



**Bishop
Hogarth**

Catholic Education Trust

SCHOOL MINIBUS POLICY

THIS POLICY APPLIES ACROSS ALL TRUST SCHOOLS AND SERVICES

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SCHOOL MINIBUS POLICY

Responsibilities

The Trust is responsible for ensuring any school minibuses operated fully comply in every respect, with all legal transport and health and safety requirements. This responsibility is delegated to the Headteacher to ensure its appropriate implementation.

Legal Requirements

The law requires that a minibus must have:

- Adequate insurance
- Be well maintained
- A valid MOT certificate (if more than one year old)
- Valid road tax
- Correct seating with correctly fitted seat belts

The Local Governing Committee and the Headteacher will ensure that the minibus is operated in accordance with this policy and the procedures for the minibuses detailed within the ROSPA Advice for Minibus Safety and their Code of Practice (see **Appendix 1**).

The Local Governing Committee and the Headteacher will ensure that all drivers of the school minibuses comply with the requirements issued in April 2006 by the DfE in their statement, 'Licensing incidental drivers of the school minibus' (see **Appendix 2**)

Use of minibus

The minibus can be used for the following reasons:

- School trips when there are less than 15 people plus the driver.
- Transport students to a place of education.
- Transport students to a home address if parents are unable to collect them.
- Transport bulky items – e.g. moving objects between Trust schools.
- Community use - only in conjunction with the authorisation of the Headteacher, e.g. use by the parish.

Management of the Minibus

The Business Manager, will have responsibility for the management of the minibus. This responsibility will be carried out in liaison with the Site Manager.

The management system, detailed below, will be monitored by the Business Manager to ensure that both organisers and drivers are complying with all requirements. Maintenance/service and vehicle logs for the vehicle should be kept for the life of the vehicle, then either be retained for 6 years by school or returned to the lease company if applicable. These records should be regularly inspected. All other records should be kept for a minimum of 15 months

Management System

The School Business Manager will ensure the following:

- All staff use a booking procedure for use of the school minibus.
- All drivers are familiar with, and adhere to, the minibus safety advice & information at **Appendix 1**.
- Before driving the minibus for the first time the site manager will take drivers through the procedures for the use of the minibus, the controls and provide an opportunity to do a test drive.
- All drivers are eligible to drive the vehicle in accordance with the guidance at **Appendix 2** and the application to drive a minibus checklist at **Appendix 3** is completed and approved. This should be recorded and the check repeated every 12 months.
- The maintenance checklist at **Appendix 4** is completed prior to each use of the bus
- That each driver is medically fit to drive the minibus. Staff **MUST** inform the Business Manager if they are taking any form of medication or you have an illness or are receiving hospital treatment or feeling unwell that may impair their ability to drive.
- Insurance cover, MOT and tax is up to date.
- Ensure that routine safety inspections are conducted with a maximum interval between inspections of 10 weeks. Vehicles that are 12 years old or older should receive a safety inspection every 6 weeks. Inspections will be conducted in accordance with the [Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness: Commercial Goods and Public Service Vehicles - DVSA](#)
- Vehicle registration documents are held securely.
- That all drivers complete the usage form & mileage log for all journeys at **Appendix 5**. The log should include the date of the journey, start and finish mileages, purpose of the journey and the driver name.
- That the log is checked at least half termly to ensure the log is correctly completed and all mileage is accounted for.
- In liaison with the Site Manager, to ensure that the minibus is securely parked in the designated area and the keys held securely.
- Access to the minibus keys should be restricted to authorised users.
- Fuel usage will be regularly checked to ensure fuel purchases are for legitimate school use and agree with the mileage recorded in the log.
- That a Section 19 permit is displayed. More details about the permit and the application process are available from the following link [Section 19 Permits](#)
- That Governors approve whether, and how, the minibus might be used by non-school users.
- Familiarisation training should be provided for all new users of the minibus.

Training

A competent person(s) within the Trust will be allocated responsibility to provide minibus driver training and a physical driving assessment to all staff driving minibuses, prior to them driving.

Monitoring and Review

The Business Manager will report to the Headteacher termly on the operation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

This policy will also be reviewed in response to any incidents or accidents that occur.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

All drivers and supervisors are required to familiarise themselves with the procedures in this policy when planning a journey.

