



Minibus Policy

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Review Committee: Resources

Review: Biannually



MINIBUS POLICY

Mission Statement

“Love one another as I have loved you” (John, 15)

We believe that Jesus Christ and his Gospel Call – to love God and all people – are at the heart of what we do.

He inspires us, as children of God, to uphold the dignity of each individual.

We strive to develop a community in Christ which fully supports all in achieving their potential – spiritually, academically and personally.

THE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL MINIBUS:

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THE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL MINIBUS

1. INSURANCE

It is the Headteacher's responsibility to arrange for a minibus to be insured on a fully comprehensive basis.

Cover will normally be restricted to drivers who obtained their full driving licence before 1 January 1997, over 21 years of age, who are experienced at driving this type of vehicle and or have undertaken relevant training, have held a full UK driving licence for a minimum of two years and who have no disability, recent motoring accidents or convictions.

Any unauthorised journey made in a school's minibus may render the driver liable to disciplinary proceedings. Should the incident involve that driver in a road accident, then the insurers may well refuse indemnity under their policy, leaving the driver liable not only for costs, but also open to prosecution for driving without insurance.

The minibus is currently insured by QBE Insurance (Europe) Ltd.

2. RECOVERY

The minibus should have breakdown cover. This is currently provided by the insurers through the AA.

3. REGISTRATION AND LICENSING

It is the Head Teacher's responsibility to make the necessary arrangements for a minibus to be registered and licensed. A full annual licence should be obtained.

4. MAINTENANCE AND SERVICING

It is the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that there is proper and adequate maintenance of a minibus in order that it meets in full the requirements of the Road Traffic Act and the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations for servicing and maintenance of the vehicle. Records of all maintenance work must be kept.

General maintenance work should not be carried out within a school or by school staff, unless there is an emergency during a journey. A claim against a school in the person of a Head Teacher or teacher responsible is a possibility should an accident result from faulty work carried out on a vehicle.

In addition to general maintenance work, regular maintenance checks will need to be undertaken at school. These include:

Tyres: Are they inflated to the correct pressure, with sufficient tread and free from cuts or other damage? (Checks should include the spare tyre).

Lights: Are they clean, adjusted properly and in working order? (Vehicles should carry spare bulbs and fuses which are easily accessible).

Windscreen:	Is the windscreen clear, the wipers working, the blades free from excessive wear and cuts? Is the windscreen washer bottle full, functioning and containing a suitable additive to prevent it freezing during winter months?
Oil/Coolant?	Brakes, power steering, engine oil - are the fluid levels correct?
Mirrors:	Are they adjusted to enable the driver to see clearly behind him/her?

Whilst it is likely that a number of teachers will drive the vehicle and undertake the necessary checks prior to the journey, it is recommended that one member of staff should have overall responsibility for the maintenance of a school's minibus. It is also recommended that a book is kept with the vehicle in which any minor defects, which cannot be immediately corrected, are recorded. Provided that this book is inspected regularly, it should be a relatively easy task to ensure that minor defects are dealt with promptly.

N.B. Any serious defect which affects the roadworthiness of the minibus should be reported to the designated member of staff as soon as possible. The vehicle must not be used to transport staff or students until the defect has been rectified.

5. MOT CERTIFICATE

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure that, where it is required, a current MOT Certificate is held for a minibus (a minibus requires a current MOT certificate from its first birthday).

Due to certain special physical requirements related to the size of minibuses, vehicles of this class have to be taken to a testing station which is registered for Group 5 tests.

6. DRIVERS

Only members of staff covered by the school's insurance policy and authorised by the Head Teacher may drive a minibus. As a minimum such drivers must:

- i) Hold a full United Kingdom driving licence which includes categories B. Any endorsements on a member of staff's driving licence need to be notified to the insurers.
- ii) Have at least 2 years experience as qualified drivers (and be over 21).
- iii) Have acquired some experience in handling a vehicle larger than a car.
- v) Have obtained the insurer's consent in writing to their driving if they have any illness or disease which may affect their driving capabilities.
- vi) Have read the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents publication: Essential Minibus Driving and the manufacturer's handbook for the minibus owned by the school.
- vii) It is recommended that those staff who do not drive a minibus frequently should re-familiarise themselves with the controls and undertake a brief drive before taking children on board.

- viii) All new drivers who have qualified since January 1997 must take a PCV Licence.

The minibus will NOT be hired out for any use other than school use i.e. no outside agencies will be permitted to borrow it.

7. DRIVERS RECORDS TO BE MAINTAINED IN SCHOOL

- i) All minibus drivers should be requested to produce their driving licence at least annually. This should be photocopied and the copy retained by the school. Drivers should also be informed that they must notify the Head Teacher if they receive an endorsement to their driving licence as a result of a conviction for a traffic offence.
- ii) Any new drivers should be assessed by an experienced school minibus driver prior to transporting students in a minibus.

