



MINIBUS POLICY

Formally adopted by the Governing Body of Our Lady and St Rose of Lima

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Chair of Governors:

Head teacher:

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1. Introduction

A minibus is a motor vehicle constructed or adapted to carry more than 8, but not more than 16 seated passengers in addition to the driver.

This policy and guidance applies to all employees who drive a minibus whilst at work. It equally applies to those who drive minibuses only occasionally or for short distances, as well as those where this amounts for a significant part of their working hours. It covers additional requirements which relate specifically to minibus use over and above the requirements for general driving.

The school expects employees to adhere to this policy in line with its obligations under equality legislation. Managers/Headteachers must ensure that all reasonable adjustments or supportive measures are considered to allow equality of access and opportunity regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, faith or religion, gender identity, pregnancy or marital status.

Please note:

- Wherever reference is made in this policy to employees this also means volunteers, charity or agency staff who drive a minibus on school business.
- Insurance for minibus driving is on the basis of its use being not for hire or reward only.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 Managers/Headteachers Responsibilities

Managers/Headteachers are responsible for ensuring:

- Risk assessments are in place for all minibus driving activities undertaken by their employees.
- Current employees who drive minibuses understand their individual responsibility to keep to the policy, and that any new employees are made aware of their responsibilities as part of their induction.
- Six monthly checks of employees driving licences are undertaken to ensure they are valid.
- That the appropriate licence allowing them to drive minibuses is held.
- Ensure checks are carried out by the 'driver' on minibuses prior to use and that appropriate action taken for any problems identified – see the Minibus Checklist.
- Ensure MOT, safety inspection and servicing conditions are adhered to.
- Ensure driver hours activity logs are completed. (STRIDA APP)



In practice these responsibilities may be carried out through directing others within the management chain of their service. However, managers/headteachers remain ultimately responsible for ensuring those persons with delegated responsibility carry out the requirements in full. The manager/headteacher will therefore need to actively monitor that the required actions are being undertaken on their behalf.

2.2 Employees Responsibilities

- Adhere to the requirements set out in this document.
- Carry out minibuses checks prior to use and taking appropriate action for any problems identified – see the Minibus Checklist.
- Complete the Driver Hours Activity log.
- Ensure a Permit 19 is displayed .

3. Minibus hire, loan or purchase (including trailers)

Before a minibus is hired, loaned or purchased it is recommended that Headteachers of LA schools consult with the Business Travel Team to ensure that their vehicle operations are going to stay both within the law and school policy on the use of vehicles for work. In addition, schools may also get better value using centrally negotiated rates for goods and services as well as being reassured that suppliers have been checked and comply with legal requirements.

4. Risk Assessment

A Risk Assessment for minibus use must be completed on an annual basis for all owned minibuses, and on individual occasions when vehicles are hired or borrowed.

5. Authorisation to Drive Minibuses

The authorisation of drivers to operate the minibus is the responsibility of the Manager/headteacher. When considering the suitability of persons for driving minibuses, they must comply with the Licensing Requirements for drivers of minibuses, as well as ensuring:

- The driver is able to certify they do not suffer from any physical defects, disabilities or illness that might impair their driving.
- All drivers of minibuses have passed the MIDAS Driver Development Training
- Minibus drivers must renew their Driver Assessment/Development Training every three years.



6. Checks before use

A pre-journey checklist must be completed each time, before a minibus is used. This is irrespective of whether the vehicle is owned, hired or borrowed. The driver should carry out the pre-journey checks, and it is also recommended that the person in charge of the vehicle should carry out additional checks at least once a fortnight.

A Pre-Journey Minibus Checklist (STRIDA APP). This concentrates on the vehicle itself.

7. Licensing Requirements for drivers of Minibuses

following requirements apply to drive a minibus with up to 16 passenger seats using their current car driving licence. The driver:

- Is 21 or older
- Has had their driving licence for at least 2 years
- Meet the 'Group 2' medical standards if over 70 – (driver should check with their GP if unsure)
- Driver development training (MIDAS) is passed prior to driving (and refresher taken on a 3-yearly basis)

And,

- The journey is "not for hire or reward"
- The Gross Vehicle Weight (or Maximum Authorised Mass) of the minibus is not more than 3.5 tonnes - or 4.25 tonnes including specialist equipment for disabled passengers, for example a wheelchair ramp
- You are not towing a trailer

If the driver passed their driving test before 1997 then a minibus category would have been added to their licence automatically, if passed after 1997 it will not appear on your licence but is still valid if the above criteria apply. Further information can be found on the DVLA website



You need to be competent to drive for MIDAS, all drivers of minibuses must pass the MIDAS Driver Development Training and renew their assessment/development training every 3 years.

All LA schools must comply with this policy irrespective of any independent or differing advice they may receive.

8. Minibus Permits

A section 19 permit must be displayed in the minibus at all times.

9. MOT, Servicing, Maintenance and Safety Inspections

Minibuses require a MOT inspection one year after initial registration, and annually thereafter. Minibuses with up to 12 passenger seats (excluding the driver) require a Class IV MOT, the same as a car. Minibuses with more than 12 passenger seats (excluding the driver) require a Class V MOT.

The manufacturers recommended servicing and maintenance schedules must always be adhered to. The service documentation supplied with the vehicle will detail when (on a mileage and/or time basis) the vehicle should be serviced.

In addition, safety inspections (over and above the pre-journey checks) should be carried out to at least the Public service Vehicle (PSV) standard. These checks should be carried out termly by a garage.

Detailed information on these safety inspections can be found in 'Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness' available on the Department for Transport's website, and the Community Transport Association's web site, both of which have valuable general advice and information for minibus use. Guidance can also be found on the VOSA website.

Passenger lifts and ramps must be inspected every 6 months and load tested in line with the Work Equipment Compliance Code P653.

10. Vehicle Standards

Minibuses must be maintained in a roadworthy condition as described in the main Driving for Work Compliance Code.



11. Breakdown Procedures

There must be a clearly defined procedure which must be followed in the event of a collision or breakdown. All drivers and passenger assistants / escorts should be made aware of and adhere to it. Guidance on what this should look like can be found in the guidance sheet 'Advice for Minibus Drivers'. Breakdown guidance should be kept in the vehicle.

12. Using a Minibus

12.1 Minibus /driver hours and Rest – UK driving only

A minibus is a vehicle with between 9 and 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver's seat.

Completion and retention of minibus drivers' hours records

We require drivers to keep a full record of their driving activity using the STRIDA APP. Records may be requested by the enforcing authorities such as the police or Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).

Drivers who hold a DQC (Driver Qualification Card) must carry this in addition to their licence to drive a minibus for the authority /school. Drivers who hold a Tachograph Driver Card must also have this available if requested roadside.

Drivers must ensure your Permit 19 is displayed on the minibus you are driving. This is important. Inform your line manager/headteacher if the permit is not displayed before driving. You may not be legal on the public highway without the permit.

The STRIDA APP includes pre journey check list, milage record,, weekly checklist, before and after every journey.

For drivers using written records, please refer to the table below for limits and periods of rest required.

Drivers opting to use the tachograph must comply with the current EU legislation on PCV tachograph rules and contact Fleet Management to download tachograph card and vehicle information.



Daily Driving	No more than 9 hours per day
Daily Work (excluding breaks)	<p>Length of working day A driver should work no more than 16 hours between the times of starting and finishing work (including work other than driving and off-duty periods during the working day).</p> <p>Daily rest periods A continuous rest of 10 hours must be taken between two consecutive working days.</p>
Breaks	<p>A person cannot drive for more than two hours without a break of 15 minutes</p> <p>After 4 ½ hours driving a driver must have a further 30 minutes break. (A break can be taken by a driver who is a passenger in a moving vehicle providing they are not performing any other duties and is able to obtain rest and refreshment)</p> <p>After 6 hours work a person must have a minimum of a 30 minute rest. If a rest has been taken due to driving time this may be counted.</p>

Weekly Driving	Maximum of 56 hours in a week
Driving in a two week Period	Maximum of 90 hours in two weeks
Working Week (Total / Working Time) And Night Work	<p>Limited to 48 hours average over a 17 week period. A maximum of 60 hours can be performed in a single week providing the average 48-hours is not exceeded.</p> <p>If night work is performed, working time must not exceed 10 hours in any 24-hour period. Night time is the period between 01.00 and 05.00 for passenger vehicles.</p>
Weekly rest	Weekly rest must be 45 continuous hours for drivers. This can be reduced to 24 hours for one week as long as the person has a break of 66 continuous hours in the second week.

