

Grant Palmer Safeguarding Policy 2021

Grant Palmer Limited transports children every day on public bus and school transport services. Keeping children safe whilst in our care is of paramount importance to us. The Directors and employees at Grant Palmer Limited understand that they have a duty and responsibility to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and support their general welfare and safety, promoting the protection of children in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Care Act, 2014, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2019, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, the Rehabilitation of Offenders' Act 1974 and General Data Protection Regulation, 2018.

As per the guidelines and recommendations: The Transport Manager will be the first point of contact for all concerns or issues regarding the safety of children and vulnerable adults.

The directors of Grant Palmer Limited recognise that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of their public transport and school transport services daily and must be reflected in all the company's policies, procedures, practices and activities. The company will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare.

The company will:

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, in parallel with all other considerations, and in line with all health and safety obligations,
- fully comply with its statutory obligations and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children,
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters,
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect,
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The company will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult with a special vulnerability.

The following procedures/measures are in place:

- In relation to any member of staff who maybe the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child using our services, the company adheres to the relevant procedures set out in our disciplinary and grievance procedure which can be found in the employee handbook.
- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the company adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the relevant legislation and statutory guidance.
- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary instruction and training to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act), the company:
 - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the company's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the company's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Encourages staff to avail of additional relevant training
 - Encourages directors to avail of relevant training
- The company maintain records of all staff and Board member training.
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all company personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the mandated reporting procedures under the Children First Act 2015,

In this company, the directors have appointed the above-named designated contact person as the 'relevant person' (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the company's child safeguarding statement.

The directors have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while using our services. The following Grant Palmer Limited policies are particularly relevant to this Safeguarding Policy and the associated risk assessment:

- Labour and human rights policy
- Sustainable procurement policy
- Privacy Policy
- Policy Statement on Secure Storage of DBS

- Conditions of Carriage
- Modern Slavery Risk Assessment
- Driver Handbook
- Employee Handbook

In addition the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children availing of our services:

- Child Safeguarding Statement and Policy will be displayed on our public website.
- All existing staff will receive a copy of our current Child Safeguarding Statement and Policy.
- All new employees will be provided with a copy of our Child Safeguarding Statement and Policy.
- Procedures for reporting child protection concerns are documented in our Policy.
- Recruitment and Selection Process will include police vetting where appropriate
- Recruitment and Selection Process will seek assurance from applicants that there are no known circumstances that would prevent them from working with children or vulnerable adults.
- Child Safeguarding will form part of Driver Induction Training.
- Grant Palmer Limited drivers will be issued with our Code of Conduct and comprehensive Drivers Handbook
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be made available on request by the company.

This statement has been published on the company's website and it is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request.

The reporting process:

1. Staff member has a safeguarding concern about a child/vulnerable adult
2. Inform the designated safeguarding lead, in their absence the deputy designated safeguarding lead
3. If necessary the designated safeguarding lead makes contact with local children's social care, or Local Adults Safeguarding Board for advice, or makes contact with the Local Authority Designated Officer for advice and guidance if the concern is in respect of an adult in a position of trust's behaviour with a child

Code of Conduct

- We expect all staff and all those who work with us, including and most particularly school bus drivers to behave appropriately at all times.
- No member of staff, or school bus driver will ever befriend a child outside of their professional role. They will never share, or accept, personal details, become friends with a child on social media, take photographs of a child, or meet them outside of their school bus role.
- No member of staff, or school bus driver will ever guarantee confidentiality to a child and if they ever have concerns about a child the member of staff will speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed every 3 years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers. The company will put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement which might be identified in the review. The directors shall decide to inform company personnel that the review has been undertaken. A record of the review and its outcomes shall be made available, if requested.