ROSPA: ADVICE AND INFORMATION: MINIBUS SAFETY

The school minibus pre-drive safety check

Do this before every journey. Walk around the vehicle, including the trailer, if applicable, to check for visible defects, and then check the items listed below.

Exterior check (*check OK or NOT OK*)

- Oil level
- Coolant level
- Windscreen washer fluid level
- Brake fluid level
- Windscreen & windows clean and undamaged
- Lights including brake lights and indicators are clean and working.
- Tyre pressures, including spares (and inner tyres and tyres on trailer if applicable)
- 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
- Trailer brake lights and indicators work, if applicable
- Roof rack or trailer is properly fitted, and all luggage securely held.

Interior check (*check OK or NOT OK*)

- Mirrors correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed
- Position & function of all dashboard controls
- Position of driving seat so all pedals can be operated comfortably
- Pressure on brake pedal
- Lights & indicators are working
- Wipers & washers working properly
- Fuel level (and type of fuel)
- Seat belts are undamaged and working properly
- Location of wheel brace and jack
- Location and contents of first aid kit & fire extinguisher(s)
- Location of relevant paperwork (permit, MoT etc)
- Change for parking or telephone (mobile/phonecard)
- Luggage securely stowed; aisles & exits clear

Brake Checks

- Check brakes before loading passengers. With engine running, check handbrake is working properly & brake pedal is firm when pushed
- Conduct a moving brake test, off the road, if possible. Reach a speed of not more than 15 mph check mirrors and, if safe, apply brakes fairly firmly. Brakes should work efficiently; vehicle should not pull to one side; luggage should remain secure.

Please complete the checklist at Appendix 3.

Advice for Minibus Drivers

On journeys where an escort is present, the items below should be divided between the escort and the driver, with the driver concentrating on those tasks which directly relate to driving the vehicle.

Before setting off

- Allow sufficient time for the journey.
- Plan breaks. Avoid long spells of driving when children might get bored and restless.
- Conduct a pre-drive safety check before every journey.
- Note the mileage (in the book provided on the dashboard) prior to each journey and the destination.
- Never allow passengers to board until the vehicle is at a complete standstill, and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or other traffic-free area.
- Ensure children are supervised when boarding vehicle, especially if using rear door. Plan which passengers will sit in the front seats and by the doors.
- Do not exceed the carrying capacity of the minibus.
- Make sure everyone is sitting, one to a seat and are using seat belts.
- When school bus signs are used, make sure they are in position only while children are being transported, and that they do not obstruct your vision.
- Ensure ambulant disabled passengers are seated safely and comfortably and passengers travelling in wheelchairs are safely restrained. Securely store wheelchairs not in use.
- Carry a complete list of passengers with notes of special needs. Keep list with other relevant documents in place where can be readily found in event of an accident.
- Comply with manufacturers instructions when using passenger lifts and other specialist equipment.
- Check that no bags or clothing are caught in doors, that all luggage is secure and gangways and exits are clear.
- Check all mirrors every time before moving off in case latecomers are approaching the vehicle.

During the journey

- Do not allow boisterous play of any kind.
- Try to keep children occupied (if escort on board) give something to do beforehand.
- Enforce "No Smoking" and "No alcohol" rules.
- Consumption of food should be discouraged during journeys.
- Do not allow passengers to operate doors.
- Approach each stop slowly and with care
- Use Hazard Warning Lights on school trips where children are boarding or leaving vehicle.
- If serious delay during journey, inform school so that information can be passed to parents. A mobile telephone is useful for this purpose (although it should not be used whilst driving the vehicle).
- Children must not be left unaccompanied on the minibus.
- If there is a risk of fire, evacuate vehicle and move occupants to a safe place.
- If you have to stop in an emergency or break down while on a motorway, only stop on the hard shoulder and as far away from the carriageway and passing traffic as possible.

Journey's end

- Supervise children when leaving vehicle, especially if using rear exit.
- Never allow passengers to leave until vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked.
- Always park so that passengers step onto the footway and not the road.

