



Minibus Policy & Procedure

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
The Governing Body	
Date adopted:	December 2018
Reviewed	September 2025
Date of next review	September 2026

Minibus Driving - Code of Practice

RESPONSIBILITY

The Minibus

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that the minibus used by Edith Kay is in a roadworthy condition. It is the legal responsibility of the driver to check and ensure that the minibus is in a roadworthy condition prior to driving.

The driver as part of his/her assessment of roadworthiness should use a Driver's Vehicle Checklist. (Appendix A)

The minibus is required to be MOT Tested from new. The current school minibus has 9 passenger seats in total and testing may be conducted at any MOT Testing Station. If the school's minibus has 12 passenger seats or less the testing may be conducted at any MOT Testing Station. If the minibus has 13 - 16 passenger seats, the testing (Class V) can only be undertaken at a LGV/PCV Testing Station.

Hired, leased and loaned minibuses must also be MOT tested in accordance with the above and where there is any concern a copy of the current test certificate should be inspected prior to accepting possession of the minibus.

The school is responsible for holding copies of MOT certificates and ensuring that no vehicle is used or stored on a public road without a current MOT certificate.

The minibus will have a periodic 'roadworthiness inspection' in addition to the MOT testing requirement. Such roadworthiness inspections should be undertaken by a suitable MOT licensed garage at periods that reflect the usage and mileage of the vehicle, this to be at least once each year. The minibus must also be serviced at intervals recommended by the manufacturer and servicing garage; the periodic roadworthiness checks can run concurrently to any servicing requirement.

The Driver

It is the responsibility of the school to authorise individual drivers and ensure that they hold a suitable driving licence and adequate driving experience.

All Drivers must have, as a minimum, B1 category on their driving licence as all drivers will be categorised as volunteer drivers. This can be checked via the following link with the individual present <https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence> (NI and Driving license number is required.)

Authorised drivers must be over 25 years of age, have at least two years' experience as a qualified driver and must be both capable and competent to drive a minibus safely. All persons who drive a minibus on school business must have successfully passed a school arranged driving course before authorisation and had their licence formally

checked by the school. This can be provided with MIDAS training which will be undertaken in the new year.

A register of all authorised drivers is held by the administrator.

Anyone taking any medication (prescription or over the counter) that might cause drowsiness is not permitted to drive a minibus.

No insulin-dependent drivers may drive a minibus or similar vehicle over 3.5 tonnes. Drivers where diabetes is treated with tablets, or by diet, are unaffected.

Any driver being diagnosed with diabetes should not drive until the DVLA have been informed and the necessary documentation completed.

Risk assessment

A suitable and sufficient risk assessment for the use of minibus should be completed. This risk assessment can be a 'Generic' type where there is extensive use of the minibus for regular journeys/activities of a similar nature.

The assessment should identify all relevant hazards, determine who will be at risk, what is the probability of the hazards causing harm to human health or the environment (i.e. the risks) and identifying appropriate control measures to eliminate or minimise these risks. This assessment should be made available to all relevant employees who may operate the minibus. The assessment should also be reviewed at regular intervals.

DRIVERS HOURS

Journey and driving times

Tiredness of the driver has often been a significant factor in minibus accidents.

The recommended maximum periods for driving a minibus are:-

Recommended limits for driving only

Recommended limits for driving plus other work

UK legal limits

Maximum time driving without a break from work

2 hours (or sooner if tired)

2 hours (or sooner if tired)

5.5 hours

Minimum length of break	15 minutes **	15 minutes **	30minutes
Maximum length of working day**	13 hours	10 hours	16 hours
Of which, spent driving	9 hours	4 hours	10 hours
Daily rest period	11 hours	11 hours	10 hours

4. If a person is injured, to produce your driving licence and insurance certificate to the police when reporting the accident or, if this is not possible, at least within seven days to a Police Station you select.

NOTE: All accidents or dangerous occurrences/near misses should also be reported to the Senior Leadership team.

DRIVING ABROAD

Europe wide regulations exist which lay down rules for international journeys and which apply to all passenger vehicles constructed to carry 9 or more persons; including the driver. There are regulations covering drivers' hours, rest periods and record keeping obligations.

