

# Minibus Policy



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<b>CHAIR OF TRUSTEES:</b>	
<b>CEO:</b>	

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## 1. The Aims of this Policy

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- To ensure that EPA Trust complies with current legislation and guidance concerning the maintenance and driving of the school minibuses.
- To ensure that the safety of minibus users (both drivers and passengers) and other road users and pedestrians is always paramount.
- To ensure that EPA Trust is meeting its health and safety and safeguarding obligations towards all members of the school community.

## 2. Policy Statement

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- The Trust follows guidance contained within Driving School Minibuses – [Advice for Schools and Local Authorities](#) (September 2013), published jointly by the Department for Education, Department for Transport and Association of Chief Police Officers. However, drivers must have a full and valid driving licence (manual) and have completed the standard minibus course with a regulated provider.
- The Trust will ensure that it has appropriate safety procedures for the minibus based on The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Advice for Minibus Safety and their code of practice (in addition to the DfE guidance). A copy of the full code of practice is available at [www.rospa.com](http://www.rospa.com).
- This policy and the procedures contained within it have been written to provide any members of staff who may need to drive vehicles on behalf of the school with the necessary knowledge and information in the light of growing legislation regarding the qualifications, insurance, operating, servicing, and inspection requirements to safely operate our minibuses and carry passengers.
- The behaviour and competence of the minibus drivers will be fully assessed to ensure the safe operation of the minibuses and to keep employees and others free of harm. This policy extends to the use of hired vehicles that are used by the Trust and to hirers of the Trust owned vehicles. Prior agreement must be made by the Headteacher for other organisations to use the Trust vehicles.
- All drivers are required to read the minibus policy and sign the declaration at Appendix A before driving a minibus. An electronic version of the policy can be accessed via the Trust's websites. A copy of the policy will be included in the minibus folder.
- This policy and the procedures contained within it will be reviewed regularly as part of the Trust's Health and Safety review.
- Use of a Trust minibus (including hire vehicles) for anything other than Trust business requires the permission of the Chief Financial Officer and in anything other than exceptional circumstances will not be permitted.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

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### 3.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body for each school is responsible for ensuring that school minibuses operated on behalf of the school fully comply in every respect, with all legal transport and health and safety requirements. This responsibility is delegated to the Headteacher and/or School Business Manager to ensure its appropriate implementation.

- To monitor the implementation of this policy

### 3.2 School Delegated Officer

- Will arrange for appropriate insurance cover (via EPA Facilities team) and for the payment of annual road tax.
- Ensure that servicing of the minibuses is performed at the correct mileage and that the service book kept is ready for inspection at any time.
- Ensure that weekly checks, as per Appendix C, are conducted by a trained member of staff on a weekly basis.
- Maintaining a minibus folder to be given to the driver before each journey.
- Keeping the driver declaration form and associated paperwork.
- Obtaining updated driver declaration forms at the start of the academic year.
- Using the DVLA code shared by the driver to verify the licence details.
- Ensuring that the driver has completed the driver declaration form prior to driving a minibus.
- Being the keeper of the minibus keys and minibus documentation.
- Notifying the Chief Financial Officer if a driver reports any changes to their driving status.
- For notifying the Director of Facilities of any concerns or irregularities.
- Issuing a Section 19 permit which must be displayed in the minibus widescreen for all journeys.

### 3.3 Minibus Drivers

- Ensure that pre-use checks of the vehicle are conducted by completing the Minibus Driver Vehicle Checklist (see Appendix B). If faults that might affect the vehicle or passengers' safety are found, they must be reported immediately to the School Business Manager and the vehicle must not be used until they are all remedied. The completed checklist must be returned to the School Business Manager.
- Notifying the School Business Manager of any problems with the minibus.
- Familiarise themselves with the relevant RoSPA ([www.rospa.com](http://www.rospa.com)) guidance e.g. Minibus Driver's Handbook and Minibus Safety – Code of Practice.
- Understand the personal legal implications if procedures are not adhered to. For example, "It is the driver's licence that will suffer if the vehicle is found to be defective. It is also the driver's responsibility to ensure the

safety (including the use of seat belts) and welfare of all passengers.”  
RoSPA February 2008

- Comply fully with all road traffic laws, respecting speed limits and always ensuring use of seatbelts. For longer journeys, frequent rest breaks are to be taken.
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately if unfit to undertake a journey in order that alternative arrangements can be made.
- Never use a mobile phone (handheld or hands free) as the driver of the vehicle unless it is parked in a safe place with the engine switched off and the key out of the ignition. Making genuine emergency 999 or 112 calls whilst driving is legal.
- Generate a code (<https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence>) to share your driving licence information, or alternatively, print the information from above.
- Any change in the status of your licence (e.g. penalty points) is to be reported to the School Business Manager. Permission must be obtained from the Chief Financial Officer who will obtain confirmation from the insurance company that the driver can continue to drive.
- Ensure that the Section 19 permit is displayed for the duration of the journey.

