

Dear Parent,

During the month of June, there will be a weekly task designed for you to work alongside and complete with your child/children in relation to a key road safety issue:

Road Safety Education - Week 3 Task (Child Passenger Safety)

This week the focus is on passenger safety and you can conduct this task without even starting the car! There is also a follow up activity supplied by Department for Infrastructure 'Safe and Accessible Travel' (attached) which can be printed out and completed by your child if you wish. However, these are not intended to take the place of the task itself but rather to reinforce the learning.

1. First thing is first – check the height of your child. The law states that all children up to 135cm (approximately 4ft 5in) in height AND under 12 years of age, must use a suitable child restraint – that is, one that is suitable for your child's height or weight.
2. Next, look for a sticker or label on the child car seats that are used for each child and it will show which of the two European standards for child restraint systems it has been manufactured to - Regulation 44 and Regulation 129 (or i-Size). Seats manufactured to either standard will have a label showing a capital 'E' in a circle - as shown in the picture:
 - Regulation 44 child car seats are based on weight with an age recommendation.
 - Regulation 129 (or i-Size) child car seats are based on height/ length and have a maximum weight (the label will tell you the weight or maximum height/length the child car seat is designed for).



3. Assuming the child car seat is still appropriate for the child it is being used for (given the above), now it's time to check the seat is being used properly. Every year too many children are killed or seriously injured – often because they are not properly restrained when travelling in a car. So make sure you understand the law and give your child the best possible protection. Many seat experts believe that it's better and safer to keep your child in the lowest group seat for as long as possible. This means staying in their current stage seat until the maximum weight or height limit is reached. Because children grow and develop at different rates it is important to keep a watch on your child's height and weight to make sure that they don't move up a stage too early or too late. You must only use a child restraint if your car's seat belt has a diagonal strap, unless the child restraint is:
- specifically designed for use with a lap seat belt only;
 - fitted using ISOFIX anchor points.

Checklist

- # follow the manufacturer's instructions (refer to the diagrams on the side of the seat or better still using the instruction manual provided at the time of purchase);
- # where using an adult belt to secure the restraint - make sure it passes through all the right slots;
- # make sure that the child restraint is tight in the adult seat;
- # make certain that the adult seat belt buckle is not bent over or resting on the child restraint frame;
- # never fit a rear-facing restraint with an active airbag in front of it;
- # check the vehicle handbook and follow the advice about children and airbags - where fitted;
- # deactivate any front airbags before fitting a rear-facing (baby) restraint in a front seat;
- # never modify the restraint or adult seat belt to make it fit;
- # never fit a child restraint in side-facing seats;
- # where the seat belt is being used to restrain the child (booster seats/booster cushions), ensure the diagonal belt is not resting on the child's throat (there may be an adjuster so that the seat belt rests on the shoulder)

Some general safety points:

- # every trip - allow time to get the child comfortably strapped in;
- # where possible, ensure children sit in the back seat;
- # make sure everyone is in their seat and properly restrained (that includes adults!) before moving off;
- # remind children not to distract the driver by shouting or fighting (!) during the journey;
- # assist young children to get out of the car;
- # insist on children exiting car on the pavement (or grass verge). If they are not sitting at that side, they could move across the back seat when the vehicle stops;

For further information on seat belts and child car seats (restraints): <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/child-car-seats-restraints-and-seatbelts>

For information from manufacturers and retailers on whether a particular child car seat will fit in your vehicle and how you should install it: <https://www.childcarseats.org.uk/choosing-using/child-car-seat-fitting-and-compatibility/>

To view the road safety calendars issued to schools: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/road-safety-teaching-aid-calendars>

Remember – seat belts (and child car restraints) save lives!