

<b>Title</b>	Mileage and Travel Expense Policy
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***Document history – Until this document is approved for the first time it is not subject to formal change control and as such, draft versions will always be referred to as ‘Draft.’***

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## Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance on the use of personal and Company vehicles for work-related travel and the process for claiming mileage expenses. The policy ensures that employees are reimbursed fairly for authorised business travel while maintaining appropriate financial control and compliance with HMRC guidance.

This policy also supports the Company's safeguarding responsibilities where employees may be required to transport young people or service users as part of their duties.

## Scope

This policy applies to all employees, managers and authorised representatives across Silver Birch Care (Holdings) Limited and its subsidiaries.

## Exclusions

The following mileage or vehicle use will not be reimbursed or authorised under this policy:

### Commuting

- Travel between an employee's home and their normal place of work.

### Unauthorised Journeys

- Travel that has not been approved by the employee's Line Manager where approval is required.
- Journeys that are not related to Company business.

### Personal Detours

- Additional mileage incurred for personal errands, diversions, or non-work-related activities during a business journey.

### Lack of Appropriate Insurance

- Mileage claims made using a personal vehicle where the employee does not hold valid insurance covering business use, including cover for transporting young people where applicable.

### Incomplete or Inaccurate Claims

- Claims submitted without sufficient detail, supporting information, or submitted outside the permitted submission period.

### Vehicle Non-Compliance

- Use of a vehicle that does not have:
  - A valid MOT (where required)
  - Valid vehicle tax
  - A valid driving licence for the driver
  - Appropriate insurance cover.

### Unauthorised Use of Company Vehicles

- Personal use of Company vehicles without written authorisation.
- Use of Company fuel cards for non-business purposes.

### Safeguarding Concerns

- Journeys involving the transport of young people where safeguarding protocols have not been followed or appropriate authorisation has not been obtained.

The Company reserves the right to refuse reimbursement or take disciplinary action where claims fall within the above exclusions.

## Definitions

### **Business Travel**

Travel undertaken by an employee that is wholly, exclusively and necessarily required for the performance of their duties on behalf of Silver Birch Care (Holdings) Limited.

### **Normal Place of Work**

The primary workplace stated in the employee's contract of employment, such as a specific care home, office location, or operational site.

### **Company Vehicle**

Any vehicle owned, leased, or provided by Silver Birch Care (Holdings) Limited for authorised business use.

### **Personal Vehicle**

A vehicle owned, leased, or otherwise privately arranged by an employee and used for authorised business travel.

### **Mileage Claim**

A request for reimbursement submitted by an employee for business-related travel undertaken using a personal vehicle.

### **Line Manager**

The employee's immediate manager responsible for authorising travel and approving mileage claims.

### **Young People / Service Users**

Children or young people receiving care, support, or services from Silver Birch Care (Holdings) Limited, including those placed within residential homes or supported services.

### **Business Use Insurance**

Motor insurance that provides cover for using a personal vehicle for work-related activities. Where employees transport young people or service users, the policy must also permit the carriage of passengers in connection with employment duties.

### **Commuting**

Travel between an employee's home and their normal place of work. Commuting is not considered business travel and is therefore not reimbursable.

## Responsibilities

### Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- Ensuring that any personal vehicle used for business purposes is safe, roadworthy, taxed, and has a valid MOT where required.
- Holding a valid UK driving licence and informing their Line Manager immediately of any endorsements, disqualifications, or changes affecting their ability to drive.
- Ensuring that their vehicle insurance includes appropriate business use, and where required, cover for transporting young people or service users as part of their employment duties.
- Ensuring compliance with all road traffic laws and regulations at all times.
- Maintaining accurate mileage records and submitting claims in line with Company procedures.
- Using Company vehicles, fuel cards, and mileage claims only for authorised business purposes.
- Following all safeguarding procedures and risk management practices when transporting young people.
- Immediately reporting any accidents, incidents, or damage involving a Company vehicle or personal vehicle used for work purposes.

