



**VE** Vectare | by **faria**  
Education Group

# Safeguarding Beyond the School Gate

A practical guide  
to school Transport  
Safeguarding

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**1**

**Introduction**

**2**

**About Vectare**

**3**

**The Safeguarding Blind Spot In  
School Transport**

**4**

**Where Transport Safeguarding  
Risks Typically Occur**

**5**

**The Growing Importance Of  
Transport Safeguarding**



Preparing For The Future  
/ Conclusion

11

The School Transport  
Safeguarding Checklist

10

The Role Of Technology

9

8

What Effective Transport  
Safeguarding Looks Like

7

The 3 Levels Of Transport  
Safeguarding Maturity

6

Common Safeguarding  
Scenarios



# 1

## Introduction

Schools have never had greater visibility over what happens inside their buildings. Attendance is recorded digitally. Safeguarding concerns are logged and monitored. Staff know which pupils should be present, where they are expected to be, and how to respond when concerns arise.

Yet for many schools, the most complex part of the school day happens outside the school gate.

Every day, pupils travel to and from school across transport networks involving buses, minibuses, taxis, and shared services. These journeys may span large geographic areas, involve multiple transport providers, and include pupils from different year groups or schools.

While these journeys are routine, they also introduce moments where safeguarding visibility can be reduced.

## Schools

### may not always know:

- Whether a pupil boarded their allocated vehicle
- Whether a pupil disembarked at the correct stop
- Whether a transport service is running late
- Or what happened during a specific journey

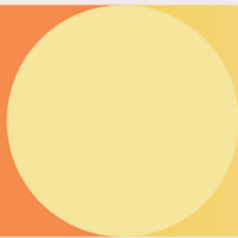
In most cases, school transport operates smoothly. But when unexpected situations arise, schools may find that information about those journeys is difficult to access quickly. This creates what many schools are beginning to recognise as a transport safeguarding blind spot: a part of the student experience where responsibility remains with the school community, but oversight can be limited.

As expectations around safeguarding, transparency, and communication continue to evolve, schools are increasingly examining how visibility across student journeys can be improved.

## This guide explores:



The safeguarding challenges associated with school transport



The scenarios where visibility matters most



Practical steps schools can take to strengthen oversight across the entire student journey

Enjoy Reading!

# About Vectare



Dominic Kalantary

Peter Nathanail

**Two school friends, a spreadsheet, and a vision.**

## 2

Vectare was founded with a simple goal: to make school transport safer, more transparent, and easier for schools to manage.



The idea for the company began while its founders, **Dominic and Peter**, were still students at school themselves. Like many schools, theirs relied on a complex network of buses and routes to transport pupils each day. Keeping track of who was travelling, which routes were operating, and how services were performing was a constant challenge. To help solve the problem, they created a spreadsheet to help their school track transport arrangements more effectively.

What began as a simple tool quickly revealed a much wider challenge. Schools everywhere were dealing with similar issues:



limited visibility of transport operations



time-consuming manual processes



fragmented communication with parents and drivers

## 2. About Vectare

Over time, that original spreadsheet evolved into a dedicated technology platform designed specifically for school transport.



Since its founding in 2016, Vectare has grown into a specialist transport technology company working with hundreds of schools worldwide. By combining digital tools with transport planning expertise, the company helps schools manage routes, monitor journeys, communicate with parents, and strengthen safeguarding oversight.



Today, Vectare supports millions of student journeys every year. Despite its growth, the company's mission remains closely connected to its origins: solving real-world problems schools face every day.

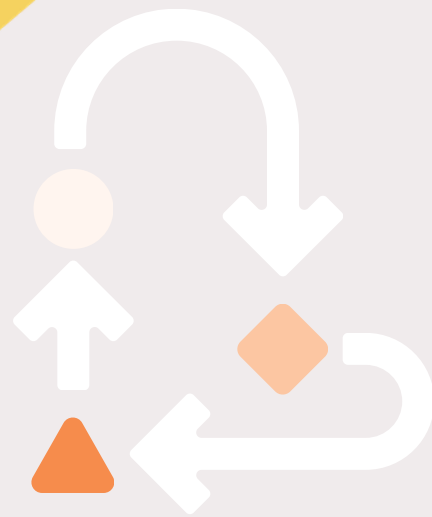
# 3

## The Safeguarding Blind Spot In School Transport

School transport networks may involve:

