**Regulations on the Carriage of Children in Minibuses**

*Legal Definition****:*** No person shall use or cause or permit to be used on a road a coach or minibus wholly or mainly for the purpose of carrying a group of 3 or more children in the following circumstances unless the appropriate number of forward facing passenger seats fitted to the vehicle meet the requirements of this regulation. The circumstances are:

1. The group of children are an organised trip
2. The journey is being made for the purposes of the trip.
3. A child is a person who is aged 3 or more but is under the age of 16.
4. A child under 3 is an infant.
5. If the trip is to carry less than 3 children then these regulations do not apply.

The driver, vehicle operator, and User Group must know whether the trip comes under these regulations and Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport must record the trip organiser’s and driver’s acknowledgement for each hire. All three parties can become liable of an offence and subject to fines if we do not comply with them. Driver’s Responsibility on the journey: to ensue that there are no more children carried than there are forward-facing seats available, and that children and infants wear the seatbelts and restraints. The driver has a legal obligation to uphold the law and has the authority of Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport to refuse carriage of any passenger when to carry them would break the regulations.

Supervising Children and Infants

Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport’s responsibilities under the relevant Transport Acts are to ensure that passengers, including children, do not constitute a danger to other road users. For this purpose we require that there is at least one adult in the saloon area when children are being transported.

User Group’s responsibilities under the Children Act are to provide sufficient supervision for their charges if they are taking children. We advise User Groups that they need to look at their legislative framework as well as our policy. The standard practice amongst groups carrying children under the age of 8 is to have one adult for each five children. Adults supervising children in the saloon are responsible to the driver for the behaviour of the children.

## When a booking is made please specify how many infants (under 3 years) and how many children (3 - 16) there will be, and the number of adults. The above regulations may at times make it impossible to legally carry the numbers of children required by the User Group. In these circumstances the organiser will either have to extend the length of booking time (to allow multiple trips to be made), or book another vehicle to carry the remainder of the children.

## The driver will be given a copy of the booking form for that trip. The driver, the vehicle operator, and the trip organiser can be liable of an offence and subject to fines if they do not comply with regulations. The trip organiser will inform Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport and the driver if the children or other passenger numbers change. Where there are multiple collections the trip organiser must provide the driver with a passenger list before the trip takes place, with sufficient time to plan a route that avoids breaking regulations. If more children are present at pick-up points than was planned for, the driver has the authority and the obligation to refuse them carriage if regulations would then be broken.

## Seating and Seatbelt regulations

## When a hire does come under the regulations, the forward-facing seats can be made available to children 3 - 16 years to the limit of the available seats.

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## Road Traffic Law on wearing seatbelts

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## Front Seats Saloon Seats

## Driver Seatbelt must be worn if fitted

## Infant (under 3) Appropriate child restraint

## Child aged 3-11 & Appropriate child restraint must

## Under 1.5.m. (5ft) be used if available

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## Child 12-13 or Adult seat belt must be worn Adult seat belt must be worn

## Younger if 1.5m

## Or over

## Adult passengers Adult seat belts must be worn Adult seat belts must be worn

## Where there is no baby seat or booster cushion available for infants 0-3 years old:

## a) They may not be carried in the front seats at all

## b) They may be carried in the rear on a forward facing seat wearing an adjustable seatbelt

## AT ALL TIMES THERE MUST ONLY BE ONE PERSON PER SEAT

**N.B. All child seats must be supplied and fitted by the member of the group who is responsible for the booking.**

**Health** **&** **Safety** **at** **Work** **Policy**

1. Under the Health & Safety Regulations which came into effect on 1st January 1993, Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport accepts its responsibilities as an employer for providing a safe and healthy environment for all of its employees and volunteers. It also accepts its responsibilities for providing a safe and healthy environment to members of the public and visitors.
2. Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport is taking all reasonable steps to meet this responsibility, paying particular attention to the provision and maintenance of :

a) Safe equipment and working systems.

1. Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport, of equipment and materials.
2. Adequate information, instructions, training and supervision to enable all employees and volunteers to recognise and avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own Health and Safety at Work.

d) A safe place of work.

e) A healthy working environment.

f) Adequate welfare facilities.

g) Access to first aid training for employees.

1. Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport reminds its employees and volunteers that it is their duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety at work and that of other employees, volunteers and members of the public, and to co-operate with Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport so as to enable it to carry out its own responsibilities.

4 Every effort will be made to ensure that there is no risk to the health & safety of the general public, visitors and voluntary workers arising from the work and activities of Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport. In the event of any emergency employees and volunteers should guide visitors and members of the public to a place of safety.

5. This statement will be reviewed, added to or modified from time to time and may be supplemented when necessary by further statements relating to the work of Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport employees and volunteers.

1. Copies of this statement & appropriate supplements will be made available to all employees and volunteers.
2. Four Towns & Vale Link Community Transport shall appoint its Chairperson as the person responsible for all matters affecting the Health & Safety of employees and volunteers of the organisation.