### Line Managers

Line Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring employees are aware of this policy and understand their obligations.
- Authorising business travel where appropriate.
- Reviewing and approving mileage claims to ensure they are reasonable, accurate, and compliant with this policy.
- Ensuring that employees transporting young people have appropriate insurance and authorisation.
- Escalating any concerns regarding misuse of mileage claims or Company vehicles.

### Finance / Payroll Team

The Finance or Payroll Team are responsible for:

- Processing mileage claims in accordance with approved rates and Company procedures.
- Ensuring reimbursement aligns with HMRC mileage allowance rules.
- Maintaining appropriate financial records and audit trails for mileage payments.
- Querying or rejecting claims that are incomplete or inconsistent with the policy.

### Senior Management

Senior Management are responsible for:

- Ensuring the policy is implemented consistently across all services.
- Reviewing the policy periodically to ensure compliance with HMRC guidance, safeguarding standards, and regulatory requirements.
- Investigating concerns relating to misuse of Company vehicles or mileage claims where required.

## Use of Personal Vehicles for Business Travel

Employees may use their personal vehicle for business travel where it is operationally necessary and where no suitable Company vehicle is available. In most circumstances, employees should obtain approval from their Line Manager before undertaking business travel using a personal vehicle.

Employees must ensure that their vehicle is properly maintained, roadworthy, taxed, and has a valid MOT where required. The Company reserves the right to request evidence of driving licences, insurance documentation, MOT certification, and other relevant vehicle documentation where appropriate.

Employees must also ensure that they hold appropriate motor insurance that includes business use. Where employees are required to transport young people or service users as part of their duties, they must ensure that their insurance policy explicitly permits the carriage of passengers in connection with their employment and allows the transportation of children or young people for work purposes.

It is the responsibility of the employee to confirm that their insurance policy provides the appropriate level of cover and to provide evidence of such cover to the Company if requested. Failure to maintain appropriate insurance may result in the employee not being permitted to use their personal vehicle for business purposes and may invalidate any mileage claims.

Where employees transport young people or service users as part of their duties, they must also ensure the vehicle is safe, suitable for the journey, and that all safeguarding procedures are followed at all time

## Use of Company Vehicles

Company vehicles may be provided to employees where operationally required. Unless otherwise authorised in writing by senior management, Company vehicles are provided for business use only.

Employees using Company vehicles must ensure they are driven responsibly and in accordance with road traffic laws. The vehicle must be kept in a reasonable condition, and any mechanical concerns, damage, or incidents must be reported promptly.

Fuel cards issued for Company vehicles must only be used for authorised business travel. Misuse of a fuel card or Company vehicle may result in disciplinary action.

Employees remain personally responsible for any driving offences, fines, or penalties incurred while operating a Company vehicle.

## Mileage Records and Claims

Employees must maintain accurate records of business travel undertaken in a personal or Company vehicle. Mileage claims must include the date of the journey, the start and end locations, the purpose of the journey, and the number of miles travelled.

Claims should normally be submitted on a monthly basis using the Company's approved expense or payroll process. The Company reserves the right to refuse or delay payment of claims that are incomplete, inaccurate, or submitted significantly outside the expected submission timeframe.

## Mileage Reimbursement

Mileage claims for authorised business travel undertaken in a personal vehicle will be reimbursed in line with HMRC Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP). At the time of publication, the approved rates are 45 pence per mile for the first 10,000 miles travelled in a tax year and 25 pence per mile thereafter.

These rates may change in line with HMRC guidance and the Company reserves the right to amend reimbursement rates where required.

Mileage reimbursement is intended to cover the general cost of operating a personal vehicle for business purposes, including fuel, wear and tear, servicing, and insurance.

## Monitoring and Review

The policy of Mileage and Travel Expense should be reviewed as required by the Group HR Director. Policies will be reviewed as a minimum every three years. However, policies may need to be reviewed at any time in response to a specific incident, change in practice, or regulation.

SBCH will regularly analyse recruitment data to:

- Monitor the diversity of applicants and appointees
- Identify recruitment challenges
- Evaluate the effectiveness of different recruitment channels
- Ensure compliance with Ofsted requirements