Lone Working Policy inc. Lone Driving with a Child

Moorhills Alternative Provision (henceforth MAP) Policies and Procedures

Introduction & Purpose:
This policy is the Lone Working Policy for MAP and applies to anyone working on behalf of MAP including paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers and students. Its purpose is to protect and enhance the safety and well-being of all children and young people by actively promoting awareness, good practice and sound procedures.

Policy Principles & Values
MAP recognises that some students require 1:1 staffing.
1:1 working introduces risks into the setting which must be managed appropriately.
The Lone Working Policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy_FINAL v2_17.07.2026.

Procedures

- MAP will ensure any 1:1 working is agreed by parents or carers, the referring school or agency and that these arrangements and agreements will be documented in writing.
- MAP will ensure that all staff have a clear enhanced DBS check and barred list check before working 1:1 with any student.
- MAP will only approve 1:1 working for a student where it is in line with parent/carer and school preference. If a student who is working 1:1 begins to display risky or challenging behaviour then this should be immediately reviewed and the activity will need to be stopped, the parent will be phoned and the student may likely be returned home.
- MAP requires all staff to raise any concerns with the DSL at the commissioning school or SEN casework officer, at the earliest opportunity.

Lone Driving

Before any staff member is permitted to use their personal car for AP transport, management must strictly enforce and log -

- **T**heir insurance certificate explicitly shows **"Business Use"** or business coverage for transporting clients/service users.
- **Valid DVLA Licence**
- **Roadworthiness Safeguards:** Staff must provide an up-to-date MOT certificate (if the car is over 3 years old) and proof of regular vehicle servicing. The policy must mandate that drivers perform a daily baseline safety check (tyre tread, working brake lights, and fluid levels) before picking up an AP student.

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Review due - 28.09.2027

Dynamic Safeguarding & Environmental Controls

Using a private car reduces institutional oversight, requiring stricter physical boundaries inside the vehicle:

- **The "No-Front-Seat" Rule:** AP students must **sit in the rear diagonal passenger seat**. This places them clearly within the driver's rearview mirror line of sight while ensuring they cannot easily grab the steering wheel, handbrake, or gearstick during an escalation.

Front Passenger Seat Restrictions and Approvals

1. General Principles

As a standard protective measure for both staff and students, all students transported in a staff member's personal private vehicle must be seated in the **rear diagonal passenger seat** (directly behind the front passenger seat).

Permitting a student to sit in the front passenger seat creates significant safeguarding vulnerabilities regarding physical boundaries, increases the risk of false allegations, and poses severe health and safety risks should a behavioral escalation occur mid-transit.

2. Permitted Exceptions

A student may only be permitted to travel in the front passenger seat if an individual risk assessment has been conducted, signed off by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Head of Provision, and meets at least one of the following criteria. Or evidence can be shown these criteria are applicable, through their EHC Plan;:

- **Medical or Physical Necessity:** The student has a documented physical disability, medical condition, or specialized medical equipment that cannot be safely accommodated or managed in the rear seats.
- **Trauma-Informed Sensory/Emotional Needs:** A trauma-informed assessment indicates that sitting in the rear of the vehicle triggers acute anxiety, panic, or claustrophobia, and that front-seat transit is necessary to maintain a calm emotional baseline.
- **Physical Scale Constraints:** The student's height or physical build makes rear-seat transit unsafe or highly restrictive in the specific personal vehicle being utilized.

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3. Absolute Prohibitions

Under no circumstances shall a student be permitted to sit in the front passenger seat if they have a documented history, or are exhibiting a current presentation, of any of the following:

- Physical aggression, unpredictable volatility, or intense emotional escalations.
- Grabby behaviors, or any history of tampering with vehicle controls (e.g., steering wheel, handbrake, gear stick, keys).
- Repeated attempts to unbuckle seatbelts or exit a moving vehicle.

4. Mandatory Safety and Safeguarding Controls

If front-seat travel is approved the driver must strictly enforce the following protocols before moving the vehicle:

- **Seat Positioning:** The front passenger seat must be slid back on its runners as far as physically possible to maximize the distance between the student and the dashboard airbag deployment zone.
- **Airbag Compliance:** The driver must ensure the vehicle's passenger airbag status complies with UK law. (Note: If an infant or young child is ever transported in a rear-facing restraint in the front seat, the passenger airbag **must** be deactivated).
- **Restraint Systems:** The driver remains legally responsible for ensuring the student is secured using the correct restraint system appropriate for their age, height, and weight, in accordance with current UK road traffic regulations.
- **Smoke and Vape-Free Environment:** Even though it is the staff member's personal property, the vehicle becomes an active workplace and educational environment during transport. Smoking or vaping by either the staff member or the student must be **strictly prohibited by policy**.

Operational Risk Checklist Template

To make the policy actionable, staff should be required to sign off on a **Pre-Trip Risk Matrix** before turning the ignition key.

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Risk Category	Pre-Journey Verification Rule
Parental Informed Consent	Written or verified verbal consent is secured via the base. Parents must explicitly know their child is in a *private vehicle*.
Escalation Trigger Check	The student's daily emotional baseline is checked at the school/home gate. If a student is currently in a state of high anxiety or crisis, lone private transport is aborted.
Strict Boundary Routes	The route must be entirely direct. Stopping at drive-throughs, fuel stations (unless an emergency), or shop runs to buy students "rewards" is strictly forbidden.
Door-to-Door Handover	Staff must wait until the student is physically handed over to a verified parent, carer, or school staff member. Staff must never leave an AP student at an empty house or at an unverified location.

5. Specific Incident Management Plan:

All staff driving personal cars on behalf of MAP must adopt the following phrase as standard protocol:

“Drive, Pull Over, Step Out."

If an AP student unbuckles their seatbelt, exhibits physical aggression, or self-harms mid-transit, the staff member must **not** attempt to physically restrain the student while the vehicle is in motion. They must safely pull the car onto the hard shoulder or pavement, remove the keys from the ignition, exit the vehicle to a position of safety outside, and immediately call emergency services or the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).