Minibuses used on the Continent, including the Republic of Ireland, will need to have been fitted with a tachograph and appropriate records kept. The vehicle may also require a waybill and for journeys outside the EEA (European Economic Area) a Model Control Document. Both are available from:

Confederation of Passenger Transport 22 Greencoat PI, London SW1P 1PR Phone: 020 7240 3131

All drivers require a full D1 driving licence if taking a minibus to any part of the EEA. Drivers who passed their driving test prior to January 1997 have D1 on their Driving Licences.

All drivers who pass their driving test after 1st January 1997 will be required to undertake a further D1 driving test in order to drive a minibus abroad.

To take a hire vehicle abroad you need to hold form VE103, issued by the Department of Transport. This acts as a substitute for the vehicle registration document and the following information will need to be supplied by the hire company:

- a letter of authorisation
- registration number of vehicle
- chassis number of vehicle
- engine capacity
- seating capacity

Advice on insurance abroad should be sought from the Head of Finance prior to travel.

MINIBUS SAFETY

Seat Belts

Seat belts must be worn at all times whilst the vehicle is travelling or in stationary traffic and it is expected that the most senior member of staff or the driver shall ensure that passengers wear their seat belts.

The driver of the minibus is legally responsible for ensuring that children, under 14 years of age, wear seat belts.

Ancillary Equipment

All minibuses must possess the following items and, where necessary, for these to be clearly marked:

- First Aid Kit
- Fire Extinguisher
- Reflective Triangle
- Serviceable Spare Tyre and tyre changing equipment
- Fuel cut-off switch (diesel)
- Emergency exit sign clearly marked
- Vehicle carrying capacity clearly marked
- Vehicle height (including with roof rack where applicable) is clearly marked.

Carrying of Goods

Gangways and aisles must be kept clear and not be obstructed by luggage or equipment. No flammable liquids or hazardous materials may be carried on a minibus. Where goods are transported within a minibus these should be secured so as not to be displaced in the event of an accident or incident.

Where minibuses are required to carry goods and/or luggage regularly it is recommended that a roof rack is fitted and luggage/goods are evenly distributed and adequately secured. For this purpose, a manual handling risk assessment must be undertaken to ensure that the nature of the goods transported can be safely handled.

Minibus Maintenance Checks

Road transport legislation places a duty on the driver of a motor vehicle to ensure that the vehicle is safe to operate on a public road. To aid this requirement and to help ensure the safety of the driver and his/her passengers, the following checks should be made prior to driving the vehicle:

- Is the vehicle suitable for the intended use?
- Is the vehicle taxed and does it have a current MOT certificate?
- Is the insurance cover adequate?
- Is the driver a registered driver?
- Check tyre condition (including spare): there should be no bare patches on the tyre and at least three millimetres of tread should be visible;
- Check the bodywork: there should be no rust holes or protruding items of bodywork;
- Check the wipers and washer level;
- Check the lights, indicators and horn;
- Check the mirrors;
- Check the battery fluid;
- Check the water (coolant) level - this must only be done when the engine is cold;
- Check the brake fluid level;
- Check the engine oil level;
- Check the fuel level;
- Check that all the ancillary equipment is correct.

All faults, defects and concerns must be reported to the administrator immediately using the form at Appendix A

It is also recommended that the administrator along with the main driver undertakes weekly roadworthiness checks on all minibuses owned or leased by the Department.

Using Trailers

Category B1

You can drive vehicles with:

- Vehicle with 4 wheels up to 400kg unladen, or 550kg if intended to carry goods.
- Vehicle up to 3,500kg MAM carrying no more than 8 passengers plus **driver**
- with trailer up to 750kg (or with trailer over 750kg if combined vehicle and trailer weight isn't more than 3,500kg MAM)
- no more than 8 passenger seats

It is recommended that before authorising a driver to tow a trailer that a school arranged driving course is undertaken to ensure that he/she is competent to tow and reverse a trailer and ensure its safe loading.

On a long journey, the trailer and vehicle should be checked every two hours.

