**Transport**

**Standards and Regulations**

**Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care:**

* [Standard 2 - Understand your role as a foster carer](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bradford/files/fost_care_tsd_standards_guid.pdf).
* [Standard 4 - Know how to communicate effectively](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bradford/files/fost_care_tsd_standards_guid.pdf).
* [Standard 5 - Understand the development of children and young people](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bradford/files/fost_care_tsd_standards_guid.pdf).
* [Standard 6 - Keep children and young people safe from harm](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bradford/files/fost_care_tsd_standards_guid.pdf).

Also see [Money Matters and Insurance](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bradford/money_insurance.html).

**1.****Introduction**

Children who are in your care should always be treated as part of the family and you will be expected to transport them in the same way that you would your own children.

A first aid kit and fire extinguisher must always be carried in the vehicle.

Where outdoor activities are planned, first aid kits should also be carried.

If for any reason any children placed with you are involved in any accidents, this should be communicated as soon as possible, and a written report provided to your supervising social worker.

You should inform your supervising social worker of any driving penalties you receive.

**Note**: It is illegal to smoke in a vehicle with anyone under 18 (See [Gov.UK Smoking in vehicles](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/smoking-in-vehicles#history)). This applies when people have the windows down or the sunroof open or are sitting in the open doorway of a car. It does not apply to e-cigarettes or a convertible car with the roof completely down however the fostering service prohibits this also.

**2.****Seat Belts/Restraints/Car Seats**

The law requires all children travelling in cars to use the correct child car seat or booster seat (see [Using a child car seat or booster seat (GOV.UK)](https://www.gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules/using-a-child-car-seat-or-booster-seat)) until they are either 135 cm in height or the age of 12 (which ever they reach first). After this they must use an adult seat belt. The same rules apply for children with disabilities unless a doctor says they're exempt on medical grounds. They can use a disabled person's seat belt or child restraint designed for their needs.

For information on when a child can travel without a car seat (for example in a taxi) please see [When a child can travel without a car seat (GOV.UK)](https://www.gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules/when-a-child-can-travel-without-a-car-seat).

**It is the driver's legal responsibility to ensure that the child is correctly restrained.**

You can use your child’s car seat in the front seat of a vehicle, in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions / advice and if it fits.

You must deactivate any frontal airbags before fitting a rear-facing baby seat.

**3.****The Vehicle**

You should take all advisory and necessary precautions to ensure everyone’s safety whilst driving and ensure you always drive within the legal limits.

You must take responsibility as the owner or driver of a vehicle, that the correct license, insurance (which covers fostered children), tax and MOT certificates are in place and valid. You may be asked to produce the relevant paperwork during the foster carer review process.

**4.****Managing Children in the Vehicle**

It is a good idea to take toys, books, tablet computers and activities to occupy younger children on long journeys.

If a journey is due to be made and the child is very upset or unsettled, you should use your knowledge of the child to determine if the journey should go ahead.

If car journeys are of particular concern and an on-going issue this should be raised with your supervising social worker and a risk assessment undertaken and discussed with all involved in the child's care.

One to one time in the car can also be a good opportunity for children to share their feelings, a time when they are not exposed to having direct eye contact, or someone facing them directly. You may find some positive conversations can come from a journey in the car.

You may be required to take children to meetings/visits to see professionals or family members from time to time. These circumstances can and do lead to children becoming upset, and, if this happens, you should always support the child and offer them the opportunity to talk through their feelings.

**5.****Travelling with Children with Disabilities**

As children with physical disabilities have individual needs, they should have an assessment about the most appropriate car seat / transportation method by Occupational Therapy or a health professional, which will include reviewing transporting the child safely, as well as securing the seat / wheelchair in the vehicle.

Some children may be assessed as requiring an escort, which would need to be discussed with the child’s social worker and the supervising social worker.

If you need advice about travelling in a car with a child with a physical disability, you should contact the health professionals involved in the child’s care for guidance.

**6.****Mobility Allowance**

You may be able to claim mobility allowance for [Disabled Children](http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/nat_key/keywords/disabled_child.html), speak to the child’s social worker about this.