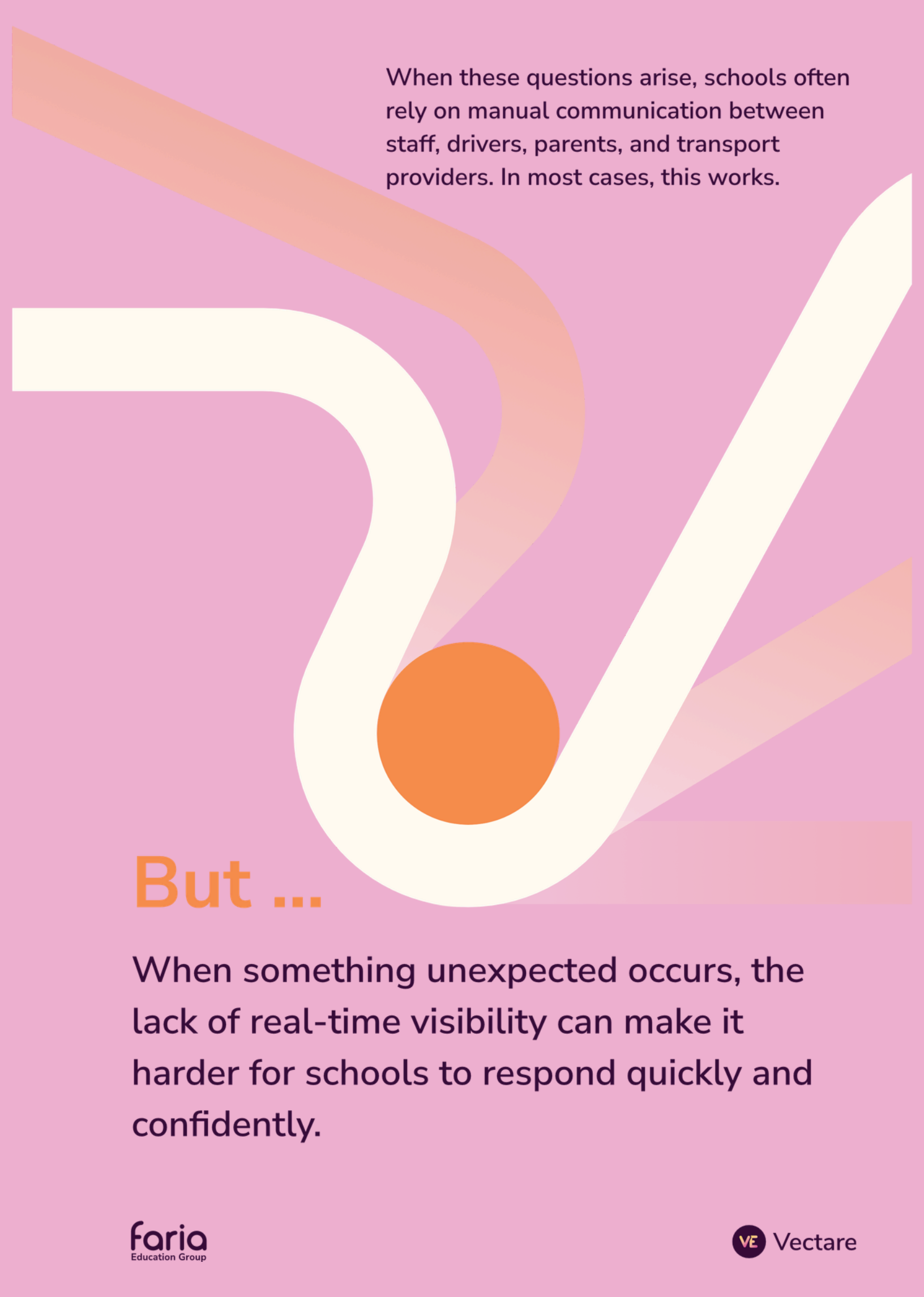
- Large catchment areas
- Multiple transport routes
- Different drivers and operators
- Pupils travelling across several schools
- Journeys taking place outside school supervision

Within these environments, information gaps can emerge.



Schools may find themselves asking:

- Has the pupil boarded the correct bus?
- Did the vehicle arrive at the expected time?
- Did the pupil get off at the correct stop?
- Which pupils were travelling together?
- What happened if a vehicle was delayed?