Before towing a trailer, the following checks should be carried out to ensure:

- the vehicle being used is appropriate for this use;
- the gross weight of the vehicle, plus the trailer, is within the vehicle gross weight limit;
- that the kerbside weight of the towing vehicle is clearly marked on the front of the nearside of the vehicle;
- the downward force from the loaded trailer on the towing ball is within the limits imposed by the towing vehicle manufacturer;
- the axle loads of the towing vehicle are not exceeded;
- that a breakaway chain is in use, which will activate the handbrake should the coupling break. Advice on this matter should be sought from the trailer manufacturer or approved dealer;
- the unladen weight of the trailer and tyre pressures are clearly marked on the trailer;
- that the total gross weight (trailer plus maximum load to be carried) is clearly marked on the front of the trailer;
- that the trailer handbrake/over-run brake functions properly;
- that the trailer lights function properly;
- that the load is securely lashed to the trailer body or frame;

Minibus Reversing

As minibuses have a significant blind spot whilst reversing great care must be exercised when the vehicle needs to be reversed, whether or not passengers are on-board.

Wherever possible a second person must assist the driver whilst reversing by guiding him/her on the outside towards the rear driver's side of the minibus. The person guiding the driver must remain in vision of the driver at all times and the driver must follow and understand his/her instructions.

In order to reduce the risk whilst reversing it is recommended that a rear view lens to the rear door window to improve vision is fitted.

Passenger details

Where it is reasonably practicable to do so, a list of all the names of the passengers, with a contact address, should be lodged with the Security Control Room, before a journey begins.

The school will take the medical needs of the learner into consideration with a risk assessment.

Appendix A

DRIVER'S VEHICLE CHECKLIST: MINIBUSES

DATE:

DRIVER'S NAME:

REGISTRATION NO:

ODOMETER READING:

DAILY OR SHIFT CHECK (TICK OR CROSS)

Fuel/ oil/ waste leaks

Wipers Mirrors

Battery (if easily accessible)

Washers

Steering

Tyres and wheel fixing

Heating/ Ventilation

Brakes

Glass

Lights

Doors and exits

Reflectors

Body Interior

Indicators

Body Exterior

Excessive Engine Exhaust

Smoke

Fire Extinguisher

First-Aid Kit

Emergency Exit

Hammer

REPORT DEFECTS HERE:-

CONFIRM HOW DEFECTS WERE RECTIFIED:-

Write NIL here if no defects found:

Driver's Signature:

.....

Defects rectified by:

.....
.....

Date:

Appendix B

The member of staff involved in the motor accident should complete this Accident Report Form. It must be completed as comprehensively and as soon as possible after the accident. Once completed it should be sent to the SEN Admin Lead and the Business Manager.

MOTOR ACCIDENT REPORT FORM

DETAILS OF DRIVER

Name:

Job Title:

Date of Birth:

Home Address & Postcode:

Telephone number:

Date passed driving test:

Permitted groups:

CONVICTIONS

Has the driver been convicted of any driving or motoring offence in last 5 years or any prosecution? If yes, please give full details.

Has the driver been involved in an accident during the last 5 years? If yes, please give full details.

Details of any trailer or loose container owned by the school:

For what purpose was the vehicle being used:

DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT

Date of Incident:

Time of Incident:

Location of the Incident:

Speed of Vehicle:

Weather conditions:

Who was responsible for the accident?

Give a detailed account of what happened:

Names and contact details of any independent witnesses:

Draw a sketch of what happened. Indicate with an arrow the direction of the vehicle.

DETAILS OF DAMAGE TO THE VEHICLE

**** IF POSSIBLE, PLEASE ATTACH PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE DAMAGE****

Damage to vehicle:

Indication of point of impact on vehicle:

Is the vehicle still in use?

Have you authorised repairs?

Where may the Insurance engineer inspect the vehicle?

PARTICULARS OF OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED AND PROPERTY DAMAGED

****IF POSSIBLE, PLEASE ATTACH PHOTOGRAPHS OF DAMAGE****

Name, address of owners and, if appropriate, driver:

Make, model and registration no of vehicle:

Insurers name, address and policy no:

Apparent damage to other parties' vehicles:

Signed:

Dated: