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Minibus Policy and Procedures

St Aubyn's (Woodford Green) School Trust



As in other matters, the School has a general duty of care for passengers when being transported in the School minibuses or hired vehicles. This has implications for all aspects of minibus use, including the type of bus, its maintenance, the authorisation of drivers, the stowing of luggage and seat belt usage.

Detailed procedures concerning the use of the School minibuses follow. For the purposes of these procedures, the term “minibus” is taken to mean either of the minibuses owned by the School or hired vehicles being used for school events.

The procedures have been written to provide any members of the St. Aubyn’s School community, who may need to drive vehicles on behalf of the School, with the necessary consolidated knowledge in the light of growing legislation regarding the necessary qualifications, insurance, operating, servicing and inspection requirements to safely operate our vehicles and carry passengers. A copy of this policy and procedures will be provided in the School minibus file (kept in the Minibus), on the School network and on the School website

The policy and procedures will be revisited annually as part of the School’s Health and Safety review.



MINIBUS PROCEDURES

The School has a Section 19 Permit which enables entitled staff to transport students, staff or their helpers in our school minibus. (Cindy to confirm)

Persons Entitled To Drive the Minibus

Driving should be done on a voluntary basis and should not be written into staff's contracts. (Cindy to confirm)

Members of staff and approved volunteers aged 25 and over are allowed to drive the School minibus if they have authorisation from the Bursar. Before being authorised to drive the minibus, staff will be required to undergo a Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MIDAS) training course and pass an assessment. The assessment and training will be carried out in-house by an external MIDAS Driver Assessor Trainer. MIDAS training is only required for regular drivers.

Additionally at periodic intervals, staff with D1 annotations will be requested to take minibus driving training and assessments to ensure that they have maintained the necessary level of proficiency to drive the School minibus safely.

Driving Licences

Staff wishing to drive the School minibuses will be requested firstly to provide their driving licence to the Bursar so that we can determine that the member of staff has the correct authorised licence with annotations to drive the School's vehicles or to carry pupils on behalf of the School.

Our staff need to have a category D1 Driving Licence to drive the School minibuses. (Cindy – is this true for both minibuses, including the new one?) Anyone who passed his or her car UK driving licence prior to 1st January 1997 will *normally* have this annotation. However, if the licence is returned to DVLA for any reason, such as change of address/name etc DVLA's occasional practice has been to remove the annotation. It is incumbent on staff to monitor this and advise the Bursar if the D1 annotation has been removed.

A minibus that is heavier than 3 ½ tonnes cannot be driven by anyone who passed their test after 1997 unless they have completed and passed a PCVD1 test. (Cindy – is our new minibus over 3 ½ tonnes?)

The Bursar will check driver's licenses annually to ensure that they are valid (D1 entitlement is required, points should be checked, current address, medical conditions etc). The license will be photocopied and the copy dated as evidence.



An eyesight test every 2 years is recommended for staff authorised to drive the School minibuses.

Drivers must be medically fit to drive and sign a declaration to that effect. Staff with a medical condition that needs to be declared to the insurers should advise the Bursar accordingly.

Drivers must pass on information regarding penalty points to the Bursar

It is unlikely that the School minibus will be used for trips abroad. However, if this does happen it will be necessary to train drivers to the full PCV standard. Driving the Minibus abroad also requires the use of a tachograph.

Servicing, M.O.T. , Insurance & Taxation

Regular servicing and M.O.T. testing will be carried out at the appropriate intervals, and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. The Bursar will ensure that servicing is performed at the correct mileage and that the service book is ready for inspection at any time.

The minibus should have an independent mini-check (fuel, water, oil and battery levels, tyre pressures and lights) every 6-8 weeks (half-termly). This should be done by a suitably trained person, who will sign it off and take responsibility for it being roadworthy. The signed forms must be kept for reference if necessary. (Cindy – Is this done?)

The Bursar will arrange for appropriate insurance cover and for the payment of annual road tax.

Drivers' Responsibilities

All bookings should be made in the booking diary in the School Office. Ideally, this will happen when events are booked into the School calendar.

A list of pupils and staff on the journey, journey details (i.e. proposed route), departure and arrival times should be left with the School Office. These will be on the risk assessment form for trips or the team sheet for sports events. The Office should be able to contact staff via their mobile phones.

The Minibus File, which contains checklists, the log book and this Policy & Procedures etc is stored on the minibus and is taken on every journey.



They should then carry out a pre-use check of the vehicle and complete the Vehicle Check List (see next section).

On return they should carry out a post-use check of the vehicle and complete the Vehicle Check List again. This is then returned to the School Office.

Pre and Post-Use Vehicle Checks

The School minibus should be maintained to high levels as mentioned. As well as MOT, servicing and weekly checks, drivers should satisfy themselves that the vehicle is safe to drive.

Pre-use and post-use checks (Appendix 1) should include checking: fluid levels under the bonnet (oil, power steering, brakes, wipers and water levels), ignition, reverse lights, lights (including hazards, brakes and indicators) as you walk around the vehicle, horn, tyre condition (NB There should be a gap between the pairs of back tyres, if applicable), scratches/dents, seat belts, the correct opening and closure of all doors, windscreen washers and wipers, fuel level.

Pre and post-use checks need to be recorded on the Vehicle Check Lists, which are kept in the minibus file. Completed Vehicle Check Lists will be handed in to the School Office upon returning to School. Any Check Lists requiring action will be immediately forwarded to the Bursar. All lists will be retained by the School.

NB. Mileage records should be used to help monitor consumption.

Responsibility for the condition of the vehicle cannot be passed to any other person by the driver.

The driver should go through a brief talk with pupils regarding the wearing of seatbelts, journey time, being seated at all times, behaviour, noise levels and escape procedures.

Driver's Assistant

A second member of staff or an adult volunteer should be on every journey as the driver's assistant. For very short journeys, (at the discretion of the Head or Deputy Head) an assistant may not be required.

The assistant should observe behaviour and maintain good order. They can also make and receive phone calls so the driver does not. They should also help with reversing and need to be visible at all times to the reversing driver. They should assist in a breakdown or accident and can act as a relief driver if they are trained and authorised.



Seat belts/Luggage

Before setting off, the driver and/or his/her assistant are to ensure that passengers have their own seat, are wearing seat belts and any luggage is securely stowed. Stickers should help remind pupils about the need to wear seatbelts.

Use of Child Restraints

All staff are advised that from the 18th September 2006 new legislation was introduced that requires children up to 1.35m in height (or 12th birthday, whichever they reach first) to use the appropriate child restraint when travelling in cars, vans & goods vehicles; this does not apply to children travelling in minibuses or coaches.

However, if booster seats are requested these are available from the School Office.

Driving Rules

Drivers are responsible for driving within the law and in accordance with the Highway Code. Copies are in the School minibus.

National speed limits apply to the School minibus.

NB. A minibus should not be driven in the third lane of a motorway.

Security

Whenever the vehicle is left unattended, all windows should be closed and doors locked.

Fuel

The School Minibuses have a fuel card that enables fuel to be purchased and charged to the School's account. However, the person delegated to regularly check the School minibuses would normally ensure that they are fully replenished for the intended known journeys each day.

Ideally the diesel level should not go below a quarter and would preferably be filled up when it is half full. This helps prevent primer and other matter from getting into the engine. A sticker on the fuel gauge could remind drivers of this.

Breakdown Assistance



In the event of breakdown contact mbp (minibus plus ltd). Contact details are on the membership card carried in the minibus. It is best to use a roadside emergency telephone if possible, as this will pinpoint your location. School should also be contacted, when practical, in the event of a breakdown.

Pupils should not remain in a broken down vehicle on the hard shoulder. They should leave the vehicle safely and stand behind a barrier until help arrives. Hazard lights should be on when the vehicle is broken down.

Staff should not change a tyre or attempt repairs. A breakdown team should do it.

Accident

In the event of an accident check the number plates of the vehicles involved. Take the names, addresses and telephone numbers of people involved, including independent witnesses. Check VIN (on windscreen). Call police and ambulance services if you feel that anyone may require medical help. Take no chances. Take photos of the accident scene from various angles if possible.

Breakdown procedures should be carried out if necessary.

Only after a minor collision is it advisable not to call the Emergency Services. Police should be contacted within 24 hours. Any damage should be reported on the check sheet. Any accidents, illnesses and injuries should be reported upon return.

In the event of a serious incident, emergency contact numbers (Head, Deputy Head, and Bursar) are available in the Minibus File (carried on all journeys).

Tiredness

Driving when tired greatly increases the risk of an accident. The Highway Code recommends that a driver takes a minimum break of at least 15 minutes after every 2 hours of driving. However, after a full working day, a driver MUST NOT drive for a continuous period of more than 2 hours without taking a suitable break.