Tiredness, fatigue and stress (be it from work, domestic or social circumstances) can affect safe driving. Drivers should take account of this and **not** drive if they believe they are unfit to do so.



12.2 Towing with a Minibus

Before attaching a trailer to the tow bar of a minibus;

- Check the gross train weight of the minibus, this sometimes is called the combination weight
- Check that you hold the correct licence to tow the trailer – D1 for trailers up to 750kgs, D1E for trailers over 750kgs
- If towing larger trailers (over 750kgs) the total weight of the trailer must not exceed the unloaded weight of the minibus
- Ask if you are unsure of any of the weight information. Knowing these weights is important to ensure you are driving on the road safely and legally
- The correct licence is held

Once connected, check;

- That the minibus emergency exits are not affected by the connecting trailer

Before the start of any journey, the driver of the minibus needs to ensure that;

- The load is distributed evenly
- The trailer is not overloaded
- The load is secure
- The lights are undamaged and working correctly. The 7 or 13 core cable and plug are undamaged
- A breakaway cable or secondary coupling is used. Make sure this is undamaged and correctly connected
- The tyre pressures are correct and the tyres are undamaged and the tread depth is legal
- The wheel nuts / bolts are tightened to the correct torque (Tightness)
- The trailer is correctly coupled to the towball or pin
- The coupling height and nose weight is correct
- There are secure mudguards on the trailer
- That the correct number plate fitted (the same as the minibus)

During the journey;

- Always keep within the legal speed limits, your capabilities and the road and weather conditions at the time
- If the trailer starts to snake or swerve, ease off the accelerator and reduce speed gently. This is an indication that you are going too fast or the trailer is wrongly loaded
- Do not break harshly on a bend as this will make the trailer unstable
- Reduce speed in plenty of time when approaching any hazard
- Remember on motorways you are not allowed in the third lane

A [minibus towing flow guide](#) is available.

12.3 Roof Racks

Where a roof rack is fitted, care must be taken not to overload the minibus and not to exceed the Gross Vehicle weight. Rack fixings must be checked regularly.



12.4 Speed Limits

Single carriageway roads where no lower limit applies	50 mph
Dual carriageways	60 mph
Motorways	70 mph
Motorways when towing a trailer	60 mph

12.5 Bus/motorway lanes

Minibuses are able to use designated bus lanes unless the word 'local' is included on the blue signage or the road markings. Minibuses fitted with a speed limiter, are not allowed in the right hand lane of a motorway with three or more lanes.

12.6 Parking

If a minibus is parked on the road at night, side and rear lights must be left on. They must also be parked on the nearside of the road unless in a designated parking area.

12.7 Passengers in Wheelchairs

National guidelines produced by the Department for Transport are contained in the code of Practice VSE87/1 "The Safety of Passengers in Wheelchairs on Buses". If you are likely to carry passengers in wheelchairs you will need to obtain a copy of this Code of Practice and abide by the guidance.

12.8 Driving a Minibus Abroad

Strict regulations govern the use of minibuses on international journeys. Operators of minibuses abroad will be subject to the laws of the countries they will be visiting, and these can vary depending on whether the country is part of the EU or not. If you are intending to drive a minibus abroad you must establish what regulations and laws will be applicable for the county you will be visiting.

As a minimum, to drive a minibus abroad, you must normally hold a full PCV Licence, Category D or D1 (obtained through examination). You will also be required to use a tachograph to record drivers hours. If you have any questions contact the Business Travel Team for clarification.