



PITMASTON PRIMARY SCHOOL - MINIBUS POLICY

RATIONALE

The Governors recognise the great educational and social development value of offsite and extracurricular activities and they commend and support all staff that run and organise such. This Policy is essential as it defines the responsibilities of Governors, Headteacher and Staff when a minibus is used to transport pupils and staff. The use of the minibus will be strictly controlled to conform to the policy **so that safety is treated as the overriding principle at all times.**

THE VEHICLE:

PLEASE NOTE ALL MINIBUS USE DIESEL NOT PETROL. If you put petrol in do not start the engine but call the AA

1. Insurance cover dictates that the minibus must only be used to transport students and staff to and from places connected with the official business of the school (delivery of the curriculum/education or extracurricular activity).

It does not cover:

- The transport goods or materials (other than items such as personal bags, PE kit etc.)
 - Private use (Personal transport, private party, towing vehicles, staff social outings).
 - Use by other schools and bodies not part of Worcestershire County Council Children's Services. Requests for use by any external groups can only be granted by the Headteacher or Business Manager.
2. The vehicle is licensed for driver and 16 other passengers. This limit must not be exceeded. Pupils **must not** sit in the front passenger seat/s alongside the driver if any other seat in the rear of the bus is free.
 3. A weekly safety check of the minibus will be carried by a designated member of the staff team (Currently Brian Beech). This will include minor service items and the cleaning of the exterior of the bus.

THE DRIVER:

4. Only drivers holding a current Worcestershire Minibus Driver Permit are authorised to drive the minibus (Drivers will hold a licence for Category D1 or full PCV to be eligible for this and will have passed the Worcestershire test).
5. Approved drivers must report any driving convictions, accidents or changes in circumstances that may affect their status as an approved driver. Failure to do so may invalidate insurance cover. All drivers will be asked to complete a declaration annually
6. Trailers must only be used if the Driver of the minibus holds a current valid Worcestershire Minibus Driver Permit that includes the 'With Trailer' option. Only school owned/maintained trailers or those hired through a reputable commercial organisation can be used. Personally owned trailers or those borrowed from other organisations cannot be used without the written consent of the Business Manager
7. The law dictates that the driver will be responsible for the safety of the party and be in overall charge of any journey, and he/she must satisfy his/herself that the minibus, and trailer if used, is roadworthy, safe and conforms to legal requirements e.g. brakes (do they work), tyres (pressure, tread depth, obvious cuts, bulges or splits) lights (do they all work) tax (visible and in date), weight (not overloaded/carrying too many passengers). All trailers must be loaded safely and within safe design limits.
8. A section 19 permit must always be displayed in the vehicle. (Purple disk)

THE JOURNEY:

9. The Trip Organiser (Trip Leader) must meet with the Driver and fully brief him/her on all pertinent aspects of the trip and journey to be undertaken prior to the trip commencing. Jointly they must plan and agree the route and conduct a risk assessment of the journey. Immediately prior to setting out the Driver must review the risk assessment bearing in mind the weather, driving conditions and their own state of health and degree of tiredness. It is important that risks should be minimal. Drivers will be asked to confirm on the form MB2 that they have considered risks before setting out. A generic risk assessment is available to assist in this process.
10. Drivers must, in conjunction with point 27 below, risk assess the group of pupils they are transporting and make a decision about effective and safe control of the group during the journey. One or more additional staff member should always accompany the group
11. Drivers and any accompanying supervising adults must wear a high visibility jacket or vest (provided on the bus) at times of hazard e.g. breakdown or accident.
12. Journeys of more than 1.5 hours driving (each way) or trips returning after 10:30pm must be accompanied by a reserve driver.
13. Journeys following a school day must not involve a member of staff driving for more than 2 hours in total and no more than 1 hour before taking at least a 30 minute break away from driving.
14. Fuel costs will normally apply to a journey and should be included within parental contributions when such fees are levied. So if you are charging for an entry fee/ticket etc. then you will include fuel costs. A general exemption applies to sporting activities, compulsory curriculum related trips and when pupils are representing the school at an event. The Business Manager should be consulted if there is any doubt
 - All passengers must wear the lap/diagonal seat belts as fitted to our vehicle throughout the journey. The driver must satisfy his/herself that all belts are being worn before driving off. No-one must be allowed to unbuckle their belt or leave their seat whilst the minibus is moving. The law states that persons under 12 years of age who are less than

1.35 meters tall must be suitably restrained in child restraint seat if they are sitting alongside the driver. ALL children must sit in the rear of the minibus at all times.

15. Pupils should not be allowed off the bus when refuelling at a petrol station. If pupils require the use of a toilet the bus must be moved to a position of safety away from the pumps and pupils must be allowed out in a controlled and calm fashion under the strict guidance of the driver or other member of staff. See also point 11
16. When returning from a trip pupils may only be dropped off at the pre arranged drop off point (normally the School). If pupils are dropped off at any other point this must only be done with the express written permission of a parent or guardian. A pupil may go home with a parent from a venue (e.g. a sporting fixture) with written consent of their parent only.
17. Drivers must ensure (unless an alternative has been agreed when booking) that the minibus is returned to its parking bay and all doors and windows are locked and the keys are returned to the key holder (The Business Manager)

A BREAKDOWN OR ACCIDENT:

18. In the event of breakdown the driver's first priority is the safety of all passengers. Passengers should not (unless it is more dangerous to leave the bus) be allowed to sit in a vehicle that is broken down. They should first be moved to a position of relative safety e.g. off the hard shoulder on a motorway and beyond any crash barrier (See point 11 above). The driver should inform AA using the number displayed in the bus and then inform the School.
19. ACCIDENTS - In the event of an accident, liability should not be admitted. Names and addresses of vehicle owners, of insurance companies, and of witnesses should be obtained. A full accident report must be completed as soon as possible after the accident and submitted to the Headteacher.
20. For major incidents first contact the emergency services and then contact the school on the emergency number

BOOKING A MINIBUS:

21. All bookings to be made through Mrs Sue Bladen who will maintain a bookings diary. Bookings must be made in advance.
22. Disputes relating to availability will be settled by the Business Manager.
23. Drivers must record mileage start/finish etc for each journey. Visual safety checks must be carried out before each journey. Mr Beech will complete weekly safety checks and the minibus will have a full safety check by an external provider every 17 weeks as part of the maintenance contract. Any concerns about the safety or serviceability of a bus **must** be reported in person by the driver to the Business Manager **immediately upon return**. If the return is after school hours/late a warning note must be left attached to the steering wheel to prevent any further use before checks can be made.

LEAVING A MINIBUS AS YOU WOULD WISH TO FIND IT:

24. It is the responsibility of the trip organiser to ensure that the minibus is left in a clean condition (internally) at the end of the journey (e.g. clear of bottles, litter, spills etc.) and is available for further use at least half an hour before the commencement of the next/following trip. Rare exceptions to this may be made by agreement with the next booked person/trip. If a bus is deemed to have been left in an unclean state by a user the relevant Phase Budget will be recharged £10.
25. When required, drivers should refuel the minibus using the school fuel card which is available from the Business Manager. **The minibus should be returned with not less than ¼ tank of diesel** (So that the following trip can get safely to a filling station!)

USE OF MINIBUSES NOT OWNED OR MAINTAINED BY THE SCHOOL:

26. For any hired in vehicle all safety related requirements of this policy apply with equal force. If a driver is supplied the organiser of the trip is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is safe to use and that all appropriate elements of this policy are applied to ensure the protection of all participants (13 & 14 do not apply as the driver will be subject to industry standard and legal regulatory control)

Reviewed by the Resources Committee 30th March 2017