## 4. Procedures and Practices

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### 4.1 Driver Eligibility

#### **Persons Entitled to Drive the Minibus**

- Drivers must be over 21 years old.
- All minibus drivers will hold a valid full driving licence (manual). Drivers without a D1 licence (pre-1997) will only be allowed to drive a minibus less than 3.5 tonnes or 4.25 tonnes if including any specialist equipment to carry disabled passengers.
- All minibus drivers (including D1 holders) are required to complete the relevant standard practical and theory test.
- Only drivers with a valid MIDAS certificate can drive minibuses above 3.5 tonnes (with no adaptations).
- Some drivers with licences that predate the current licence categorisation may be permitted to drive the minibus. The Chief Financial Officer will seek advice from the DVLA before giving authority for the driver to drive the minibus.
- Drivers must be medically fit and legally qualified to drive a minibus and are required to complete and sign a driver declaration form (Appendix A) to that effect before driving the minibus. The driver declaration form will be kept on file by the School Business Manager and should be updated at the start of each academic year.
- Drivers must not take the minibus without the permission of the School Business Manager.
- Staff with a medical condition that needs to be declared to the insurers should advise the Chief Financial Officer accordingly.
- Comply with the guidance on eyesight which can be found in the

Minibus Driver's Handbook issued by RoSPA.

- It is the licence holder's responsibility to notify the School Business Manager of any changes to their driving licence.
- Where a driver informs the school that they have acquired penalty points on their licence, the Chief Financial Officer will determine whether they are permitted to drive the minibus.
- Only those named on the approved drivers list (a copy of which is held by the Minibus Coordinator) will be eligible to drive a minibus on behalf of the Trust.

#### 4.2 Vehicle Readiness and Maintenance

##### **Servicing, MOT, Insurance and Taxation**

- Servicing and MOT testing will be carried out at the appropriate intervals, and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Trained members of the staff as directed by the School Business Manager will conduct weekly and complete Appendix C. A signed record will be maintained to demonstrate that these checks have been undertaken.

#### 4.2 Pre-Use Vehicle Checks

- The minibuses must be maintained to high levels. As well as MOT, servicing and regular checks, drivers should satisfy themselves that the vehicle is safe to drive. If the serviceability of the vehicle is in doubt, it is not to be used until it has been repaired.
- A pre-use checklist (Appendix B) should be completed by the driver before the start of each journey. A walk around the vehicle should occur to check for damage / defects and to assess tyre condition.
- If the driver has concerns about the condition of the vehicle, it must not be used, and these concerns must be reported to the School Business Manager.
- Prior to the start of each journey, the driver is to go through a brief talk with all passengers regarding the wearing of seatbelts, journey time, being always seated, behaviour, noise levels and escape procedures. The journey is not to commence unless the requirements of the driver are complied with.

#### 4.3 Fuel

- The school minibuses have a fuel card that enables fuel to be purchased and charged to the school's account.
- A designated member of staff will regularly check the minibuses to ensure that the vehicles have adequate fuel. It may, however, be necessary for the minibus driver to refuel whilst on a journey.

#### 4.4 Equipment

It is recommended that the following equipment is carried on board the Minibus. If items are used and need to be replaced, please inform the School Business Manager who will arrange for supplies to be replenished:

- First Aid Box containing a minimum of:
  - 10 antiseptic wipes, foil packed
  - 1 conforming disposable bandage (not less than 7.5cm wide)
  - 2 triangular bandages
  - 1 packet of 24 assorted adhesive dressings
  - 3 large sterile un-medicated ambulance dressings (not less than 15cmx20cm)
  - 2 sterile eye pads with attachments
  - 12 assorted safety pins
  - 1 pair rustproof blunt-ended scissors
  - Disposable gloves
  - Mouth mask for resuscitation
  - Fire Extinguisher
- At least one fire extinguisher (which complies with BS 5432 or equivalent and has a minimum test rating of 8A or 21B) that contains foam.
- Warning Triangle
- This should be used in the event of breakdown and carefully positioned 50m behind the vehicle to warn other road users of the broken-down vehicle.
- Hi-Visibility Vest

#### 4.5 Tidiness

- The Minibus should be left tidy. Eating and drinking on it should be discouraged (exceptions can be made in circumstances of long delay).
- Bin bags are to be carried and made available for rubbish.
- Dirty/muddy kit (especially boots and shoes) must not be worn in the minibus.
- Clean tracksuits and / or footwear should be taken if students are likely to get muddy.

#### 4.6 Capacity

- The driver and number of passengers should not exceed the capacity of the vehicle.

#### 4.7 Seat Belts/Luggage

- Before setting off, the driver must ensure that passengers are wearing seat belts. Students are to be informed that seatbelts are to be always worn when the vehicle is in motion and should only be removed once the driver has switched off the engine.
- Any luggage is to be securely stowed and is not obstructing passageways.

### 5. Driving Rules

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- Drivers are responsible for driving within the law and in accordance with the Highway Code (a copy is held by the School Business Manager

and in each minibus). The Trust will not refund fines or other costs incurred by drivers because of any road traffic or parking offence. Drivers must inform the Chief Financial Officer of any penalty points received whilst using the school minibus; failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

- National speed limits apply to the school minibus.
- Under normal road conditions, a minibus is not permitted to be driven in the third lane of a motorway.
- Vehicles are not to be driven by anyone who has consumed any amount of alcohol or illegal substance.
- Some medication may impair a driver's ability and employees who are taking medicines of this nature are not to drive vehicles.
- All accidents, whether or not they cause injury to persons or damage to property, are to be reported to the school as soon as possible after they occur using the Vehicle Accident Reporting Form provided at Appendix D.
- Keys must not be left in an unattended vehicle at any time.
- Consideration must be given to parking in secure areas as much as possible, particularly where overnight stays are required.
- Vehicles must not be driven at any time if the load being carried exceeds the maximum allowable weight capacity.
- Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is prohibited on the minibus at any time.

## 5.1 Reversing of Vehicles

- Reversing vehicles can be particularly hazardous. The best way of avoiding a reversing accident is to avoid reversing a vehicle wherever possible.
- Always check behind your vehicle before reversing – where possible, ask someone to watch the area into which you will be reversing.
- If you use a guide, ensure they can be always seen whilst manoeuvring and wear a hi-visibility vest- if two members of staff are present, one must always be the guide when reversing.
- Ensure rear view mirrors are clean and properly always adjusted.

## 5.2 Distraction During Driving

- The use of mobile phones is prohibited unless it is parked in a safe place with the engine switched off or to make a genuine emergency 999 or 112 calls, which is legal.
- Avoid any action which may cause a distraction whilst driving, such as drinking, eating, or even changing a radio channel.
- The Trust permits the use of integrated or standalone (but not mobile phones) satellite navigation devices. A driver should only operate such devices when the vehicle is stationary, and the engine is switched off and the key is out of the ignition.
- Minimise actions which necessitate removing a hand from the steering wheel.

### 5.3 Tiredness

- Driving when tired increases the risk of an accident. The Highway Code recommends that a driver takes a minimum break of at least 15 minutes after every two hours of driving. However, after a full working day, drivers MUST NOT drive for a continuous period of more than two hours without taking a suitable break.
- If an authorised relief driver is available to drive a journey can be continued without a break.
- Drivers should use common sense to ascertain their suitability to drive at a given time (consider tiredness, recent alcohol or medicine consumption, illness etc.).

### 5.4 Safety

- Whilst driving the minibus, drivers should ensure that all doors are unlocked to assist with emergency egress if the need arises.
- Drivers should ensure that internal lights are off whilst driving so that their vision is not impaired by the internal light.
- Exits/gangways should always be clear of obstructions (such as bags).
- Check weather conditions in advance of the journey and in the event of extreme weather conditions avoid making the journey.
- In the event of a fire do not attempt to extinguish. The priority is for the safe evacuation of all passengers.
- Dealing with 'road rage':
  - If threatened by another driver, do not retaliate by flashing lights, sounding the horn, or making offensive gestures; this only attracts a response and will often make a situation worse
  - If forced to stop, stay in the vehicle with windows closed and doors locked and be prepared to drive off
  - If necessary, use your mobile phone to contact the police for assistance but only if safe to do so. Ask someone else to make the call if possible.
  - Note the registration number of the vehicle, and the make and colour, plus a description of the driver and occupants and give the police these details.
- If you feel that driving cannot be in complete safety, do not continue. Members of staff are not required to put themselves at risk at any time whilst driving on behalf of the trust.

### 5.6 Security

- Whenever the vehicle is left unattended, all windows are to be closed, and doors locked.

## 6. Accident and Breakdown

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### 6.1 Breakdown

Standard breakdown procedures are to be followed where necessary:

- If on a public road, get out of the vehicle on the safe side – nearest the path or verge.
- If on a motorway, follow the instructions of the emergency operator, which may include staying in the vehicle, or getting out of the vehicle and not getting back into the vehicle again.
- Avoid going near the traffic flow and exercise extreme caution at all times.
- Switch on the hazard warning lights.
- If possible, leave a motorway, dual carriageway, or main road if a fault occurs, which will reduce the risk of collision, but park in a well-lit place so that the vehicle can be seen by other road users.
- In the event of breakdown refer to the membership card kept in the Minibus Folder (carried on every vehicle) for contact telephone numbers
- It is best to use a roadside emergency telephone if possible as this will pinpoint your location.
- The school should also be contacted, when practical, in the event of a breakdown.
- Staff should not change a tyre or attempt repairs. This should be carried out by a breakdown team.

### 6.2 Accident

In the event of an accident:

1. Deal with any injured persons.
  2. Ensure the safety of everyone involved.
  3. Use hazard warning lights and any other safety devices provided.
  4. If necessary, call the emergency services.
- In all cases, stop at the scene and take the names, addresses and telephone numbers of people involved, including independent witnesses. Take photos of the accident scene from various angles if possible. Complete the Vehicle Accident Reporting Form provided at Appendix D.
  - Breakdown procedures should be carried out if necessary.
  - In the event of a serious incident, emergency contact numbers are available in the Minibus Folder (carried on all journeys).

- The driver should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy before continuing with the journey.

## 7. Insurance and Breakdown Cover

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Details of the Trust's motor vehicle insurance and breakdown cover, including contact details, can be found in the Minibus Folder which the driver should have at the start of each journey.

The Trust holds motor vehicle insurance for the following vehicles:

- SF19 DBZ (BAR)
- WA11 HWH (BAR)
- WJ65 BFO (BAR)
- CE21 UGK (HEY)

Please refer to the insurance policy for all conditions that apply. This is a summary of the key conditions:

- . The driver must have permission to drive the vehicle on behalf of the Trust.
- . The driver must be aged over 21.
- . The driver must have held a full driving licence for a minimum of two years.
- . The driver must have a valid licence and be medically fit to drive.

Drivers who do not fall into any of the above categories must obtain special dispensation from the insurers to drive the minibus. Contact the Chief Financial Officer to request this and refrain from driving the minibus until clearance is obtained from the insurer.

**Insurance for hire vehicles must be put in place before we take possession of the hire vehicle.**

Contact the Chief Financial Officer with any insurance queries.

## 8. General

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Any member of staff who has queries relating to the driving of a Trust minibus or the condition of the vehicle should bring them to the attention of the Site Development Office.

## Appendix A - Declaration of Fitness to Drive a Minibus on Behalf of the Trust

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### To be completed annually

#### Name of Driver:

I declare that:

1. I hold a full driving licence.
2. I have completed the required minibus driving test.
3. I do not have any illness that would impair my ability to drive the minibus in a safe and controlled manner.
4. I am aware of my responsibility to inform the School Business Manager if I receive penalty points or ban from driving.
5. I am responsible for notifying the School Business Manager of any change in my circumstances.
6. I have read and agree to adhere to the Trust Minibus Policy.
7. I agree to follow all Trust protocols and procedures when driving the minibus.

I agree that the School Business Manager can view my driving licence information online and have generated the following code to do so, or provided a printed copy of the information:

**DVLA Driver Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Licence Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### If the licence held is a D1 (101) category

**MIDAS Certificate Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Renewal Date:** \_\_\_\_

(attach a photocopy of both sides of the current licence and MIDAS certificate to the declaration)

