

Minibus safety policy

Minibus

The school minibuses are a valuable resource providing pupils access to school trips, residentials, sports matches against other schools and other extra-curricular activities. It is essential that all users are aware of the legal and procedural responsibilities pertaining to the use of minibuses.

Aims

1. Provide clear procedures relating to the use of the school minibuses.
2. To ensure that all users of the school minibuses are aware of their legal responsibilities.

Eligibility to drive the school minibuses

1. Any driver must be aged between 21 and 70 years of age with a full clean driving licence including D1 or D PCV entitlement.
2. Any endorsements incurred by eligible drivers must be disclosed to the headteacher, as these may affect eligibility to drive the vehicle.
3. All eligible drivers will be trained using a recognised training scheme every three years to ensure high levels of competence and skill. The School will meet the cost of this training.
4. New staff will be asked to undertake individual training unless able to provide evidence of previous training which means that they are qualified to drive minibuses.

Driving a minibus is not the same as driving a car; it requires different levels of knowledge, skill and awareness. It also carries different legal responsibilities.

Procedures

1. The school minibuses must not be used unless there is a driver who meets the eligibility requirements above.
2. Those wishing to use a school minibus should book it via the minibus booking diary held in the [school office].
3. The headteacher has overall responsibility for the school minibuses and final powers of authorisation over their use.
4. [Name of person responsible] will be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the school minibuses and will complete a minibus vehicle checklist before each journey. That checklist will be made available to the driver before the journey.
5. The school minibus should be collected from and returned to [location] and keys should be returned to [location/person] at the end of the journey, or as soon as possible thereafter.
6. Any defects noted should be reported to [person responsible] as soon as possible. Serious defects must be reported IMMEDIATELY. Minor defects can be reported after the journey has taken place. However, if the driver has any doubt or is unsure how serious the defect may be s/he should not take the minibus out.
7. If cash is required to purchase fuel it should be obtained from [person] or, alternatively, receipts should be obtained and handed in for reimbursement.

Maintenance/licensing of the school minibuses

1. Overall responsibility for ensuring the school minibuses are properly maintained and licensed lies with the headteacher. However, responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance is devolved to [person responsible].
2. Any driver must remember that they will be held personally responsible for any defects whilst the vehicle is under their control.
3. The school minibuses must be regularly serviced according to the manufacturer's recommendations. The headteacher [or other designated person] is responsible for arranging this servicing with a reputable and suitable qualified organisation.

4. Licensing of the school minibuses is the responsibility of the headteacher, who must ensure that all road tax, insurance and MOT certificates are up to date.
5. The headteacher [or other designated person] is responsible for ensuring that the School minibuses have suitable breakdown cover with details of the same placed in the vehicle, preferably in the windscreen.

Health and safety of drivers and passengers

1. Seatbelts must be worn at all times. This is a legal requirement. This should be checked by the driver. If any pupil refuses to wear a seatbelt properly or at all they will not be permitted to travel.
2. Everyone must remain seated at all times.
3. Gangways and doorways are to be kept clear at all times. Bags should be kept on laps or stored under seats securely.

In the event of an accident

1. The driver should inform the SMT member on-call as soon as is reasonably possible.
2. Insurance details should be swapped with any third party but liability should never be admitted.
3. Where it is safe and reasonable to do so, pupils should be removed from the vehicle and taken to a safe area away from the accident site, where they should be fully supervised.
4. A visual check of the vehicle should be undertaken before the journey resumes.
5. If the vehicle is not roadworthy the driver should contact the breakdown service.

In the event of a breakdown

1. The driver should inform the SMT on-call as soon as is reasonably possible.
2. The breakdown service indicated on the windscreen should be contacted as soon as is reasonably possible.
3. Where it is safe and reasonable to do so, pupils should be removed from the vehicle and taken to a safe area away from the breakdown site, where they should be fully supervised.

Other considerations

1. If at any time the pupils distract the driver, s/he should stop the bus until the pupils are settled. Do not try to continue. Remember that they may also be distracting other drivers.
2. Where possible park the bus with the side doors to the kerb. Where this is not possible, pupils should remain seated until you can supervise them alighting from the minibus.
3. It is essential that all drivers of the minibuses have had a sufficient rest period prior to undertaking a journey. The driver should assess whether they are safe to drive before commencing a trip.
4. Drivers of the minibus must be allowed sufficient rest and therefore should not be on-call overnight when attending a residential trip.
5. Drivers should remember that prescribed medication and over-the-counter medication may affect their ability to drive.
6. On no account should you drive a minibus if you have had an alcoholic drink within the previous 12 hours.
7. Drivers must not drive for more than two hours without taking a 15-minute break.
8. It is essential that for all journeys the school minibuses are staffed by a named driver and at least one other qualified driver.

Minibus check list

Date of journey

Name of person carrying out check

Time check carried out

	Yes	No	Defect reported to	Date defect remedied
Fuel level ok?				
Oil level ok?				
Windscreen wipers/washers working?				
Lights/brake lights working?				
Indicators working?				
Tyres in good condition?				
Brakes (hand and pedal) working?				
Fully stocked first aid kit?				
Fire extinguisher?				
Paperwork (insurance, driving licence)?				
Permit displayed?				
Seatbelts working properly?				
Mobile phone available?				