- Take care when reversing if children are nearby. If you have to reverse, get adult help in directing you.
- Ensure that no litter is left on the minibus and any rubbish is safely discarded into bins.
- Do not leave children alone if no one has come to collect them.
- Report problems or incidents that occurred during the trip to the operator.
- Note the mileage in the book provided (on the dashboard).
- Alert site staff to low fuel level.

Instructions for Children on Minibuses

Here are some helpful hints and instructions to keep you, the pupils, and others, safe while on a minibus journey.

Pupils should:

- Arrive on time, and wait for the minibus away from the road.
- Not push or rush towards the minibus when it arrives.
- Find a seat quickly and quietly without pushing. You may have already been allocated a seat.
- Stay seated when the minibus is moving and wear your seat belt.
- Avoid kneeling in your seat as this is dangerous.
- Make sure their bags do not block gangways and exits, or take up seats.
- Only speak to the driver when he or she is not driving, or in an emergency. Distracting the driver can be very dangerous.
- Never throw things or play about in the minibus; never ever throw things out of the minibus window as you could cause other drivers to have an accident.
- Wait until the minibus has stopped completely before getting up to leave.
- Take their belongings with them when they leave the minibus, except in an emergency when they should be left behind.
- Take care if returning to the minibus after getting off as the driver may be pulling away.
- Follow the Green Cross Code when alighting the bus.
- Go to the toilet before they get on the minibus. Tell the escort, or the driver if the escort is not present. If you need to use the toilet or you feel unwell during the journey,.

The Green Cross Code

- First find a safe place to cross, then stop. It is safer to cross at subways, footbridges, pedestrian islands, zebra and pelican crossings or where there is a police officer, school crossing patrol or traffic warden. If you can't find one of these, choose a place where you can see clearly along the road in all directions.
- Stand on the pavement near the kerb.
- Look all around for traffic and listen. Traffic may be coming from any direction. Sometimes you can hear traffic before you can see it.
- If traffic is coming, let it pass. Look all around again.
- When there is no traffic near, walk straight across the road. Do not cross unless there is a safe gap and you are sure that you have plenty of time to get across. If in doubt, don't cross. Always walk across, don't run.
- Keep looking and listening for traffic while you cross.

DRIVER ELIGIBILITY

Driving School minibuses: advice for schools and local authorities

Published 4 September 2013

About this guidance

This is non-statutory advice jointly produced by the Department for Education (DfE), the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) on driving licence entitlement when driving a school minibus.

This advice does not constitute legal advice nor is it a ruling on the law: individual, schools etc should seek independent legal advice on these issues if they have any queries or concerns. The relevant legislation is '[Part 3 of the Road Traffic Act 1988](#)' and the '[Motor vehicles \(driving licences\) regulations 1999 \(SI 1999/2864\)](#)'.

Expiry or review date

This document replaces the relevant section of the DfE health and safety departmental advice. It will be reviewed should the law change.

Key points

There are circumstances in which a member of school staff with a car driving licence (category B) can drive a minibus. This licence entitlement is set out here and in an interactive flowchart on the DfT website. Schools are also advised to check their insurance and any employer's policies on this matter.

There is also an exemption under which drivers can drive minibuses on behalf of non-profit making bodies such as schools using a section 19 permit. If schools are in any doubt about their legal position they are advised to apply for a permit.

What is a minibus and who can drive one?

A minibus is a motor vehicle with between 9 and 16 passenger seats
It is described as a [category D1 vehicle](#) by the [Driving Vehicle Licencing Authority](#).

Drivers who hold a full D1 (or D) PCV entitlement can drive minibuses for hire or reward. There are, however, circumstances when a driver can drive a minibus within the UK when they hold a car (category B) licence. These circumstances vary depending on when the driver passed their car driving test. These arrangements only apply when driving the minibus in the UK not if driving abroad. If you passed your category B:

a) (car) driving test before 1 January 1997, you can drive a minibus that is not being used for hire or reward as these licences automatically include category D1 (101) (not for hire or reward) entitlement. This means school staff with such a licence can drive a minibus carrying up to 16 passengers with no maximum weight restriction on the vehicle. Drivers with a D1 + E (101) (not for hire or reward) entitlement can tow a trailer over 750 kg.

b) driving test on or after 1 January 1997, you may drive a minibus that is not being used for hire and reward if the following conditions are met:

- you are over 21 and have held a category B licence for at least 2 years
- the minibus is used by a non-commercial body for social purposes

- you receive no payment other than the recovery of your out of pocket expenses (e.g. fuel and parking costs)
- you provide the service on a voluntary basis
- the gross vehicle weight of the minibus is not more than 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes if including any specialist equipment to carry disabled passengers)
- you do not tow a trailer

What is hire and reward?

