



Mid Essex Anglican Academy Trust



To unlock every child's potential as a unique child of God

**Respect – Forgiveness – Trust – Responsibility – Thankfulness – Justice –
Humility**

MINIBUS POLICY

Ratified by: Chair of Trustees

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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy is designed to make journeys in a minibus as safe as possible. It is recognised that no matter how safe the procedures, accidents are still possible (the majority of which involve human error).

Following these procedures will help protect the driver, the passengers and the school in the event of an accident or other minibus related incident as well as help prevent the occurrence of these in the first place.

Following the procedures and advice contained here is mandatory on any person using the school minibus. Every person is directly accountable to the Head teacher or Head of School.

2. DRIVERS

Each use of the minibus must be approved by the Head teacher/Head of School or Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) (or another member of SLT or the School Business Manager when he/she is not available).

All trips will be logged recording the purpose of the journey, the mileage completed and names/number of pupils on the journey.

- Any person wishing to gain **approved driver status** to drive on behalf of the School must have satisfactorily completed an approved assessment and training course. Each driver must be at least 25 years of age and be medically fit to drive. Each driver who qualified before 1 January 1997 must hold a current driving licence which is free from endorsements and registered for D1. Drivers who gained their licence after this date will need to have category D1 PCV added to their licence and may not drive any vehicle with a gross weight exceeding 3500 kg. These documents must be given to the School Business Manager for approval. It is the duty of any driver to inform the Head teacher/Head of School/EVC if there are any changes to their driving licence or health in relation to their ability to drive as soon as that happens. If these conditions have not been fulfilled, the driver will be uninsured and driving illegally.
- A **reassessment** of all drivers approved to drive the vehicle will be carried out on a periodic basis. In addition, drivers who have not driven the minibus for a while should request a familiarisation and assessment when they feel they need it.
- An appropriately designed **log** will be maintained in the school main office that will record driver's name, the purpose and destination of the journey, date of travel and who approved journey.
- All drivers and minibus staff must read and follow the control measures in the generic **risk assessment** before each journey. The generic risk assessment is suitable for most general circumstances. Risk assessment is a dynamic process and the driver and other staff must be alert to other risks and plan additional control measures as appropriate. If these can be

anticipated in advance a new written risk assessment should be produced. An example of on the spot risk assessment could be responding to exceptional road or weather conditions by modifying your journey plan.

- The minibus must not be used for **hire or reward** and the driver must receive no payment or other consideration other than approved out-of-pocket expenses.
- Drivers must not be under the influence of **alcohol or drugs** and **alcohol** must not be consumed within 14 hours prior to driving or while driving.
- A **Mobile** phone must be available in the minibus but must not be used by the driver while driving. A school mobile can be booked out from the main office.
- Drivers must not drive when they are taking **medicines** that carry a warning regarding driving or when they feel affected in a way that impairs driving.
- Drivers must not drive when they feel **tired or unwell**.
- No **fuel cans** may be carried in the minibus.
- When possible, the driver will have another adult with them at all times to supervise children, support in the event of an accident, assist with getting off minibus safely, etc. (If only a small number of children are being taken, the driver may take them by themselves if another adult is not available.) The maximum number of children to be taken by one adult is 15 and this is only if the adult is confident that they are able to manage this number – if any doubt exists, speak to the Head teacher/Head of School/EVC and arrange for an additional adult to join to support the trip.

3. JOURNEY AND SAFE DRIVING HOURS

- Drivers should never do a **day's work** or be awake for a day and then drive for several hours in the evening. Drivers who drive for more than 2 hours after a day's work are significantly more likely to be involved in an accident.
- **Consecutive days on duty** must be assessed in terms of risk while driving.
- Drivers must not be required to supervise students during their **break**.
- **Maximum driving time** is 2 hours and then a **break** of a minimum 15 minutes is required.
- Drivers must not ignore being **too tired** to drive safely. Two hours maximum driving between breaks is not a goal, but a limit for alert drivers. Tired drivers must stop and take appropriate action to recover or seek help. Driving with open windows or putting on air conditioning is not appropriate.
- If the driver is **only driving** and doing no other work, his/her working day must not exceed 13 hours of which no more than 9 hours should be spent driving.

- If the driver is **working at other work and driving**, the combined must not exceed 10 hours and the driving must not exceed 4 hours.
- **Journey planning** is important and considerably reduces risks.
- Drivers should avoid staying up late and having **normal sleep** interrupted.
- A **second driver** is often useful for safety and on long journeys it is essential.
- Stick to all **speed** restrictions and do not exceed 70 mph on motorways (60 mph if the minibus is longer than 12 metres).

