St Mary's Church, Summerstown
Policy for giving lifts to and from church activities in private vehicles (to children and/or vulnerable adults)

Approved by PCC on January 2023. To be reviewed annually

Latest review: *24th February 2026*

Introduction:

This policy covers the use of private vehicles for the transport of children and/or adults who may be vulnerable to and from church activities. Transport arrangements to or from church activities are the responsibility of parents or carers or individual adults if they make arrangements among themselves. They are the responsibility of the PCC if the PCC (or representatives of the PCC or church) organises them on behalf of others. Transport or travel between church activities will usually be the responsibility of the PCC.

Any drivers giving lifts to/from church activities on behalf of the PCC or Church must complete a volunteer driver form. Parents must complete a permission form for their children to receive lifts for church activities. Adults, who may be vulnerable, or their carers must complete a permission form in order to receive lifts for church activities. More detail is given on these below.

Responsibility of organisers of church activities (eg PCC or leaders of an activity)

- Those organising outings requiring the use of private cars are responsible for ensuring that drivers are aware of this procedure.
- Approved drivers must be recruited according to the safer recruitment procedures. This includes, drivers:
    - Satisfactorily completing a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure
    - Completing and signing the volunteer driver form
    - Sight of their driving licence and car insurance certificate

Consent

- Children and young people should not be taken out in transport without the prior consent of their parents or carers.
- Adults who may be vulnerable should give permission to being transported themselves, and discretion used in consulting first with their carers (if applicable).
- Care should be taken when assisting children or adults who may be vulnerable to board and alight vehicles, both to ensure that the road is safe to do so and in following the guidelines on physical contact.

The driver

- All those who drive children or adults who may be vulnerable on church organised activities should be over 25 and should have held a full current driving licence for more than two years.
- Any driver who has an endorsement of six points or more on their licence should inform the PSO.
- Any driver who has an 'unspent' conviction for a serious driving offence should not transport children or adults who may be vulnerable.

Transport in private cars

Seat belts in cars

- Only cars fitted with seat belts (both front and rear) may be used, and the numbers of people transported should not exceed the number of seat belts available.
- All car passengers are required to wear seat belts in the front and rear seats.
- All children up to three years old must be carried in a child restraint.
- Rear-facing baby seats must not be used in a seat protected by a front air-bag unless the
    - air-bag has been deactivated manually or automatically.
- Children from the age of three up to 135cm in height (approx 4ft 5in) or their 12th birthday (whichever they reach first) must use child seats, or booster cushions for older children. After this they must use an adult seat belt.

<u>The vehicle/insurance</u>

- All cars that carry children or adults who may be vulnerable should be comprehensively insured. The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts during church activities. This is the responsibility of the car owners. (While the transportation of passengers without reward (in other words for petrol money only) would normally be covered under 'social/domestic use', vehicle owners must check with their insurers. Additional cover can very often be included for a small extra charge.)
- All cars that carry children or adults who may be vulnerable should be in a roadworthy condition.
- At no time should the number of people in a car exceed the number of seat belts in the car.

<u>Accompanying adult</u>

- As far as possible, another responsible adult should accompany the driver, to assist with any emergencies.
- A single adult should never gift a lift to a single child. Another adult must be present, or more than one child.
- If in an emergency a driver has to transport one child or vulnerable adult on his or her own, the child or vulnerable adult must sit in the back of the car.

Definitions

- A child is anyone under the age of 18 years old.
- A adult who may be vulnerable is more difficult to define. The Church of England define a vulnerable adult as *"a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired".*
- For the purpose of giving lifts to and from church activities, a vulnerable adult may include someone who finds it difficult to get in and out of a car and needs additional help, or who may have a greater risk of falling when getting out of a car, even if there are no other aspects of vulnerability.