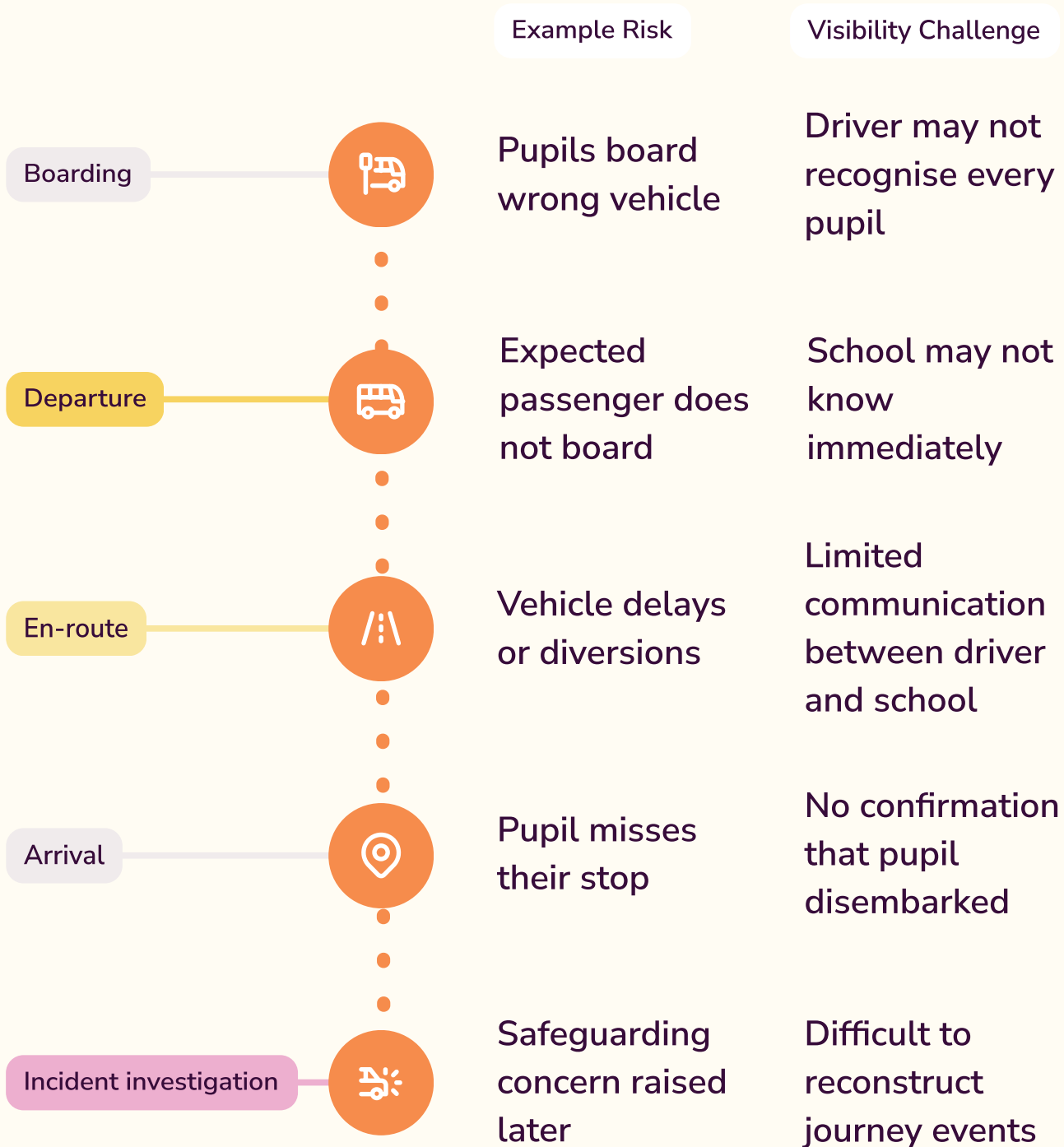
When these questions arise, schools often rely on manual communication between staff, drivers, parents, and transport providers. In most cases, this works.

**But ...**

When something unexpected occurs, the lack of real-time visibility can make it harder for schools to respond quickly and confidently.

# 4

## Where Transport Safeguarding Risks Typically Occur



When concerns arise, the ability to access accurate information quickly becomes extremely important.

# 5

## The Growing Importance Of Transport Safeguarding

Several trends are increasing the importance of safeguarding oversight during school transport.



### Larger Catchment Areas

Many schools now draw pupils from wider geographic areas. Longer journeys mean greater reliance on organised transport systems and more complex route networks.

### Greater Operational Complexity

Schools may operate multiple bus routes, contract external operators, or manage mixed fleets of buses, minibuses, and taxis.




## Rising Parent Expectations

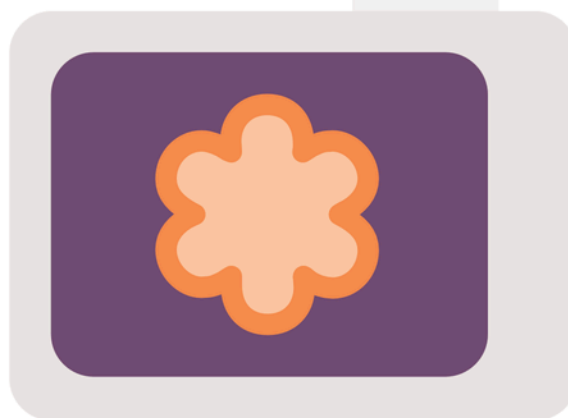
Parents increasingly expect transparency around services affecting their children.

In a world where people can track deliveries, taxis, and flights in real time, expectations around school transport are evolving as well.

Without reliable systems for sharing this information, schools may receive frequent enquiries from concerned families.

### Parents often want to know:

-  Whether transport is running on time
-  Whether their child has boarded safely
-  When the vehicle is approaching their stop



# Stronger Focus On Safeguarding Culture

Education systems worldwide increasingly emphasise safeguarding culture and accountability. Schools are expected to demonstrate clear processes for identifying risks, responding to concerns, and maintaining accurate records. Transport oversight forms part of that broader safeguarding picture.



# The Visibility Expectation

Parents today expect real-time visibility across many aspects of daily life. Deliveries, taxis, and travel services can often be tracked in real time through mobile apps.



Increasingly, parents expect similar transparency when it comes to their children's journeys to and from school.



Providing timely information about transport services can help reduce uncertainty and improve communication between schools and families.



# 6

## Common Safeguarding Scenarios

Most school journeys take place without incident. However, transport environments create situations where visibility and communication are essential.



Missed boarding

A pupil booked on a bus service does not board at their usual stop.



Boarding the wrong vehicle

Younger pupils may accidentally board the wrong service, particularly when several buses depart from the same location.



Missed stop

A pupil remains on the vehicle beyond their intended stop.



Delays and disruptions

Traffic congestion, roadworks, or weather conditions can delay vehicles.



Investigating incidents

Schools may need to confirm which pupils were on a vehicle, when they boarded, and where the vehicle travelled. Accurate records are essential for understanding events and responding appropriately.

# Safeguarding In Action

## When A Student Misses Their Stop



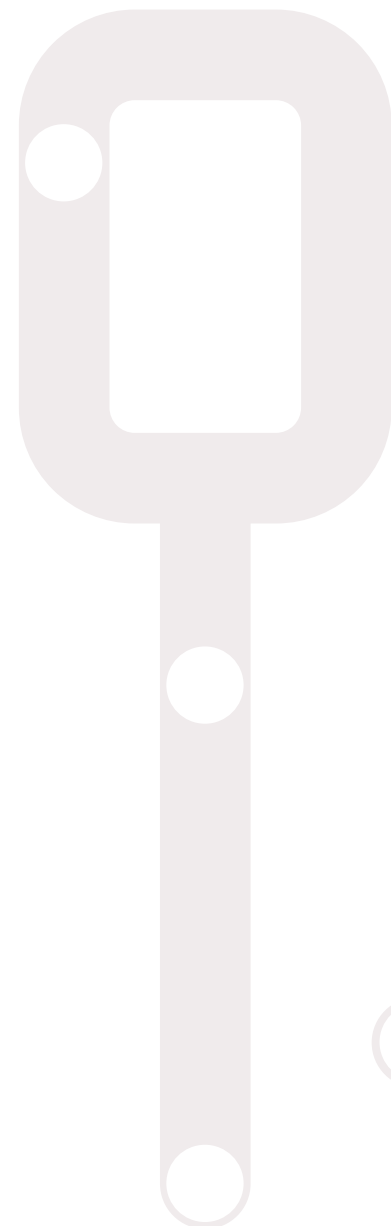
The following scenario is **fictional** but reflects situations that schools commonly encounter when managing student transport.

It's the end of the school day and buses are leaving campus as usual.

Among the passengers is a Year 4 pupil travelling home on one of the school's regular routes. During the journey, the student **falls asleep**. When the bus reaches their stop, they remain on board without the driver noticing.

A few minutes later, the pupil's parent contacts the school office. **Their child has not arrived home** at the expected time.

Without clear visibility of the transport network, situations like this can quickly create uncertainty. Staff may need to call drivers individually, check paper registers, and try to determine which route the pupil boarded.