A vehicle which is operated for hire or reward is one where payment is made, in cash or in kind, for the carrying of passengers, or matters which include the carrying of passengers, irrespective of the person to whom the payment is made. This includes direct payments such as a fare or an indirect payment which gives a person an opportunity to travel. It does not matter whether or not the operator is a profit-making entity. A minibus is used for hire or reward if there is a clear and logical link between payment and the transport provided and that link is not too remote.

A minibus is not being used for hire or reward, for example, where the pupils are not obliged to pay in exchange for the right to be passengers. This applies where independent schools with charitable status, free schools and academies use a minibus not for a passenger service on a commercial basis but to take pupils off-site for trips within the school day or as an extra-curricular activity, where the pupils do not pay for their transport. Independent, fee-paying schools which lack charitable status could be viewed as commercial bodies that operate minibuses for hire or reward; the hire or reward element being school fees. We advise such schools to seek legal advice.

If schools (or their insurers) are concerned that they may not meet the definition of not operating for hire or reward they are advised to consider [applying for a section 19 permit](#).

What are social purposes?

We consider social purposes to mean non-commercial activities. This includes school trips and travel to sporting fixtures within the school day or as an extra-curricular activity.

Where a minibus is operated to provide passenger services for commercial purposes, the driver must hold a full D1 licence (or a full D licence, which entitles the holder to drive minibuses).

What are out of pocket expenses?

Out of pocket expenses are remuneration for any fuel costs, parking fees, toll fees or similar expenses incurred as part of a trip. The driver should receive no other payments for driving the minibus.

What is 'on a voluntary basis'?

In our view, if the terms and conditions of a teacher's contract of employment state that driving minibuses is a part of their duties, or if a teacher is paid an additional sum specifically for driving the minibus (other than a sum to reimburse the teacher for out of pocket expenses on a cost recovery basis), such staff would be deemed as receiving payment for driving a minibus and would not be driving the minibus 'on a voluntary basis'. In these cases, a full D1 licence (or a full D licence) would be needed.

However, in our view, if a teacher's contract of employment does not state that driving minibuses is part of their duties and they receive no additional payment for driving a minibus to take pupils on trips or to social sporting events (except for reimbursement for out of pocket expenses), they will be driving on an extra-contractual, voluntary basis. In this case, the category B licence would suffice

(assuming the conditions are met) even if the school reimburses the teacher for fuel, parking and tolls.

Medical standards and renewing a driving licence

When your category B driving licence expires at age 70, the entitlement to drive a minibus can be renewed upon request, if you meet the [medical standards for category D1 drivers](#). You will need to complete a [D2 application form and provide a medical examination report \(D4\)](#). Further information can be obtained from the DVLA's INF28 leaflet, '[Driving a minibus](#)'.

Every driver must comply with medical standards for any driving licence issued.

Driving under the Section 19 permit scheme

A section 19 permit is usually issued free of charge and is given to non-profit making bodies that run transport services which benefit the community. Section 19 permits are issued to bodies to enable them to provide transport for their own members or other people whom the organisation exists to help. The vehicle must not be used for carriage of members of the general public. It must also not be used with a view to profit, nor incidentally to an activity which is itself carried out with a view to profit. Category B and category D1 (101) (not for hire or reward) licence holders are entitled drive minibuses that are operated for hire or reward in accordance with a Section 19 permit. Apart from the hire or reward test, the same driving licence requirements as described in paragraph 9 apply.

Permits are available free, or for a small fee, from the [Traffic Commissioners](#) and designated bodies such as local authorities and various church organisations. Once a permit has been obtained, a member of staff can drive a minibus under the conditions outlined above. These permits only apply within the UK.

Insurance, other legal requirements and Police

It is up to drivers to check with their insurer whether their insurance policy covers a minibus in the circumstances in which it is proposed to be driven.

