original full and current driving licence (copy to taken)
* Copy of current MOT for their own vehicle (if appropriate)
* Copy of current Insurance document confirming Business Use
* No more than 6 penalty points (evidence needed)
* Not have any DVLA ‘declarable medical conditions’
* Where there is an additional premium for including business use on a staff member’s insurance policy, the individual Registered Manager will need to discuss any request to reimburse the driver with the Service Lead for Residential on a case by case basis.
* Staff who transport children in their own vehicle must ensure copies of their valid driving licence, MOT and insurance certificate are provided to the Registered Manager and updated regularly.

**Risk assessments**

* Each journey or trip where staff are transporting a child to a known destination must be fully risk assessed. Risk assessments should include the following:
* The needs and compatibility of each child
* The staffing ratio
* The seating plan
* The weather conditions / time of journey
* Proposed route (including any toll requirements)
* The availability of specialist harnesses, seatbelts, or clamps
* Availability of parking at the destination
* Condition of the vehicle including any specialist needs (such as air conditioning)
* Escort staff must ensure they have up to date training in clamping wheelchairs where needed, and be confident to safely secure a child into the vehicle.
* If a child becomes unwell, unpredictable or otherwise presents a risk or is having a seizure, the driver must pull the vehicle into a place of safety as soon as possible and wait until accompanying colleagues have assessed and supported the child. The escorting staff will be responsible for confirming when it is safe to resume the journey.
* Drivers must not smoke in any WSCC vehicle.

**Driver’s responsibilities**

* Any staff who are approved drivers must ensure they undertake the following duties and tasks on each journey:
* Visual check of the vehicle including tyres and windscreen
* Check fuel level and top up as necessary
* Ensure all lights, internal fixtures and fittings are in full working order before commencing the journey
* Take a note of the starting and finishing mileage on the Mileage Log Book
* Only use the vehicle for legitimate work-related activity
* Ensure the vehicle is left clean and tidy and any rubbish is removed
* Park in line with any local restrictions (displaying a disabled parking badge where applicable)

**Links to related resources:**

<https://www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving>