



Minibus Policy

Date Approved: Spring 2024

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Approved By: Strategic Board

Blidworth Oaks Primary School recognise their responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASWA) to ensure that arrangements are in place to carry out our activities in such a way as to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare of our employees, pupils and all persons likely to be affected by our activities, including the general public where appropriate.

We will co-operate and co-ordinate with Partnerships, Contractors, Sub-Contractors, Employers, and the occupiers of premises and land where we are commissioned to work in order to pursue our Health & Safety Policy aims.

The Governing body will actively work with the Head teacher and staff to identify hazards and where these cannot be removed, ensure that they are adequately controlled.

Our aims are to

- Provide and maintain a safe and healthy working and learning environment ensuring the welfare of all persons
- Maintain control of Health & Safety risks arising from our activities
- Comply with statutory requirements as a minimum standard of safety
- Consult with all staff on matters affecting their health, safety and welfare
- Provide and maintain safe systems, equipment and machinery
- Ensure safe handling, storage and use of substances
- Provide appropriate information, instruction and supervision for everyone
- Ensure staff are suitably trained and competent to do their work safely
- Continually develop a safety culture to remove or reduce the possibility of accidents, injuries and ill-health
- Assess risks, record significant findings and monitor safety arrangements
- Review and revise safety policies and procedures periodically and when circumstances may introduce a requirement to amend or improve arrangements
- Develop and maintain a positive Health & Safety culture through regular communication and consultation with employees and their representatives on Health & Safety matters

Our Health & Safety Management System has been developed to ensure that the above commitments can be met. All Staff, Governors and volunteers will be instrumental in its implementation.

Policy: The Head Teacher will monitor and periodically review the 'Minibus Policy' to incorporate changes which affect it. Where statute changes, such changes will apply regardless of whether the policy wording has been updated and legal advice will be sought on interpreting the law if needed.

What is a Minibus and who can drive one?

1. A minibus is a motor vehicle with between 9 and 16 passenger seats and it is described as a category D1 vehicle by the Driving Vehicle Licencing Authority.
2. Drivers who hold a full D1 (or D) PCV entitlement can drive minibuses for hire or reward.
3. There are, however, circumstances when a driver can drive a minibus within the UK when they hold a car (category B) licence. These circumstances vary depending on when the driver passed their car driving test. These arrangements only apply when driving the minibus in the UK not if driving abroad. If you passed your category B (car) driving test before 1 January 1997, you can drive a minibus that is not being used for hire or reward as these licences automatically include category D1 (101) (not for hire or reward) entitlement
4. This means school staff with such a licence can drive a minibus carrying up to 16 passengers with no maximum weight restriction on the vehicle. Drivers with a D1 + E (101) (not for hire or reward) entitlement can tow a trailer over 750kg.
5. If you passed your category B driving test on or after 1 January 1997, you may drive a minibus that is not being used for hire and reward if the following conditions are met.
 - You are over 21 and have held a category B licence for at least 2 years.
 - The minibus is used by a non-commercial body for social purposes.
 - You receive no payment other than the recovery of your out of pocket expenses (e.g. fuel and parking costs)
 - You provide the service on a voluntary basis.
 - The gross vehicle weight of the minibus is not more than 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes if including any specialist equipment to carry disabled passengers)
 - You do not tow a trailer.
6. The driver's seat does not count for these purposes.
7. Drivers who have renewed their licence (e.g. when a photo licence is issued) should check that this entitlement has been retained.
8. Maintained schools, Free Schools and academies are considered non-commercial bodies, as are independent schools holding charitable status.

9. The weight of the vehicle (sometimes known as the Maximum Authorised Mass or MAM) is shown on a metal or plastic plate situated in the engine shell or on a door pillar.

Minibus Purchase Policy Blidworth Oaks Primary School will only purchase 'light' minibus where the gross vehicle weight is not more than 3.5 tonnes (3500 kg) or not more than 4.25 tonnes (4250 kg) with equipment to carry disabled passengers which is installed. Drivers can normally drive this type of minibus on a full UK car driving licence (see below) provided it is within the above limits. The only exemption is if the entitlement to drive a minibus has subsequently been removed by the DVLA.

The driving licence entitlements will be routinely checked online by the school, with the permission of the driver, when they first volunteer to be added to the list of approved drivers and every 12 months thereafter. Any change to the entitlements is a material fact that a staff volunteer or other volunteer is required to disclose, without delay to the Head teacher.

This can be done at:

<https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence> and <https://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information>

These internet pages require the driving licence number, driver's national insurance number and the postcode of the driving licence to be entered (with the driver or the driver's permission). It is the volunteer driver's responsibility to ensure DVLA has the correct address and postcode.

General checks on driving entitlements, without the need for specific personal information, can be made at:

<https://www.gov.uk/vehicles-can-drive>

Department for Transport (DfT) non-statutory advice published, jointly produced with the DfT and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), in August 2013 states that, where an employee is not paid an additional amount for driving the minibus, and where the employee's contract of employment does not mention driving as part of his or her duties, they would be considered to be driving the minibus 'voluntarily' and for no payment.

Driving Licence check procedure

1. Go to web page-
<https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence>
2. Click on Start
3. Fill in required fields
4. Tick agree box.
5. Click on View Now.
6. Click on Get Your Check Code (top right hand corner)
7. Click on Get Code.
8. Click on Print or save a driving summary
9. Send results to-
daniel.brickles@blidworthoaks.notts.sch.uk

The school mini bus will have a permit under the Section 19 standard permit scheme to operate the minibus NOT for 'hire and reward' the passengers must only be beneficiaries (e.g. students of the school) for which the minibus is being driven. The permit will be displayed in the windscreen of the vehicle.

All employees are required to report to the Head Teacher without undue delay, any subsequent driving convictions or changes which may affect the school's decision to maintain their name on the current list of approved minibus drivers.

Staff can be assured that a motoring offence is not normally sufficient on its own to threaten the continuation of employment as driving is not normally a requirement of the job but it may impact on the permission to drive the school minibus or any minibus with school passengers this is a decision for the Head Teacher/ HOS.

Duty of Care and Training

Although persons meeting the above criteria have an entitlement to drive a minibus, additionally the following criteria must be met.

Before being authorised to drive the minibus, staff must undergo training from an outside provider that has been accredited as an approved provider this training is called Minibus Awareness Training (MAT). This course means that applicants must complete the theory part and pass a driving assessment at the end of the course.

Additionally, staff will have MAT refresher training every **four years** to ensure that they maintain the necessary level of proficiency to drive the school minibus safely.

Drivers must be medically fit and legally qualified to drive a minibus and are required to complete and sign a driver declaration form to that effect before driving the minibus. The driver declaration form will be kept on file in the school office.

Staff with a medical condition that needs to be declared to the insurers should advise the Head teacher

It is the licence holder's responsibility to notify the Head teacher of any changes to the driver's licence.

Where a driver informs the school that he/she has acquired penalty points on his/her licence, the Head teacher will determine whether he/she is permitted to drive the minibus.

Only those named on the approved drivers list (a copy of which is held by the school office) will be eligible to drive the school minibuses.

Training will be delivered on a group or individual basis depending on the demand.

Nottinghamshire County Council		CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT OF MEDICAL HISTORY FOR PERSON WISHING TO DRIVE A MINI-BUS OWNED OR OPERATED BY NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	
<small>PLEASE NOTE: DVLA CATEGORY 2 MEDICAL STANDARDS ARE APPLIED TO ALL APPLICANTS</small>			
A. TO BE COMPLETED IN FULL BY THE PERSON WISHING TO DRIVE A MINI-BUS OWNED OR OPERATED BY NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL			
N.I. NUMBER	Date of Birth		
SURNAME			
FORENAME(S)			
ADDRESS			
HOME TELEPHONE	Mobile:		
B. THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE AUTHORISING DEPARTMENT			
COST CODE AND NAME & ADDRESS OF PERSON TO BE CHARGED FOR GP REPORT/CHI REPORT			
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT AND LOCATION			
RESULT OF ASSESSMENT IS TO BE SENT TO			
C. THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PERSONNEL ONLY			
RECOMMENDATION:	FIT		
	REFERRED for Medical Exam.		
Signature	Date		
<small>Please tear along dotted line To be retained by prospective Mini-Bus Driver:-</small>			
D. THIS FORM IS TOTALLY CONFIDENTIAL TO NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STAFF. You should complete it and forward it to the County Occupational Health Service in the envelope provided. It will be kept by the County Occupational Health Service as a personal and confidential record and no private medical details will be disclosed. You are, however, responsible for the accuracy of your statements.			
<small>Only an assessment of your fitness for driving a Mini-Bus will be sent to Management. This system is used to reduce the need for a full medical examination, although you may be asked to attend for a health interview or undergo an examination.</small>			

Insurance

The school's insurance covers staff over 21 years of age to drive the school minibus in accordance with this policy.

Driver Hours

Sleepiness reduces reaction time, alertness, concentration and decision making, all crucial driving skills. 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. **All drivers** should take a break every 2 hours (or sooner if tired). The break should be a minimum of 15 minutes. Second and subsequent breaks may need to be longer to prevent fatigue.

After 4.5 hours of driving, the accumulated length of breaks from driving should be at least 45 minutes.

Between one working day and the next, you should have a rest period of at least 11 hours, during which you can get adequate sleep.

See summary table below:

Recommended Driver Hours for Drivers

	Driving Only	Driving + Other work
Max. length of working day*	13 hours	10 hours
Of which, spent driving	9 hours	4 hours
Maximum time driving without a break from work	2 hours or sooner if tired	2 hours or sooner if tired
Minimum length of break	15 minutes	15 minutes
Daily rest period	11 hours	11 hours

* Taking account of other work undertaken before starting a journey.

Drivers should not be required to supervise children during their break, as this would not be a rest for the driver.

Seat Belts, Child Seats and Booster Cushions

The school minibus must be fitted with seat belts and must be worn by all seated passengers. The driver is responsible for ensuring that all passengers wear their seat belts and that the seat belts are in good working order. The seats must face forward and seat restraints must comply with legal requirements.

Child restraints e.g. seatbelts, seatbelts with booster cushions in minibuses must be used for any young person whose height is 135cms or less or aged under 12 years ONLY if the restraints are both available. If they are not available, then children aged 3 to 11 must wear adult seatbelts. Child seats are generally not suitable for the narrow seats in minibuses but booster cushions may be.

People with Key Responsibilities

This is not an exhaustive list but highlights some of the key responsibilities of staff and others associated with this policy.

Business Manager

The member of staff responsible for the school minibus is the nominated person who is also designated to book introductory minibus training and to make sure the correct assessment has been completed through the MIDAS training. The Business Manager is responsible for ensuring an accurate and 'up to date' record is kept on the current staff list of approved drivers.

The minibus insurance will be kept by the Business Manager.

The road tax evidence, maintenance and MOT records, log books and fuel cards (if applicable) are held by the Business Manager.

Extended Services Coordinator

The Extended Services Coordinator checks the vehicle regularly and records of these are kept in the school office. However, before embarking on a journey the 'Driver' must also make a visual check of the vehicle and record details in the folder within the minibus.

Drivers must:

If you volunteer to drive a school minibus you are personally responsible for its roadworthiness. If any defects are found by the police, it is you who will be fined, points on your licence, or even prosecuted. You would also be responsible for any road traffic offences committed.

As such the following must be carried out:

- Complete the visual checks as per the checklist
- Check all students (and the driver) are wearing safety belts



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- Abandon the journey if in any doubt about the safety of the vehicle
- Report all faults or damage or injury that occur during a journey to the nominated person
- Carry an emergency telephone list in case of an emergency or breakdown
- Obtain a fuel card from the ESC for the longer trips
- Attach all fuel receipts and VAT receipts
- Accept responsibility for the safety of his/her passengers and the condition of the driven vehicle
- Ensure the vehicle is not overloaded (see Minibus - Loading and Safety)



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Driver's Responsibilities

A driver cannot avoid these responsibilities. **If a vehicle or trailer is defective you MUST make immediate arrangements to have the faults rectified.** Use the guides below to assist in conducting checks.

Today's Date	Day of the week
Vehicle Registration	

Weeks start at 00:00 Monday and end 24:00 Sunday

This pre-drive check book is to be presented to your supervisor at the end of the week to have a supervisors certification signed.

Driver 1 Name/ <u>Odo</u>			Reading
Driver 2 Name/ <u>Odo</u>			Reading

Pre-drive Check (✓ if satisfactory X if defective N/A if Not Applicable)	D1	D2
1. Fluid Levels		
2. Mirrors & Glass		
3. Interior		
4. Horn		
5. Steering		

At the end of the journey, the driver must ensure that:

- 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 to be carried and made available for rubbish
- Dirty/muddy kit (especially boots and shoes) must **not** be worn in the minibus
- Clean tracksuits and / or footwear should be taken if students are likely to get muddy
- The fuel tank is low then report this to the ESC
- Report any defects or concerns to the ESC as soon as practicably possible

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5. Steering		
6. Brakes		
7. Windscreen Wipers & Washers		
8. Security of Load		
9. Body Exterior		
10. Markers		
11. Reflectors		
12. Spray Suppression		
13. Battery Security/ Condition		
14. Fuel & Adblue		
15. Tyres & Wheel Fixings		
16. Lights, Indicators, Camera & Warning Lights		
17. Fuel & Oil Leaks		
18. Excessive Engine and Exhaust Smoke		
19. Towed Trailer Checks		
20. Ancillary Equipment		
Drivers Initials		

Defect Found	Odo Reading	Defect Date	Job Number

MINIBUS - LOADING AND SAFETY

The majority of minibuses, have a pre-determined specified maximum gross vehicle weight (GVW).

It is **VITAL** that this weight is not exceeded at any time. Over-loading is illegal and is also potentially unsafe. Minibuses handle significantly differently from private cars, whether laden or empty. Overloading, even by small margins, may make the vehicle more difficult to control and it will increase its braking distances. In some circumstances, this may lead to an accident.

Minibus drivers may inadvertently overload their vehicles simply by transporting a full complement of passengers.

For every journey, the driver **must** make an accurate estimate of the weight of the passengers, driver and additional luggage or equipment to be carried. (It may be impractical to actually weigh all the passengers and luggage).

If the vehicle's maximum gross vehicle weight will be exceeded, then the number of passengers or the amount of equipment to be carried **must be** reduced. If the minibus is meant to carry two front seat passengers, reduce this to one front passenger, before reducing the number carried in the rear of the vehicle.

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If driving a minibus which is close to its maximum weight limit, remember that its braking distances will increase and reduce driving speed accordingly.

EXAMPLE

Minibus kerb weight 2257kg 1 x Driver (approx. 75kg) 75kg 16 x passengers @ approx. 70kg each 1120kg Luggage for 16 passengers @ 3kg each 48kg

Total 3500kg (Verify this weight is less than the GVW)

SPEED LIMITS

The speed limit for a small bus is:

- 70mph on a motorway; however, the school minibus has a speed limiter so the bus cannot exceed 62 mph;
- 60mph on a dual carriageway;
- 50mph on other roads unless stated otherwise (i.e. 30mph).

Drivers should note that the **National Speed Limit does not apply to minibuses**. You should travel no faster than 50mph on any A or B road.

MAINTENANCE OF THE VEHICLE

All vehicles must have:

- An MOT if over 1-year-old (13 or more passenger seats);
- A valid certificate of insurance;
- A fire extinguisher complying with BS 5423;
- A First Aid kit;
- A logbook in which the date, the starting and finishing mileages and confirmation that the driver has completed the daily/pre-use checks is recorded;
- A Section 19 permit disc on display in the windscreen (where applicable); In addition to the T&Cs of this permit the school minibus will have a 13 weekly inspection that is carried out by Rivervale Minibus Inspections.
- A yearly service check with Crown Farm Garage, Mansfield.
- Breakdown cover details

The nominated person (Business Manager) should ensure that:

- Regular checks are carried out on the vehicle; at least monthly and findings recorded and kept in the Mini Bus file. Any action required must be reported and the necessary work organised.
- Annual maintenance including MOT and servicing to be planned and dates blocked out on the calendar by the Business Manager
- All of the above must be recorded.



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Mini Bus File



Procedures for Booking and Using the Minibus

1. Member of staff/volunteer to email the school office with their request giving date, time and reason for use. The visit for which the minibus has been requested must have been authorised by the Head Teacher or HOS
2. School office will check availability of the school minibus and allocate the booking if available
3. School office will email the requestor to confirm the school bus has been booked or to confirm the school bus is not available
4. It is the responsibility of the member of staff organising the visit to ensure that the driver and bus are in the correct place at the beginning of the visit and back to the school at the end of the visit.
5. The staff member who has requested the minibus must inform the School Office ASAP if the visit has been cancelled.
6. On the day of use, the driver will collect the keys from the office and carry out the Driver checks, as per the folder held in the minibus.
7. Details of the mileage and any damage are to be noted in the binder for the whole journey.
8. On return to school, the minibus is returned to the staff car park, if school is closed you must lock the gates when leaving the premises.
9. Any incidents are to be brought to the attention of the Business Manager immediately and the accident/incident form completed.

BREAKDOWN AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

An emergency situation can arise at any time i.e. minibus breaks down, minibus involved in an accident, driver or passenger taken ill etc. In such a situation, you should telephone the emergency services, the Head teacher and the AA roadside assistance (If required)

- School procedure will then allow for Parents/Guardians to be informed of the situation.
- The emergency contact person provided by the school should also be called immediately should the driver or any of the passenger(s) be taken ill.



Blidworth Oaks Primary School Mini Bus Drivers Log

Print Name	Signature	Date	Department	Journey Details	Start Mileage	Finish Mileage	Additional Comments

First Aid Kit

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.

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)

Other Equipment that can be found in the Minibus are:

- Pen and paper
- A high-visibility vest
- An emergency warning triangle
- A working torch