The Highway Code advises that the most effective ways to counter sleepiness are to take a short nap or drink, for example, 2 cups of strong coffee. Fresh air, exercise or turning up the radio may help for a short time but are not as effective. 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).



Drugs

Drivers must not drive under the influence of drugs or medicine.

Phones

A working, charged mobile phone should be taken on all journeys. The use of a hand-held mobile phone when driving a vehicle is illegal. The School has not fitted the minibus with the equipment necessary to allow hands-free use of telephones. Mobile phones should not therefore be used by drivers while the vehicle is moving or the engine is running. However, mobile phones should be turned on such that staff can always be contacted. The driver's assistant can receive and make phone calls if necessary.

If drivers need to make a call or alternatively receive a call whilst driving, they should safely stop the vehicle in an appropriate location prior to answering or making the mobile phone call.

In the event that contact needs to be made with parents, this can be done via the School Office during School hours. For trips that run out of School hours, the staff member running the trip should take the relevant contact information in whatever format is most suitable. Parent contact details are sensitive data and should not be left on the Minibus

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 be clear of obstructions (such as bags) at all times. Bags can go on spare seats and under seats.

If a trailer is used the back doors of the Minibus need to be able to open fully to help pupils escape safely if necessary.

Equipment

It is recommended that the following equipment is carried onboard the Minibus:
A First Aid Kit, a fire extinguisher (check pressure gauge as part of 5 minute check).
A clean up kit (gloves, wipes, scoop, crystals, cat litter, alcohol gel).



Two High Visibility vests.

Head torch.

A Highway Code

Red triangles to warn other drivers if you have had to stop

Bin bags

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 available for rubbish.

Dirty/muddy kit (especially boots and shoes) must not be worn in the minibus. Clean tracksuits and footwear should be taken if pupils are likely to get muddy.

The Bursar will arrange for the regular cleaning of the vehicle.

General

Any member of staff who has queries relating to the driving of the School Minibus or the condition of the vehicle should bring them to the attention of the Bursar

The minibus can be exempted from Congestion Charge at no cost. Cindy – Is this still true? If not, what are the arrangements for ensure payment is made?

For further information read 'Minibus Safety A Code of Practice' (RoSPA). Copies are available in the Minibus Files kept in the vehicles.

APPENDIX 1

St Aubyn's School Minibus – Pre-drive safety check

Driver Name: _____ Destination: _____



Passenger Info: _____ Driver's Assistant: _____

Date: _____

Departure Time: _____

Mileage at start of journey: _____

Mileage at end of journey: _____

Exterior Check		
	OK	Not
Windscreen and windows are clean and undamaged		
Mirrors are correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed		
No cuts and bulges on tyres		

Interior Check		
	OK	Not
Mirrors are correctly adjusted , clean and unobstructed		
Position and function/purpose of all the dashboard controls		
Position of driving seat so that all controls can be operated comfortably		
Check for pressure on brake pedal		
Wipers and washer are working properly		
Fuel level (diesel)		
Location of relevant paperwork (risk assessment, map, small bus permit, insurance, road tax disc, emergency numbers, breakdown card and MoT)		
Change for parking or the telephone		
Charged mobile phone with credit		
Luggage is securely stowed and aisles and exists are clear		
Emergency equipment is available in the event of breakdown or accident (high visibility jacket, first aid kit, fire extinguisher, torch, warning triangle, pencil, paper).		

If faults that might affect the vehicle's or passengers' safety are found, the vehicle must not be used until they are remedied. PTO

Brake checks

Before the passengers are loaded the brakes should be checked. With the engine running, check the handbrake is working properly, and that the brake



pedal is firm when pressed. A moving brake test should then be conducted, off-road if possible. Warn the passengers first, reach a speed of not more than 5 mph, check the mirrors and if it is safe, apply the brakes fairly firmly. The brakes should work effectively, the vehicle should not pull to one side, luggage should be stored securely.

Please remember:

Do not drive for over 2 hours/120 miles without a break

Speed limits for minibuses are:

30mph in built up areas

50mph where the national speed limit is in force

60mph on dual carriageways

70mph on motorways*

*(when towing a trailer this becomes 60mph and you cannot use the outside lane)

TURN OFF INTERIOR LIGHT

Signed: _____ (Driver)

Please return this form to the school office

Post – drive report:

Signed: _____

Please return to the School Secretary. To be filed in Minibus Records Fil