



MINIBUS POLICY

The King's School runs a fleet of minibuses which help to provide pupils with access to school visits and residential, as well as to numerous other extra-curricular activities. It is important that everyone involved in the organisation, maintenance and driving of these minibuses is aware of all legal and procedural responsibilities pertaining to their use.

The aim of this policy is to:

- a) Provide clear procedures relating to the use of the school minibuses
- b) Ensure that all users of the school minibuses are aware of their legal responsibilities.

This policy refers to the use of school minibuses within the UK. If a minibus is to be used in other countries within the European Union, the driver should inform the Premises Manager when the journey is being planned so that the requisite regulations can be adhered to.

1 Responsibilities

1.1 The Headteacher is responsible for this policy and its implementation.

1.2 The Premises Manager is responsible for ensuring that all vehicles are kept roadworthy, clean and safe, engaging the services of the appointed dealership, as necessary.

1.3 The School will:

- Ensure that the minibuses are maintained in a roadworthy condition, are regularly serviced and full records kept up-to-date.
- ensure that the minibuses are not used until defects which have safety implications are rectified
- ensure that the proper insurance, licences, registration and permits are held and kept up to date
- ensure that all new minibuses are equipped with seat belts and conform to the relevant legislation
- ensure that the appropriate fire extinguisher and first aid kit are supplied for each minibus
- maintain a list of authorised drivers and arrange for minibus tests where required.

1.4 The School will **not**:

- pay fines for parking, speeding or other motoring offences.
- provide legal support for staff charged with the above.

2 Maintenance and Servicing

2.1 The Premises Manager is responsible for ensuring that there is proper and adequate maintenance of the minibuses and that they are serviced, by an approved contractor, in accordance with the manufacturer's specification. Records of all maintenance work are kept.

2.2 A Maintenance and Premises Officer conducts a weekly inspection of all vehicles (see Appendix C), and notes in the Log Sheet (stored in each minibus) that this has been done.

2.3 On receipt of a defect report from a driver, the Premises Manager examines the vehicle to determine, as far as is possible, the nature of the defect and decides whether to effect a repair or to refer the matter to an approved contractor.

- 2.4 If the defect renders the vehicle unroadworthy the keys are withdrawn, and the Log Sheet and Minibus Booking Log marked accordingly.
- 2.5 Following repair and return to service, the appropriate entry is made on the Log Sheet.
- 2.6 The fire extinguisher for each minibus is serviced annually by an approved contractor.
- 2.7 The Premises Manager liaises with Pupil Reception to ensure that the first aid kit comprises the appropriate supplies and that, when used, it is replenished.

3 MOT Certificate

- 3.1 The Premises Manager is responsible for ensuring that, where it is required, a current MOT Certificate is held for each minibus.

4 Permission to drive a minibus

- 4.1 Any member of staff or appropriate adult, aged between 21 and 65, may ask/be invited to become a recognised minibus driver. (S)he needs to have held an appropriate car licence for at least 12 months. (S)he needs to be over 25 to be able to drive abroad. Any colleague wishing to become a minibus driver should contact the Premises Manager.
- 4.2 Drivers must be medically fit to drive. All drivers are legally required to inform the DVLA of any medical condition that affects their ability to drive.
- 4.3 All drivers are required to have passed a minibus test, conducted on behalf of the Board of Governors, by an appointed and approved assessor, a fully qualified driving instructor. Any potential driver, who has not driven a minibus before, will be required to undertake tuition, paid for out of the School's CPD budget, until the assessor is satisfied with their performance. This tuition will be for a minimum of one lesson.
- 4.4 A driver who fails a minibus test is required to retake it successfully, before permission to drive is granted. Any driver involved in more than one driving incident in any one year is required to retake a test.
- 4.5 No driver may drive a minibus, if they have any of the following against their name:
 - more than 6 penalty points on their licence
 - any drink/drive endorsements
 - a driving ban within the last 5 years
 - more than one current speeding endorsement.
- 4.6 Drivers are required to inform the Premises Manager immediately if they are subject to any of the above, either when they apply to drive a minibus or when the unfortunate event occurs. New drivers are required, at the latest on the day of their test, to sign a form informing the Board of Governors of which, if any, of these apply, and to present their driving licence.
- 4.7 Permission to drive expires four years from the date of the test. A further test must be taken if a driver wishes to remain an authorised minibus driver. This will be arranged by the manager of the school shop.
- 4.8 A driver needs to re-take a test, if they wish to continue to drive beyond their 65th birthday.

5 Authorisation to Drive

- 5.1 Before any person can be authorised to drive a School vehicle the relevant insurance declaration form must be completed and submitted to the Finance Manager.
- 5.2 Once on the authorised drivers' list, drivers are obliged to advise the Finance Manager of any change in circumstances which may have a bearing on their insurability. This will include notification of any motoring offences and the production of a driving licence, if requested.
- 5.3 Use of a minibus will not be considered to be 'Authorised' unless the Minibus Booking Log in the Premises Office has been properly completed in advance.

6 Driver Impairment

- 6.1 Drivers can be impaired by a number of factors, each of which can reduce their ability to drive safely and increase the risk of accident.
- 6.2 Alcohol reduces the ability to concentrate and increases the risk of being involved in an accident. Alcohol remains in the body for up to 24 hours after it has been consumed and may still affect a driver the morning afterwards. Drivers must not drive having consumed alcohol.
- 6.3 Drivers should never drive if they feel tired or unwell, or if they are taking prescription or over-the counter medicine or undergoing any medical treatment which advises against driving. Where appropriate, they should consult their doctor or pharmacist for an alternative that does not cause drowsiness.
- 6.4 As well as being illegal, taking illicit drugs can seriously affect a driver's judgement and abilities. Many drugs remain in the body for much longer periods than alcohol. Drivers must not drive if under the influence of drugs or medication that may inhibit the ability to drive.
- 6.5 Drivers should avoid staying up late or reducing their normal sleep before a long journey.
- 6.6 Tired drivers are much more likely to have an accident, and the crash is likely to be severe because a drowsy or sleeping driver does not usually brake or swerve before the impact. Drivers who drive for more than two hours after a day's work are significantly more likely to be involved in an accident.

7 Booking Procedure

- 7.1 A Minibus Booking Log is kept in the Premises Office. Booked use will take priority over unbooked use. Usage is monitored by the Premises Manager, and charged monthly by the Assistant Finance Manager.
- 7.2 Enter the details of the journey proposed, including the intended driver and start and finish times.
- 7.3 There may be another booking following on from the booked journey so drivers should return the minibus on time.
- 7.4 Keys are to be collected from the Premises Office immediately before use and returned immediately after use. If, however, the vehicle is thought to have a potentially hazardous defect (see Appendix A), the keys should be returned to the Premises Office and the Log Book so marked, and the Premises Manager notified.
- 7.5 The fuel card is kept on the key ring.
- 7.6 Minibuses should always be returned clean and at least half-full of fuel and REVERSED into place in the Sports Hall car-park.

8 Fuel

- 8.1 Fuel cards may be used to refuel vehicles belonging to the School in connection with official and properly authorised activities.
- 8.2 The use of a fuel card to refuel a private vehicle is forbidden and doing so may lead to disciplinary action.
- 8.3 Receipts for fuel purchased must be returned to the Finance Office immediately after the journey
- 8.4 If the driver is not in possession of a fuel card, for whatever reason, and refuelling is required (s)he must complete the purchase from their own resources. Full VAT receipts for the fuel purchased must be returned to the Finance Office in order that reimbursement can be arranged.

9 Safety

- 9.1 When taking charge of a minibus, drivers must satisfy themselves that the vehicle is in a fit condition for use (see Appendix B).
- 9.2 Before the driver starts each journey (s)he must make sure that these checks have been completed, as it is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition.
- 9.3 If the minibus is away overnight, these tests should be carried out each day.
- 9.4 If faults that might affect the vehicle's or passengers' safety are found, the vehicle **must not** be used and the Premises Manager should be informed immediately.

10 Documents

- 10.1 Photocopies of the following documents are to be kept in the minibus:
 - Current MOT certificate (where appropriate)
 - Insurance certificate
 - Registration documents

11 Log Sheet

- 11.1 A Log Sheet is kept in each vehicle and must be filled in by every driver.
- 11.2 It is not acceptable to ignore the Log Sheet just because the journey is very short.
- 11.3 On a trip of several days' duration, the Log Sheet should be completed at the end of each day and started again on the next day.

12 Wheelchair users

- 12.1 The organising teacher will notify the Trips Co-ordinator that a wheelchair user will be on a school trip. The Trips Co-ordinator will arrange for the minibus to be suitably modified.

13 Code of conduct for students

- 13.1 Arrive on time, and wait for the minibus away from the road.
- 13.2 Do not rush or push when entering or leaving the vehicle.

- 13.3 Find a seat quickly and quietly.
- 13.4 Stow any luggage where it will not block access to the doors at the rear and sides of the vehicle or cause danger to others
- 13.5 Wear seat belts.
- 13.6 Stay seated when the minibus is moving.
- 13.7 Only speak to the driver when (s)he is not driving, or in an emergency. Distracting the driver can be very dangerous.
- 13.8 Never throw things or play about in the minibus; never ever throw things out of the minibus window as you could cause other drivers to have an accident.
- 13.9 Wait until the vehicle has stopped before getting up to leave.
- 13.10 Make sure that you have all your belongings when you leave the bus and ensure that the minibus is left tidy for the next user
- 13.11 Do not drop litter.
- 13.12 No food or drink may be consumed in the minibus.
- 13.13 If the vehicle breaks down, or is involved in an accident, follow the instructions given to you by the driver.
- 13.14 Behave sensibly and safely at all times.

14 Individual drivers' responsibilities

- 14.1 Understand that they are legally responsible for the condition and safe use of the vehicle, and the safety of the passengers.
- 14.2 Ensure that they meet the licensing requirements for driving the vehicle.
- 14.3 Follow the Minibus Policy for each journey.
- 14.4 Plan all journeys for the conditions, for example distance and weather, so as to ensure everyone's safety and comfort.
- 14.5 Drivers should check information on roadworks and weather conditions that may affect their route, before they set out. If possible, plan an alternative route to avoid any major delays.
- 14.6 Be clear about the route to be followed. A suitable route should include places for rest, refreshment, comfort breaks and re-fuelling, if necessary.
- 14.7 Confirm the number of pupils who are travelling in the minibus before setting off, and check the same on any stops and the return journey.
- 14.8 Ensure that the maximum permitted number of passengers and the overall weight limit are not exceeded.
- 14.9 Ensure that seat belts are worn correctly at all times. This is a legal requirement. It is the driver's responsibility to check this.

- 14.10 A pupil under 135 cm tall sitting on the front seat of the minibus should use a booster seat if one is available. If one is not available the pupil should use the ordinary adult seat belt.
- 14.11 Ensure that all luggage or other material is loaded securely in a safe manner and that it presents no danger to occupants of the minibus or to other road users.
- 14.12 Ensure that all current road traffic legislation is observed.
- 14.13 Ensure that they are properly rested before starting a journey, plan appropriate rest stops and, where required, carry a relief driver.
- 14.14 Ensure that they always park so that pupils alight on the footway and not on the carriageway.
- 14.15 Ensure that they know how to use a fire extinguisher.
- 14.16 Ensure that adequate supervision is provided for pupils with Special Educational Needs.
- 14.17 Be aware of any disability a student has, and any difficulty (s)he might have as a result.
- 14.18 If there is a risk of fire, however small, evacuate the vehicle and move occupants to a safe place.
- 14.19 Supervise all pupils when leaving the vehicle, especially when using the rear exit. No pupil may operate minibus doors.
- 14.20 Never leave children alone in a minibus or at school after a trip, if no one has come to collect them.
- 14.21 Ensure that the minibus is kept clean and tidy and that all litter is cleaned up after each trip.
- 14.22 Report any conviction for traffic offences within 24 hours to the Premises Manager.
- 14.23 Report any accident or incident directly to the Premises Manager, **IMMEDIATELY**.
- 14.24 Report any vehicle deficiencies on the Log Sheet, kept in the minibus.
- 14.25 Be familiar with breakdown, fire and accident procedures, and with the petrol/diesel fuel arrangements.
- 14.26 Ensure that doors are always shut in transit.
- 14.27 DO NOT leave the vehicle unattended, with the engine running or with keys in the ignition.
- 14.28 Keep to speed limits at all times, including 5mph on school premises.
- 14.29 Always carry a mobile phone.
- 14.30 Drivers **must not**
- Use a mobile phone while driving. If the driver has to use the mobile phone, (s)he must stop the minibus first in a safe place.
 - Be distracted whilst driving, for example eating or drinking, tuning a radio/CD, reading a map, writing, holding conversations with the pupils unrelated to the task of driving.

- Allow any smoking, alcohol, eating or drinking, standing or moving around in the bus. If at any time the pupils distract the driver, (s)he should stop the minibus, when it is appropriate to do so, until the pupils are settled.
- Carry spare fuel cans inside the minibus
- Break the regulations on drivers' hours:
 - a break of 45 mins must be taken after 2.5 hours' continuous driving
 - no longer than 7.5 hrs driving before a prolonged rest (prolonged = 10hrs +)
 - no more than 48 hrs driving in any consecutive 7 days
 - no more than 90 hrs driving in any consecutive 14 days
 - at least 24 hrs driving-free per week.

Without providing hard and fast rules regarding driving times, it is strongly recommended that:

- For journeys which take place at the end of the school day and which are anticipated to return late at night, and for long journeys of 50 miles or more, careful consideration should be given to the provision of two drivers who can share the journey.
- Staff who have experienced a heavy teaching load during the course of the day should not be expected to start a journey at the end of the school day without first having taken some refreshment.
- All drivers should take regular short breaks during the course of long journeys.
- Teachers proposing to drive at the end of a full working day must check with the Premises Manager in advance that their plan meets the demands of sensible practice. A 'rule of thumb' is that a theatre trip to Cambridge is probably all right, but a similar trip to London is certainly not.
- Unless these drivers' hours' regulations can be met, an alternative to the minibus should be used.