8. DRIVING TIME

There are no statutory regulations concerning driving time and rest periods for drivers of minibuses covered by permits issued under the Transport Act 1985. It is also very difficult to provide precise guidelines which would cover every eventuality. However, a number of factors are relevant when considering appropriate driving time and rest periods for drivers. These include

- The age and experience of the driver concerned.
- The nature and length of the journey to be undertaken (driving in the local area is very different from driving on a motorway, or in an unfamiliar environment).
- The timing of the journey (a journey undertaken during daylight hours is very different to a journey undertaken at the end of the day in darkness).
- The number, ages and level of responsibility of the passengers (a minibus full to capacity with excited children can be very distracting to the driver).
- The number of hours already worked by the driver prior to the start of the journey.

Without providing hard and fast rules regarding driving times, it is strongly recommended that:

- For journeys which take place at the end of the school day and which are anticipated to return late at night and for long journeys of 50 miles or more, careful consideration should be given to the provision of two drivers who can share the journey.
- Staff who have experienced a heavy teaching load during the course of the day should not be expected to start a journey at the end of the school day without first having taken some refreshment.
- All drivers should take regular short breaks during the course of long journeys

9. EQUIPMENT/DOCUMENTS TO BE CARRIED IN THE VEHICLE

- i) All minibuses must carry at least one fire extinguisher which complies with BS5423. These will either contain:

- a) Water with a minimum test fire rating of 8A or,
- b) Foam with a minimum test fire rating of 8A or 21B or,
- c) contain, and marked to indicate that it contains, Halon 1211 or Halon 1301, with a minimum test fire rating of 21B.

ii) First Aid Kit.

All minibuses must carry a first aid kit comprising:

- a) Ten antiseptic wipes, foil packed:
- b) One conforming disposable bandage (not less than 7.5cm wide):
- c) Two triangular bandages:
- d) One packet of 24 adhesive dressings:
- e) Three large sterile unmedicated ambulance dressings (not less than 15.0cms x 20.0 cms):
- f) Two sterile eye pads, with attachments:
- g) Twelve assorted safety pins and
- h) One pair of rustless blunt ended scissors.
- i) Sterile Gloves

The nominated person with responsibility for the minibus should ensure that both the extinguishers and the first aid kit are easily accessible in the event of an emergency. If the first aid kit is kept in the glove compartment, or under a seat, then there should be a prominent sign to the effect. Both the first aid kit and fire extinguisher should be checked on a regular basis.

iii) Fuel Cans:

The carrying of spare fuel cans inside the vehicle is not acceptable.

iv) Documents:

Photocopies of the following documents should be kept in the vehicle:

Current MOT Certificate

Insurance certificate

Registration certificate

The vehicle's tax disc should be clearly displayed in the bottom left hand corner of the windscreen.

10. SPEED LIMITS

For minibuses not requiring PSV licences, the speed limits are as follows:

Motorways:	60 mph maximum}	
Dual Carriageways:	60 mph maximum}	If not subject to lower statutory speed limits.
Other roads:	50 mph maximum}	

11. SEATED PASSENGERS

All passengers must be belted up before the vehicle starts its journey.

12. ACCESS TO DOORS

Drivers should ensure that all passengers have unobstructed access to at least two doors, one of which must be on the nearside of the vehicle and one of which must be either at the rear or on the offside of the vehicle. Gangways to these doors should not be blocked by luggage.

13. GENERAL ADVICE TO THE DRIVER

- i) Be satisfied that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition before and throughout the journey.
- ii) Be clear about the route to be followed.
- iii) Ensure that all students are wearing seat belts and remain seated whilst the minibus is in motion.
- iv) If the minibus is not full to capacity with passengers, ensure that the rear seats of the vehicle are left unoccupied.
- v) Always park so that students alight on the footway and not on the carriageway.
- vi) If students have to exit by the rear of the minibus, then ensure that an adult supervises this operation
- vii) Instances of indiscipline must not be tolerated. Offenders should be firmly dealt with at the time so that they are left in no doubt as to the unacceptable nature of their behaviour. The Head Teacher, or a senior member of staff, should be kept fully informed about any serious instances of indiscipline.
- viii) Ensure that you know how to use the fire extinguisher.
- ix) Ensure that there is no smoking in the vehicle.
- x) Ensure that no alcohol is drunk by anyone involved in the journey prior to, or during the course of, the journey.

14. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS

- i) Do not rush or push when entering or leaving the vehicle.
- ii) Find a seat quickly and quietly. If the minibus is not full to capacity, leave the rear seats of the vehicle unoccupied.
- iii) Place any luggage where it will not block access to the doors at the rear and sides of the vehicle.
- iv) Wear seat belts.
- v) Only speak to the driver when he/she is not driving or in an emergency. Remember - excessive noise, loud radios etc. can distract the driver.
- vi) Wait until the vehicle has stopped before getting up to leave.
- vii) Make sure that you have all your belongings when you leave the bus.
- viii) Do not drop litter.
- ix) If the vehicle breaks down, or is involved in an accident, follow the instructions given to you by the driver.
- x) Behave sensibly and safely at all times.

15. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

- i) Adequate supervision, including the use of escorts, should be provided for all journeys.
- ii) Drivers and escorts should receive regular training regarding wheelchair transfer and, if appropriate, the use of tail lifts and any mechanical devices on the vehicle.
- iii) Drivers should not commence any journey until they are satisfied that any restraints

and wheelchair clamps are correctly fitted.

- iv) Drivers and escorts should be made aware of any disability a student has, and any difficulty he/she might have as a result.

APPENDIX 1

NOTES FOR STAFF DRIVING THE MINIBUS

MINIBUS LOG:

The log book kept in the minibus must be filled in for EVERY journey, including start and end mileage.

STAFF ENTITLED TO DRIVE:

The minibus is fully comprehensively insured for any person to drive, provided they obtained their full driving licence before 1 January 1997, are over 21 years of age, have held a full clean licence for at least two years and have been familiarised with the minibus by an experienced member of staff. The school intends to assess some staff through the MIDAS scheme in the future.

Please remember when planning a trip which may use the minibus, staff should check minibus availability through the booking system on Moodle.

All drivers must complete the minibus driver's information sheet (appendix 3) which will be kept on record at school.

Where possible, the minibus will be provided with sufficient diesel for the trip, but if it is necessary to purchase petrol a proper receipt should be obtained to facilitate the recovery of the cost of the fuel. Apart from normal driving regulations, the minibus is restricted to 50 mph except on motorways where the current maximum is allowed. It is essential that the pre-journey checks are carried out before any trip. (See appendix 2)

N.B. IN LAW, THE DRIVER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VEHICLE BEING ROADWORTHY.

In the event of a mechanical problem, the school is a member of the AA: the details are in the minibus and also attached at appendix 4. In the event of an accident, if at all possible, collect as many witnesses as you can and then take FULL details of the scene, including paced out dimensions.

A first aid kit and fire extinguisher are carried in the minibus, for safe driving, it is VITAL that good discipline is maintained. The driver needs all his/her concentration for the road.

Please check that the minibus is visually in good condition BEFORE and AFTER you use it, and note any problems to Andrea. **Please also ensure that the interior is clean and tidy for the next person.**

APPENDIX 2

MINIBUS PRE-JOURNEY CHECK LIST

Before you start each and every journey make sure **you** have completed the following checks, because it is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition. If faults that might affect the vehicle's or passengers' safety are found the vehicle **must not** be used until they are all remedied.

Pre-journey checks

☐☐☐Exterior check :-

Walk around the vehicle, including the trailer, if applicable, to check for visible defects. Make sure you look closely at tyres, lights and mirrors.

☐☐☐Brake check :-

Brakes should be checked before loading passengers. With the engine running, check handbrake is working properly and brake pedal is firm when pushed.

It is also important to conduct a moving brake test, off road if possible. Reach a speed of not more than 15 m.p.h., check mirrors and if safe, apply brakes fairly firmly. Brakes should work efficiently, vehicle should not pull to one side, luggage should remain secure.

☐☐☐Interior check :-

Once inside the vehicle make sure the position of the driver's seat is correct so that all pedals and controls can be operated comfortably. Check mirrors are adjusted correctly and are clean and unobstructed. Check lights and indicators work and there is enough fuel for your journey. Seat belts must be worn by all passengers (staff and students).

☐☐☐During the journey :-

During the journey it is important **not** to allow any boisterous play of any kind. Approach each stop slowly and with care, never allow passengers to operate the doors. Children must not be left unaccompanied on a minibus.

☐☐☐Journey's end :-

Supervise all children when leaving the vehicle, especially when using the rear exit. Always park so that passengers step onto the path and not the road. Never leave children alone if no one has come to collect them. The minibus **must** be kept clean and tidy all litter must be cleaned up after each trip.

Report any problems, faults or incidents that occurred during the journey to Andrea. Remember it is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition.

'If faults that might affect the vehicle's or passengers' safety are found the vehicle MUST NOT be used until they are all remedied'.

APPENDIX 3

MINIBUS DRIVER'S INFORMATION SHEET

Driver's Name Date of Birth

Driving Licence No Date of Expiry

Date Driving Test passed

Date of Council's Minibus Assessment Test, if taken
(re-tests must be taken every five years)

Details of any illness or disease which may affect your driving capabilities
.....
.....
.....
.....

Details of any current endorsements on your licence
.....
.....

Have you ever been convicted of reckless driving or offences involving drinks or
drugs **YES / NO**

If yes, please provide full details
.....
.....

I have received a copy of the Minibus Check List and understand that it is the driver's
responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition and will report
any faults or incidents that occurred in writing to the I/C Minibus.

Signed Date

**I certify that the information provided is correct and agree to provide the
Head Teacher with details of any endorsements to my licence which I receive
from the date given below**

Signed Date

Driver's Licence seen by : Date

N.B. A photocopy of the driver's licence is required annually and should be kept with this form