# Safeguarding In Action

In this example, the school can see immediately which bus the pupil boarded earlier that afternoon. **Real-time tracking** shows that the vehicle has already passed the intended stop.

School staff contact the driver and the pupil's parents within minutes. **The situation is resolved quickly and safely.** While fictional, scenarios like this highlight why visibility across school transport journeys can be important.



# Questions Your School Should Be Able to Answer

If a safeguarding concern arises during a transport journey, schools should be able to answer several key questions quickly:

- ? Which vehicle was the pupil travelling on
- ? What time did they board
- ? Which other pupils were on that vehicle
- ? Who was driving the vehicle
- ? Where was the vehicle during the journey
- ? What time did the pupil disembark

If answering these questions requires multiple phone calls or manual checks, transport oversight may benefit from improvement.

Schedule a call with one of the experts here at Vectare.



# The 3 Levels Of Transport Safeguarding Maturity

Schools often develop their transport oversight gradually as systems and processes evolve. Assess yourself based on the levels we have outlined below.

## 1 Limited Visibility

Transport oversight relies largely on manual processes.

Typical characteristics:

- Paper passenger lists
- Limited vehicle tracking
- Drivers responsible for reporting issues
- Schools informed only when a concern arises

## 2 Operational Oversight

Schools introduce systems that improve operational visibility.

Typical characteristics:

- Digital passenger records
- Basic vehicle tracking
- Structured communication with parents
- Recorded journey data

This allows staff to investigate incidents more quickly

## 3 Proactive Safeguarding

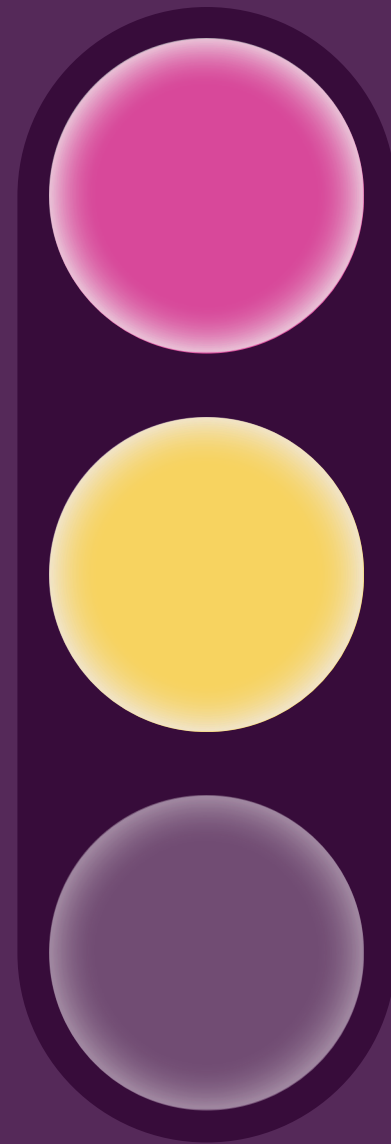
Transport becomes integrated into the school's wider safeguarding framework.

Typical characteristics:

- Real-time vehicle visibility
- Confirmed passenger boarding records
- Automated alerts for missed boarding
- Digital journey history
- Integrated communication with parents

At this stage, transport oversight supports proactive safeguarding rather than reactive response.

If you fall into  
the **Level 1** or  
**Level 2**  
category, why  
not speak to  
one of our  
experts here  
at Vectare?



## 8

## What Effective Transport Safeguard Looks Like

Schools are increasingly recognising the importance of extending safeguarding oversight to the entire student journey.

Effective transport safeguarding typically includes:

- Real-time vehicle visibility
- Confirmed passenger boarding records
- Clear communication with parents
- Reliable journey records
- Driver and vehicle compliance monitoring

Together, these elements help create a transport system that supports the wider safeguarding framework within a school.

The screenshot displays the 'Exeter School Bus Service' website. At the top, it says 'Find your nearest bus stop'. Below this is a search bar for 'Travelling from' (with a placeholder 'Please enter your postcode...') and a dropdown for 'Travelling to' (set to 'Exeter School'). A 'Bus Routes' section lists: Axminster, Coplestone, Exmouth, M5 Cullompton Services, and Moretonhampstead. A 'Route Map' shows a network of bus routes in various colors (green, purple, blue, red) connecting various locations. A 'Journey Calendar' button is visible. Below the map is an 'Availability Checker' with a grid of calendars for months from September 2023 to April 2024. The grid uses colored dots (green, yellow, orange, red) to indicate bus availability for different days. On the right side, there is a 'Times' section showing '07:30 Mon' and a 'Fares' section with a 'Return Ticket' button.