Speed limits that apply to minibuses:

Built up roads	30 mph (Unless signed otherwise)
Single Carriageway	50 mph (Unless signed otherwise)
Dual Carriageway	60 mph (Unless signed otherwise)
Motorway	70 mph (Unless signed otherwise)
Motorway	60 mph (if minibus is longer than 12 metres)

4. DRIVERS' RESPONSIBILITIES & SAFETY ROUTINES FOR EACH JOURNEY

- Be familiar with this minibus policy.
- Read the minibus generic risk assessment, or the extended version you have produced to include additional hazards, and check that all other staff have also done so.
- Consider additional risks that may have come to light since the risk assessment was produced and continue to do this during the journey.
- Complete the 'pre drive safety check' sheet.
- Log the journey details.
- Ensure the school office are aware of which pupils are offsite.
- Make sure you are familiar with the 'Additional Advice to Drivers'.
- Ensure no animals are transported (other than guide dogs where required).
- Know the location of wheel brace and jack.
- Know the location and contents of first aid kit and fire extinguisher(s).

On completing the journey:

- Report any problems with the vehicle to the School Business Manager.
- Ensure the bus is left in a clean condition. If necessary, report the need for a thorough valet clean to the School Business Manager.

5. ACCIDENT GUIDANCE

In the event of an accident/incident inform the school immediately you are able. To assist you in the possible confusion after an accident a checklist has been prepared:

1. Stop - it is an offence not to stop after an accident.
2. Switch off the vehicle engine. Ask others involved to do the same.
3. Ensure your passengers are safe from other hazards. If passengers are uninjured get them to leave the vehicle and go to a place of safety. Ensure students are supervised. Do not leave students unattended after an accident.
4. Make sure no one smokes near the accident site.
5. Warn other road users of the danger.
6. Contact Police and, if anyone is injured, the emergency services by dialling 999.
7. Administer First Aid if required and if you are able.
8. Do not move casualties unless absolutely necessary.
9. Do not move the vehicles involved (unless they are a danger to traffic) until the police arrive or if they are not attending, until an independent person has noted their position.
10. Give your name and address, the registration number and in case of personal injury, insurance particulars to any person having reasonable grounds for requiring them. Should, for any reason, the particulars not be given at the time of the accident then the circumstances must be reported to the Police as soon as possible and in any case within 24 hours.
11. Obtain from the other person(s) involved in the accident/incident their name, address and registration number of their vehicle and insurance details.
12. If there are any witnesses to the accident, obtain their name(s) and address(es).
13. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ADMIT LIABILITY FOR THE ACCIDENT/INCIDENT
14. Ensure accident report form is completed as soon as possible and submitted to the School Business Manager.

6. BREAKDOWN GUIDANCE

The driver's first responsibility is the health and safety of his/her passengers and then to minimise any disruption, discomfort, to his/her passengers. This is particularly important if any passengers are disabled. Move passengers out of the nearside of the minibus and as far away from traffic as possible. Do not let anyone stand behind the minibus. On motorways or other busy road, take the passengers onto the embankment or grass margin and as far from the traffic as possible. Use warning triangles, however not on a motorway. In some circumstances, it is safer to leave passengers in the minibus. For example if it seems too dangerous to unload passengers in wheelchairs or if there is not a safe waiting area. Keep passengers together in one group and under supervision. Do not allow child passengers to assist with repairing or restarting the minibus and never allow them to push the minibus. Drivers are also responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and security of the vehicle and, having reported the breakdown. If necessary, go for help, leaving the passengers with the passenger assistant, but if you are the only adult present, do not leave children alone. Give the police or breakdown service accurate details of the location and let the operator know if children or passengers with mobility problems are being carried. After calling for help, telephone you contact to tell them what has happened and ask them to relay the message to parents and others. Frequent roll calls are important and the weather must be assessed as an additional safety hazard and sensible controls put in place to deal with this.

7. DISASTER ON AN EXCURSION – GUIDANCE

1. Establish the nature and extent of the emergency.
2. Make sure all other members of the party are accounted for and are safe (i.e. carry out ahead count). Remember you must carry with you a list of the members of your party.
3. Call the appropriate emergency services. If there are injuries, establish their extent and administer appropriate first aid if you have been trained and feel capable. Be aware of consequences that might follow were you to give incorrect treatment. Have regard to your own safety vis-à-vis blood contact.
4. Advise other party staff of the incident and of actions taken. Decide if appropriate, who is in charge and responsibilities to be undertaken by each adult member of the group. If appropriate, contact the school and inform them.
5. Ensure that an adult accompanies any casualties to hospital. If only one adult is available in the circumstances a decision will have to be reached as to the best course of action.
6. Ensure that remaining students are adequately supervised and arrange for an early return to base.
7. Arrange for one adult to remain at the site of the incident to liaise with the emergency services until the incident is over and all students are accounted for.
8. Contact the senior members of staff on call. This should be arranged before the journey and a manned telephone number should be recorded on each Staff Offsite Safety card. Control access to telephones until the senior member of staff has contacted parents/others directly involved. Give full details of the incident including:
 - Nature, date, location and time of incident
 - Details of injuries, etc.
 - Names and home telephone numbers of those involved
 - Action taken so far
 - Telephone numbers for future communication
9. Do not discuss matters with the media.
10. The senior member of staff should contact the Head teacher/Head of School and

establish who will take charge of the situation and what immediate action will be taken. The Head teacher/Head of School will advise the Local Authority.