**Signature of Driver:**

**Date:**

**Signature of School Business Manager:**

**Date:**

## Appendix B - Minibus Driver Vehicle Checklist

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Vehicle Registration Number: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Exterior Check</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Defect Reported To</b>
Oil level			
Coolant level			
Windscreen washer fluid level			
Brake fluid level			
Windscreen and windows clean and undamaged			
Lights including brake lights and indicators are clean and working			
Tyre pressures, including spares			
Tyre tread, including spares (and inner tyres as above). At least 3 mm across centre $\frac{3}{4}$ is recommended. Any cuts and bulges?			
Doors open and close properly			
<b>Interior Check</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Defect Reported To</b>
Mirrors correctly adjusted, clean, and unobstructed			
Position and function of all dashboard controls			
Position of driving seat so all pedals can be operated comfortably			
Pressure on brake pedal			
Lights and indicators are working			
Wipers and washers working properly			
Fuel level (and type of fuel)			
Seat belts are undamaged and working properly			
Location of wheel brace, jack, warning triangle and hi-vis vest			
Location and contents of first aid kit and fire extinguisher(s)			
Check Minibus Folder for all relevant paperwork			
Section 19 permit is displayed in the windscreen			
Luggage securely stowed; aisles and exits clear			
The number of passengers plus the driver does not exceed the maximum capacity for the vehicle			
<b>Brake Checks</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Defect reported to</b>
Check brakes before loading passengers. With engine running, check handbrake is working properly, and brake pedal is firm when pushed			
START MILEAGE:		FINISH MILEAGE:	
Date:	Name:	Signature:	

**IF FAULTS THAT MIGHT AFFECT THE VEHICLE OR PASSENGERS' SAFETY ARE FOUND, THE VEHICLE MUST NOT BE USED UNTIL THEY ARE ALL REMEDIED**

## Appendix C - Weekly Vehicle Checks

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Registration Number	
Tax Expiry Date:	
MOT Due Date:	
Last Service Date:	
Next Service Due Date:	
Current Mileage	

<b>Exterior Check</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Defect Reported To</b>
Oil level			
Coolant level			
Windscreen washer fluid level			
Brake fluid level			
Windscreen and windows clean and undamaged			
Lights including brake lights and indicators are clean and working			
Tyre pressures, including spares			
Tyre tread, including spares (and inner tyres as above). At least 3 mm across centre $\frac{3}{4}$ is recommended. Any cuts and bulges?			
Doors open and close properly			
<b>Interior Check</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Defect Reported To</b>
Mirrors are adjustable, clean, and unobstructed			
Pressure on brake pedal			
Lights and indicators are working			
Wipers and washers working properly			
Fuel level (and type of fuel)			
Seat belts are undamaged and working properly			
Location of wheel brace, jack, warning triangle and hi-vis vest			
Location and contents of first aid kit and fire extinguisher(s)			
Section 19 permit is displayed in the windscreen			
<b>Brake Check</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Defect reported to</b>
With engine running, check handbrake is working properly and brake pedal is firm when pushed			
Date:	Name:		Signature:

**IF FAULTS THAT MIGHT AFFECT THE VEHICLE OR PASSENGERS' SAFETY ARE FOUND, THE VEHICLE MUST NOT BE USED UNTIL THEY ARE ALL REMEDIED**

## Appendix D - Vehicle Accident Reporting Form

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The driver of the vehicle involved in the accident should complete this form. It must be completed in detail as soon as possible after the accident and provided to the School Business Manager.

Driver name:				
Vehicle registration:	Make:	Model:	Colour:	Trust owned or hire vehicle Trust / Hire (please circle)
Number of persons (including driver) in Trust vehicle:				
Date and time of the incident:      __/__/20__ : ____ am / pm				
For what purpose was the vehicle being used?				
Was a trailer attached: Yes / No				
Where did the accident occur (e.g. road name, town)?				
Estimated speed of the vehicle:				
Weather conditions / visibility			Condition of road surface:	
Name and contact details of any independent witnesses:				
Was there police involvement: Yes / No		Provide details:		
Was damage sustained to another person's property or vehicle: Yes / No				
Owner's name and address:				
Insurance Details:		Make:	Model:	Registration:
Description of damage sustained:				

Did anyone sustain an injury: Yes / No  
If yes please give details (e.g. name, address, nature of injury, hospitalised)

The information provided is for internal use by the Trust. No admission of liability or blame should be made to any third party.

Driver's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: -

If you have any queries regarding the completion of this form, please contact the School Business Manager.

**Please provide a description of the accident below (use additional sheets if required). Give as much detail as possible (include road markings, signals given and who you think is at fault for the accident):**

**Please provide a sketch plan of the accident. Use the diagrams provided over the page to indicated damage to Trust vehicles. Take photographs if safe and legal to do so.**