# 9

## The Role Of Technology In Modern Safeguarding

Digital systems are increasingly used across education to support safeguarding and operational oversight.

### Schools already rely on technology to manage:

- Attendance monitoring
- Safeguarding records
- Communication with parents
- Behaviour and incident reporting

Transport management is evolving in a similar way.

### Modern systems can provide:

- Real-time vehicle tracking
- Digital passenger registration
- Automated parent notifications
- Digital journey records
- Driver compliance monitoring

These tools help transform transport oversight from a reactive process into a proactive one.

# Testimonials

Hear from  
customers  
like you



## Brighton College

The Vectare system has streamlined our transport processes, significantly reducing administrative workload and enabling us to plan far more effectively and longer term.

**Belinda Forsythe OBE, Director of Operations**



## Shiplake College

Shiplake College relies on an extensive network of buses to support our families, many of whom are located a significant distance from the school. Working closely with Vectare, we have identified ways to further increase the number of bus users by appealing to a greater number of current and prospective families. For example, we have introduced an express route for families travelling the furthest distance to avoid too early start times, have used data to identify potential routes to serve new areas and widen our market, and ensured flexibility for families requiring reduced regular bookings in line with any boarding provision also used at the College

**Mrs Katherine Green, Director of External Relations**



## Newcastle High school for Girls

We've been very pleased with the service provided by Vectare. Their management of our trips is professional and they have achieved substantial cost savings by making our procurement process more competitive and introducing us to new operators who we had not previously used.

**John Crosby, Director of Finance and Operations**

# 10

## The School Transport Safeguarding Checklist

Schools reviewing their transport arrangements may find it helpful to consider the following questions.

Visibility	Can the school see where transport vehicles are during journeys?	Yes / No
Passenger records	Can the school see where transport vehicles are during journeys?	Yes / No
Communication	Can the school see where transport vehicles are during journeys?	Yes / No
Journey verification	Can the school see where transport vehicles are during journeys?	Yes / No
Driver compliance	Can the school see where transport vehicles are during journeys?	Yes / No
Vehicle safety	Are safety checks and maintenance records documented?	Yes / No

If several of these questions are difficult to answer, it may indicate opportunities to strengthen transport oversight.

# 11

## Preparing Your School For The Future

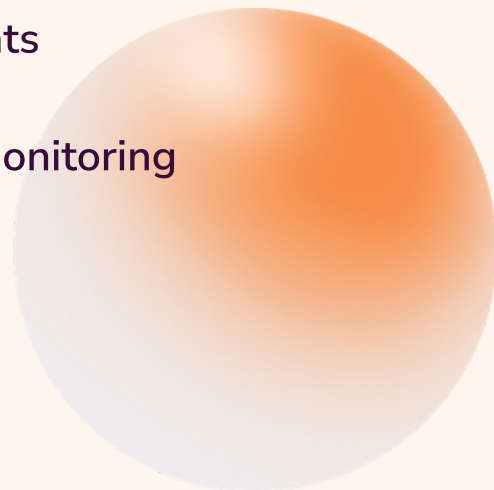
Education is becoming increasingly connected and data-driven.

Schools are adopting digital systems to improve communication, streamline administration, and strengthen safeguarding processes.

*Transport management is part of this broader shift.*

Improving visibility during student journeys can help schools:

- Real-time vehicle visibility
- Confirmed passenger boarding records
- Clear communication with parents
- Reliable journey records
- Driver and vehicle compliance monitoring



# Conclusion

Safeguarding does not end at the school gate.

Every school day, pupils travel through transport networks that connect homes, communities, and school campuses. While these journeys are routine, they remain an important part of the student experience and an important part of a school's wider duty of care.

By strengthening oversight during transport, schools can extend safeguarding practices across the entire student journey. Greater visibility, clearer communication, and reliable records help ensure pupils remain safe, supported, and accounted for wherever their school day begins or ends.

For schools looking to improve transport safeguarding, the next step is to understand what greater visibility could look like in practice.



**Book a demo with Vectare** to see how digital tools can help your school monitor journeys, communicate with parents, strengthen operational oversight, and support safer travel for every pupil.

**OA** OpenApply

**MB** ManageBac+

**AT** Atlas

**SC** SchoolsBuddy

**VE** Vectare