It is also up to drivers to check whether their driving triggers other legal requirements, such as the laws in respect of drivers' hours, tachographs and 'Certificates of professional competence'. This guidance has been cleared by the Association of Chief Police Officers, who will promote awareness of this legislation amongst local traffic police officers.

Application to Drive a Minibus Checklist

Employees Name Licence Type (i.e. UK1) Licence No Issue No Issue Date Expiry Date Categories (to include B and /or D1)			
Confirm		Please Tick	
☐ I have seen the original documentation for the licence and paper counterpart to photocard Licence			
☐ Take a photocopy of both sides of licences and counterparts and append to this form			
Check			
☐ Does the Licence contain the security markings			
☐ Personal details are correct – name, date of birth and address			
☐ Age Restrictions – Information on Driving Licences			
☐ Restriction codes - Information on Driving Licences			
☐ Photocard expiry date			
☐ Any new endorsements/disqualifications since last licence check if so list below – <i>Use Guide to Driving Offences & Penalty Points</i>			
Code	Date of Conviction	Code	Date of Conviction
☐ Record particulars of <u>all</u> accidents in the past five years (write 'nil') if not applicable			

▪ Whether any medicals/renewals are due in the future – if so advise driver	
▪ Advise driver of reportable medical conditions see section of this form	
▪ Bring to the attention of the driver the advice for minibus drivers contained within the Minibus Policy contained policy on the use of Mobile Telephones and Substance Misuse.	

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Licence examined for validity in line with current DVLA legislation

Application approved..... Date

Date of next check..... (12 month)

Signed

Appendix 4

Minibus daily checklist to be completed by Site Staff at the beginning of each day

	Check	Checked? (Y/N)
Bodywork	Panels (ext/int)	
	Seats	
	Windows (ext and int)	
	Doors, latches, locks	
	Cleanliness	
	Number plates	
Fluid	Oil	
	Coolant	
	Brake/clutch	
	Windscreen wipers/ washer/ reservoir	
	Fuel	
Wheels (visual check)	Tyres condition & tread depth	
	Pressure	
	Damage	
	Wheel rims and trims	
Lights	Front/rear	
	Brake	
	Indicator	
	Hazard	
	Fog	
	Interior	
	Reverse	

	Check	Checked? (Y/N)
Controls/Interior	Warning Lights	
	Gauges	
	Seats	
	Seat Belts/buckles/fixings	
	Horn	
	Reverse Alarm (lights off)	
	Mirrors	
	Cleanliness	
Steering/gears/clutch	Excess Play	
	Pulling to one side	
Brakes	Conduct off-road break test at speed of approx 10 mph	
	Handbrake	
	Footbrake	
	Pulling to one side	
Battery		
First Aid Kit *		
Fire Extinguisher		
Jack and tools		
Permit / Road Fund Licence		
Cleanliness		
Silhouette signs		

Details of defects If faults that might affect the vehicle's or passengers' safety are found, the vehicle must not be used until they are all remedied.	Reported (date)
Mileage	Site Staff Signature: Date:
Additional comments	

*** FIRST AID BOX CONTENTS**

- 10 antiseptic wipes, foil packed;
- 1 conforming disposable bandage (not less than 7.5cm wide);
- 2 triangular bandages;
- 1 packet of assorted adhesive dressings;
- 3 large sterile unmedicated ambulance dressings (not less than 15cmx20cm);
- 2 sterile eye pads with attachments;
- 12 assorted safety pins;
- 1 pair rustless blunt-ended scissors

Usage Form & Mileage Log

Vehicle Make / Model:

Reg No: XXX XXX

- Collect Keys from **insert location**
- Return the Minibus with a full tank of fuel
- Check for damage/litter/vandalism etc
- Complete the form below and return with the keys to **insert name** together with any fuel receipts
- If you require the college mobile phone please arrange this before travel

Name of Driver: _____

Date of Journey: _____ Time of Journey _____

Purpose of Journey: _____

Final Mileage Reading: _____ Start Mileage Reading: _____

Actual Distance: _____

Account to be debited/credited: _____

Signature of Account Holder: _____

Please note that reimbursement for fuel purchased should be claimed via an expenses claim form and accompanied by a receipt.

Date: _____