15 Accident Procedure

In the case of an accident, the driver should:

- 1) stop
- 2) call emergency services for injured passengers
- 3) make accident scene safe for uninjured passengers – use hazard lights
- 4) seek independent witnesses
- 5) exchange drivers' and owners' name, addresses and insurance details
- 6) report to the Premises Manager, the member of SLT overseeing the trip, the Headteacher or, if unavailable, another member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- 7) report any injury to the Police within 24 hours
- 8) complete a report form and give it to the Premises

16 Fire Procedure

In the case of a fire, the driver should:

- 1) park the vehicle as safely as possible, turn off the ignition, apply the handbrake.
- 2) escort passengers to safety, away from the vehicle and the highway
- 3) call the Fire Brigade
- 4) take no personal risk, but use fire-extinguisher if (s)he can
- 5) **not** wander onto the highway.

17 Breakdown Procedure

In the case of a breakdown, the driver should:

- 1) ensure the safety of passengers and vehicle
- 2) call the Breakdown Service, using the card provided
- 3) call the Headteacher or, if unavailable, a member of SLT.

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Appendix A - Reportable Defects

- Defects to steering, brakes, clutch, tyres.
- Damage to swept portion of windscreen.
- Damage to doors which prevents their secure closure or which prevents them from being opened easily, as intended by the manufacturer.
- Damage to the bodywork which results in loose panels or jagged projections.
- Damage to bodywork which results in restriction to steering lock or which otherwise results in contact with a tyre.
- Insecure seat(s).
- Engine oil light failing to extinguish within five seconds.
- Abnormal noise from engine, gearbox or rear axle.
- Difficulty in changing gear or clutch slip.
- Failure of lights or indicators.
- Defect to windscreen wipers which impairs their inability to clear the windscreen.
- Inoperable seat belts.
- Any other defect which the driver believes requires attention.

Appendix B – Driver’s Pre-Journey Checks

Exterior Check

- Walk around the vehicle to check for visible defects.

Tyre Check

- Tyres should be correctly inflated and not damaged.

Brake Check

- Brakes should be checked before loading passengers.

Interior Check

- Make sure that the driver’s seat is correct so that all pedals and controls can be operated comfortably.
- Check mirrors are adjusted correctly and are clean and unobstructed.
- Check that the wipers and washers are working properly.
- Check lights and indicators work.
- Seat belts must be worn by all passengers (staff and students).
- Check that the First Aid kit and fire extinguisher are present and are easily accessible in the event of an emergency.
- Check the fuel level to ensure that there is sufficient for the journey.

Appendix C – Maintenance and Premises Officer’s Weekly Checks

Tyres

Are they inflated to the correct pressure, with sufficient tread and free from cuts or other damage? Checks should include the spare tyre.

Lights

Are they clean, adjusted properly and in working order? Vehicles should carry spare bulbs and fuses which are easily accessible.

Windscreen

Is the windscreen clear, the wipers working, the blades free from excessive wear and cuts? Is the windscreen washer full, functioning and containing a suitable additive to prevent it freezing during winter months?

Oil/Coolant

Brakes, power steering, engine oil – are the fluid levels correct?

No fluids are to be added until it has been verified that they are in accordance with the manufacturer's specification.

Mirrors

Are they adjusted to enable the driver to see clearly behind him/her?

Body

Exterior – general condition, doors, mirrors, fuel filler cap. Is a car wash required?

Interior – seat mountings, seat belts, interior rear-view mirror, general tidiness and condition

Controls – check for unusual play/wear.

Any serious defect which affects the roadworthiness of the minibus should be reported to the Premises Manager as soon as possible. The keys should be withdrawn and the vehicle must not be used to transport staff or pupils until the defect has been rectified.

Appendix D - Checklist

A) Checklist for pack in each minibus

- Emergency contact details on little plastic card.
- Insurance details, copy of MOT certificate.
- Breakdown (AA), fire and accident policy details, as well as a copy of the Minibus Policy.
- High visibility coat BS EN 471.
- Warning triangle.
- Torch in working order with batteries, but necessarily in).
- Fire extinguisher.
- First Aid Kit (including sanitary towel pack).
- Clipboard with log sheet for mileage and defects sheet; pen attached.

B) Each minibus should DISPLAY internally or externally:

- Maximum passenger numbers
- Tyre pressures over each wheel-arch
- School name and telephone number
- Speed limits from the Highway Code, 5mph on school premises.