11. The party leader should, at the first opportunity, make notes on the incident, as should other people involved. A record should be kept of the names and addresses of any witnesses or people involved.
12. Do not discuss legal liability.
13. Ensure accident forms are completed as soon as possible.
14. Inform parents of any delays that will be necessitated.

SOURCES - Elements of this policy have been included or adapted from a document on minibus safety produced by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

8. ADDITIONAL ADVICE FOR MINIBUS DRIVERS

On journeys where an escort is present, the items below should be divided between the driver and escort, with the driver concentrating on those tasks which directly relate to driving the vehicle.

Before Setting off

- Allow sufficient time for the journey.
- Avoid long spells of driving, and plan breaks to ensure you are fresh to continue and that students do not get restless.
- Conduct a pre-drive safety check before every journey.
- Passengers should only board the minibus from a safe point.
- Never allow passengers to board until the vehicle is at a complete standstill, and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or other traffic free area. If you need to leave the vehicle to assist passengers boarding ensure that you switch off the engine.
- Passengers should enter the minibus from the pavement adjacent to the bus, not from the road itself.
- Ensure that students are supervised when boarding the vehicle, especially if they are using a rear door. Plan which passenger will sit in the front seat and by the doors.
- Do not exceed the carrying capacity of the minibus. Make sure everyone is sitting, one to a seat, and that passengers are using belts.
- Always ensure that ambulant disabled passengers are seated and comfortable and that passengers travelling in their wheelchair are safely restrained. Wheelchairs not in use must also be securely stored.
- Make sure there is a complete list of passengers being carried with a note of any special medical or other needs. Keep the list with other relevant documents in a place where it can be readily found in the event of an accident. Check that students have any necessary medication with them.
- 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.
- Check that all luggage is secured, and that gangways and exits are clear.
- Know the height, width, length and weight of the vehicle, and the position of the exterior fuel cap.
- Ensure all passengers are wearing their seatbelt correctly.
- Ensure weight limits are not exceeded and that weight is evenly distributed.

During the Journey

- Do not allow noisy or boisterous behaviour, or passengers to trail flags or any other article from the vehicle.
- Do not allow child passengers to operate the doors, and supervise any operation of the doors by responsible persons.
- Approach each stop slowly and with care.
- Use hazard warning lights on school trips when students are boarding or leaving the vehicle.
- If there is a delay during the journey inform school/lodge so that information may be passed to parents. A mobile phone is essential for this purpose, but must not be used by the driver while driving.
- Students must not be left unaccompanied in the minibus.
- If the vehicle breaks down, or if there is an accident, give clear instructions to the passengers and see that students 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.
- 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 students, remain together and are supervised.
- If requested by the police, or any other person having reasonable cause, give the driver's name and show their driving licence, along with the name and address of the minibus operator or owner.

At the End of the Journey

- Ensure that students are supervised when leaving the vehicle, especially if they are using a rear exit.
- 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.
- Always park so that passengers step onto the footway and not onto the road.
- Take particular care when reversing the vehicle if students are nearby. Avoid unnecessary reversing, but if it is unavoidable, seek adult assistance for directions, but ensure the assistant does not stand directly behind the vehicle.
- Do not leave students alone if no one has arrived to collect them. Ensure you know what to do if a child is not collected.
- Report any problems or incidents that occurred during the trip to the Head of School / EVC.

9. PRE-DRIVE SAFETY CHECKS

The School Business Manager will ensure that the vehicle is regularly serviced and maintained. However, before every journey the driver should conduct a pre-drive safety check by walking around the vehicle paying particular attention to the items listed below.

EXTERIOR CHECK			INTERIOR CHECK		
	OK	Not OK		OK	Not OK
Windscreen washer fluid level(once only at start of day)			Risk Assessment has been read by the driver and other staff.		
Windscreen and windows are clean and undamaged			Record mileage in green book(stored in main office)		
Wiper blades are clean and undamaged			Mirrors are correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed.		
Lights, brake lights & indicators, are clean and working			Position and function/purpose of all the dashboard controls are known		
Visually check tyre pressures.			Position of driving seat is adjusted so that all controls can be operated comfortably		
Visually check tyre treads. At least 3.0mm across centre ¾ is the accepted standard.			Check for pressure on brake pedal and check operation.		
Any cuts and bulges?			Washers and wipers working properly.		
Doors open and close properly			Fuel level and type of fuel: diesel or petrol has been checked.		
No visible damage or sharp edges			Seat belts, are undamaged and working properly		
			No visible damage or sharp edges		
			Luggage is securely stowed, and aisles and exits are clear		
			Mobile phone available		
			First Aid box in vehicle		

Any defects which may affect the vehicles or passengers' safety should be reported immediately and the vehicle must not be used until they are all remedied.

NAME SIGNATURE DATE