



## Minibus Safety Policy and Procedures

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The aim of these minibus safety procedures is to help Westbourne School provide a safe, effective and efficient minibus service in transporting children from home to school and during educational trips. This policy refers to various statutory regulations and the RoSPA (The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) Code of Practice.

### Summary of best practice for safe use of Minibuses

- Risk assessments should be conducted at regular intervals and detailed records should be kept.
- Operators should comply with all the requirements of section 19 and section 22 permit schemes.
- Operators should ensure that the Minibus is correctly registered and taxed.
- Operators should obtain written confirmation that their insurance policy applies to all the people using the minibus and all the activities and journeys that are conducted.
- All minibuses should be serviced and maintained in accordance with a set schedule. A pre-drive safety check should be conducted every day the vehicle is used and repeated whenever another driver takes over.
- Appropriate written records should be kept, regularly reviewed and updated.
- Operators should set minimum criteria for their minibus drivers and ensure all their drivers conform to it.
- Ensure that all drivers have the appropriate entitlement on their driving licence.
- Ensure that all drivers receive induction training and are regularly re-assessed, and re-trained as necessary, to maintain their driving skills and standards.
- Westbourne School has nominated the Bursar to decide who is authorised to drive the minibus. Only authorised drivers should drive the minibus.

- Operators should ensure that they are aware of and comply with the latest Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements and that drivers and passenger assistants are vetted as necessary.
- All journeys should be properly planned.
- Drivers should understand, and comply with, speed limits that apply to minibuses.
- Drivers and/or passenger assistants should ensure that all passengers who need to be met on their return have been safely met. A post-trip vehicle check should be conducted and recorded.
- Clear accident and emergency procedures should be in place and should be included in driver training.
- Passengers should be adequately supervised.
- Drivers should only use suitable, agreed pick-up and drop-off places.
- Passengers should be aware of their expected behaviour, and the need to wear seat belts.
- Procedures for passenger illness should be in place.
- Seat belts should be provided on all seats and all passengers should wear their seat belt.
- Operators must display seat belt signs in the minibus.
- Minibuses must be fitted with tachographs as required by law.
- Minibuses must be fitted with speed limiters as required by law. Drivers must understand how this affects the way the vehicle can be safely driven, and especially the implications when driving on motorways.
- Passengers in wheelchairs should be afforded the same level of safety as all other passengers. Drivers should be trained in the care of passengers in wheelchairs.
- Persons operating lifts must be trained to use them and should be aware of, and follow, the latest guidance for lifts and ramps on minibuses.
- Operators should ensure that all passengers are transported in a minibus suitable for their needs.
- Appropriate emergency equipment should be provided in the minibus, and drivers and passenger assistants trained in its use.
- Appropriate fire hazard procedures should be in place.
- All luggage must be securely stowed, and not impede access to the gangways or to the doors. Drivers must be trained in the use of roof racks and trailers, if used.
- The maximum weight limit of the minibus should never be exceeded.
- Operators should ensure that they are aware of, and follow all necessary rules and regulations for international journeys and for all the countries in which they travel.

## **1. Before Setting Off on a Journey**

- 1.1 If the minibus is being operated under a permit scheme, make sure the permit disc is displayed in the windscreen.
- 1.2 Make sure your driving licence entitles you to drive the minibus.

- 1.3 Make sure you have the relevant phone numbers, and a mobile phone, in case of a delay or emergency.
- 1.4 Allow sufficient time for the journey. If using a SatNav, set it before you start. Check for any problems on your route (eg, road closures, road works or severe weather warnings)
- 1.5 Avoid long spells of driving, and plan breaks to ensure you are fresh to continue and that children do not get restless. Consider whether a second driver is required.
- 1.6 Conduct a pre drive safety check before every drive.
- 1.7 Never allow passengers to board until the minibus is at a complete standstill, and safely parked by a pavement or traffic free area. If you leave the vehicle, switch off the engine.
- 1.8 Try to make sure the passengers enter the minibus from the pavement, not the road (unless using a ramp or lift at the rear). If the nearside door opens onto the road, take extra care.
- 1.9 Ensure that children are supervised when boarding the vehicle, especially if they are using a rear door. Plan which passengers will sit in the front seats and by the doors.
- 1.10 Do not exceed the carrying capacity of the minibus. Make sure everyone is sitting, one to a seat, and that passengers are using seat belts.
- 1.11 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.
- 1.12 Always ensure that ambulant disabled passengers are seated safely and comfortably and that passengers travelling in their wheelchairs are safely restrained. Wheelchairs not in use must also be securely stored.

## **2. Advice for Minibus Drivers**

- 2.1 Make sure there is a complete list of the passengers being carried with a note of any special medical or other needs, such as travel sickness. Keep the list with other relevant documents in a place where it can be readily found in the event of an accident. Check that passengers have any necessary medication with them.
- 2.2 Take care when using passenger lifts and other specialist equipment. Always comply with the manufacturer's instructions.
- 2.3 Check that no bags or clothing are caught in the doors, and check all mirrors every time before moving away in case latecomers are approaching the vehicle.
- 2.4 Check that all luggage is secured, and that gangways and exits are clear.
- 2.5 Know the height, width, length and weight of the vehicle, and the position of the fuel cap.
- 2.6 If you have a passenger with an oxygen cylinder, display signs to warn emergency services in the event of a fire.
- 2.7 Children must not be left unaccompanied in the minibus
- 2.8 If the vehicle breaks down, or if there is a collision, give clear instructions to the passengers and see that children remain together and supervised: their safety is paramount. If there is a risk of fire, however small, evacuate the vehicle and move the occupants to a safe place.
- 2.9 If you have to stop for an emergency or breakdown whilst on a motorway, only stop on the hard shoulder, and as far away from the carriageway and passing traffic as possible. Again ensure that passengers, especially children, remain together and are supervised.
- 2.10 If requested by the police, or any other person having reasonable cause, give particulars of the driver's name and driving licence, and the name and address of the minibus operator or owner.

## **3. During the Journey**

- 3.1 Do not allow noisy or boisterous behaviour, or passengers to trail flags or any other article from the vehicle.
- 3.2 Enforce a 'No Smoking' rule. It is now a legal requirement that minibuses are 'No Smoking'
- 3.3 Enforce a 'No Alcohol' rule.
- 3.4 Do not allow child passengers to operate the doors, and supervise any operation of the doors by responsible persons.
- 3.5 Approach each stop slowly and with care.
- 3.6 Use hazard Warning Lights on school trips when children are boarding or leaving the vehicle.
- 3.7 If there is a serious delay during the journey inform the school or organisation so that information may be passed to parents. A mobile telephone is very useful for this purpose, but must not be used by the driver while driving.

#### **4. At the End of the Journey**

- 4.1 Ensure that passengers are supervised when leaving the vehicle, especially if they are using a rear exit.
- 4.2 Never allow passengers to leave until the vehicle is at a complete standstill, and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or other traffic free area, and the hand brake is engaged.
- 4.3 Always park so that passengers step onto the footway and not onto the road.
- 4.4 Take particular care when reversing the vehicle. Avoid unnecessary reversing, but if it is unavoidable, seek adult assistance for direction, and ensure the assistant does not stand directly behind the vehicle.
- 4.5 Children alighting from the vehicle should be closely supervised.
- 4.6 Do not leave children or vulnerable passengers alone if no one has arrived to collect them. Ensure you know what to do if a passenger is not collected.
- 4.7 Report any problems or incidents that occurred during the trip to the operator.

#### **5. Advice to Parents and Guardians**

- 5.1 Teaching road safety is one of the most important duties of a parent. It must include teaching children to behave properly when they use public transport. Minibuses are not places for play.
- 5.2 Please read and make sure you understand and agree to these guidelines before allowing your child to make a minibus journey.
- 5.3 Make sure your child is ready for collection at the proper time. Remember, it is your responsibility to ensure your child gets to and from the minibus safely. Make sure your child knows what to do if the minibus is late or does not arrive.
- 5.4 Wait with your child on the side of the road where the minibus stops. Make sure you stand on the side of the road where the minibus sets them down on the return journey. Always avoid calling your child across the road to you. Children are excited when they have just come back and traffic will be the last thing on their mind.
- 5.5 Make sure your child knows and understands the Green Cross Code. Young children cannot judge the speed or distance of traffic very well and must not be allowed to cross the road unaccompanied. Advice on safe crossing is available from your local Road Safety Officer located within the County Council.
- 5.6 Make sure that you, or another carer, are at the pre arranged meeting point when your child returns home, and have the telephone number of other parents, the school or other relevant contact person to pass on messages if required.
- 5.7 Make sure that both you and your child know the safest route home after leaving the minibus, and always use it.

- 5.8 Teach your child to act sensibly on or around minibuses. Make sure your child knows that bad behaviour on the minibus is dangerous and to listen to the driver's instructions.
- 5.9 Children should understand that misbehaviour may result in the minibus returning to its base, the child being taken to a place of safety and/or the minibus remaining stationary until the parents have collected the child.
- 5.10 Make sure that the person responsible for the minibus has up to date information about the child making the journey, including contact details for emergencies.
- 5.11 Make sure that the person responsible for the minibus has up to date information about any special requirements the child may have and relevant medical information in writing.
- 5.12 Giving medicine to passengers is not the responsibility of a driver or teacher and they should not give any medical treatment, other than immediate first aid. If your child needs to take medication during the trip, discuss this in advance with the trip organisers. It may be possible for them to take a medically qualified assistant on the journey, or to arrange for a medically qualified person to train a non- medically qualified assistant to give medication. They will need time, and written consent from the passenger's carer to make these arrangements.
- 5.13 If a child is going out on a school trip, provision must be made to ensure the child's health and safety.
- 5.14 Advise the driver if there is a particular difficulty with your child on a particular day. But it is your duty to decide whether your child should go on the journey in such circumstances. It is the parent's responsibility for assessing whether a child is fit to undertake the journey.
- 5.15 Vandalism caused by your child whilst on a journey, is your responsibility. Persistent offenders may not be accepted on future journeys. Unreasonable behaviour may endanger our own, or someone else's, child. Parents will be expected to reimburse the operator for any damage caused by their child.
- 5.16 Discuss and resolve any concerns you may have with the responsible person, e.g.: The Headteacher or group leader.

## **6. Advice for Children on Minibuses**

- 6.1 Go to the toilet before you get on the minibus. Arrive on time, and wait for the minibus away from the road.
- 6.2 Don't push or rush towards the minibus when it arrives.
- 6.3 Find a seat quickly and quietly without pushing and put on your seatbelt.
- 6.4 Make sure your bags are correctly stored so they do not block the gangways or take up seats.
- 6.5 Stay seated when the minibus is moving and keep your seat belt on at all times.
- 6.6 It's dangerous to kneel on your seat.
- 6.7 Only speak to the driver when he or she is not driving, or in an emergency. Speak to the passenger assistant (if there is one) rather than the driver.
- 6.8 If you need to use the toilet or you feel unwell during the journey, tell the passenger assistant, or the driver if the passenger assistant is not present.
- 6.9 Don't throw things or play about in the minibus.
- 6.10 Wait until the minibus has stopped and the driver has told you to undo your seatbelt before getting up to leave.
- 6.11 Take your belongings with you when you leave the minibus, except in an emergency when you should leave them behind.
- 6.12 Be careful, if you have forgotten something and you return to the minibus the driver may be pulling away. Tell the passenger assistant.
- 6.13 If you have to cross the road after getting off the minibus, wait for it to move away first. Use the Green Cross Code.

## **First Aid Kit and Other Equipment for Minibuses**

### **1 First Aid Kit**

- 10 antiseptic wipes, foil packed
- 1 conforming disposable bandage (not less than 7.5 cm wide)
- 2 triangular bandages
- 1 packet of 24 assorted adhesive dressings
- 3 large sterile unmedicated ambulance dressings (not less than 15 x 20 cm)
- 2 sterile eye pads with attachments
- 12 assorted safety pins
- 1 pair of rustproof blunt-ended scissors
- Disposable gloves
- Mouth mask for resuscitation.

Make sure that even minor uses of a first aid kit are recorded in an accident book, and that stock is replaced after use. Check that all items are 'in date' and replace any that have passed their expiry date.

### **2 Fire Extinguisher**

At least one fire extinguisher (two are recommended for accessible minibuses) which:

- Complies with BS 5432 (or an equivalent, e.g. BSEN 3), and
- Has a minimum test rating of 8A or 21B, and
- Contains foam (please note they must not contain Halon)

### **3 Other Equipment**

It is recommended that the following should also be carried:

- Pen and paper
- The organisation's internal instructions and contact details
- Insurance details
- Motoring breakdown policy details
- Mobile phone, phonecard or change for the phone
- Webbing cutter
- A high-visibility coat complying with BS EN 471 or BS EN ISO 20471
- An emergency warning triangle or a flashing beacon (not fitted to the vehicle)
- A working torch
- Sterile gloves and mouth masks.

## Appendix 1: Pre-drive Safety Check

Everyday the minibus is used, the driver should conduct a pre-drive safety check. This should be repeated whenever another driver takes over the vehicle, to check for visible defects, and items listed below:

Exterior Check	Ok	Not ok	Notes
Oil Level (once only at the start of the day)			
Coolant level (Once only at the start of the day)			
Windscreen washer fluid (Once daily at the start of the day)			
Brake Fluid Level (Once only at the start of the day)			
Windscreen and windows are clean and undamaged			
Wiper blades are clean and undamaged			
Exterior mirrors are correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed			
Lights, including brake light and indicators, are clean and working			
Tyre pressures, including the spare and inner tyres			
Tyre tread, including the spare and inner tyres, at least 3.0mm across centre $\frac{3}{4}$ is recommended			
Any cuts and/or bulges Doors open and close properly			
Lift/ramp (if fitted) works safely and is securely stowed			
Damage to bodywork or sharp edges			
Fluid leaks			

Interior Check	Ok	Not ok	Notes
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			
Pressure on Brake pedal			
Wipers and washers are working properly			
fuel level (and type of fuel: diesel or petrol)			
Heating and ventilation systems working			
All seats are fixed and secure and all seat belts are undamaged and working properly			
Location of wheel brace and jack			
Location and contents of first aid kit and fire extinguisher(s)			
Relevant paperwork (permit disc, insurance, MOT, emergency numbers and driving licence)			
Change for parking			
Luggage is securely stowed and aisles and exits are clear			
Damage or sharp edges			
Emergency equipment (Hi-Vis Jacket, torch, warning triangle, webbing cutter)			
All doors are unlocked			
Horn is in working order			
Interior lights are working			
No warning lights on the dashboard			

## **Brake Checks**

Check the brakes before passengers board.

With the engine running, check the handbrake is working properly, and that the brake pedal is firm when pressed.

Then conduct a moving brake test (off-road if possible). Reach a speed of no more than 15mph, 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.

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