



MINIBUS POLICY

Committee Responsible:	Finance and Resources
Person Responsible:	Headteacher
Date Approved by FGB:	March 2018
Date for Review:	March 2019

Signed.....

Date.....



Contents

1. Aims of Coldwaltham, St. James' C.E Primary School Minibus Policy
2. Guidance
3. Roles and Responsibilities
4. Driver Eligibility
5. Servicing, MOT, Insurance and Tax
6. Minibus Bookings and Administration
7. Pre-use Vehicle Checks
8. Equipment
9. Tidiness
10. Vehicle Operation
11. Accompanying Adult
12. Distractions / Tiredness
13. Safety
14. Accident and Breakdown Procedures
15. Trained Staff

1. Aims

To ensure that Coldwaltham, St. James' C.E Primary School complies with current legislation and guidance concerning the maintenance and driving of the school minibus.

To ensure that the safety of minibus users (both drivers and passengers) and other road users and pedestrians is paramount at all times.

To ensure that Coldwaltham, St. James' C.E Primary School is meeting its health and safety and safeguarding obligations towards all members of the school community.

2. Guidance

The school follows guidance contained within Driving School Minibuses – Advice for Schools and Local Authorities (September 2013) which was published jointly by the Department for Education, Department for Transport and Association of Chief Police Officers.

This policy and the procedures contained within it have been written to provide any members of staff who may need to drive vehicles on behalf of the school with the necessary knowledge and information in the light of growing legislation regarding the qualifications, insurance, operating, servicing and inspection requirements to safely operate our minibuses and carry passengers.

The behaviour and competence of the minibus drivers will be fully assessed to ensure the safe operation of the minibuses and to keep employees and others free of harm.

This policy extends to the use of hired vehicles that are used by the school.

A copy of this policy will be provided to all minibus drivers and will be kept in the Staff Handbook and retained by the Business Manager.

This policy and the procedures contained within it will be reviewed regularly as part of the school's Health and Safety review.



3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body of Coldwaltham, St. James' C.E Primary School is responsible for ensuring that the school minibus is operated on behalf of the school and is fully compliant in every respect with all legal transport and health and safety requirements. This responsibility is delegated to the Headteacher to ensure its appropriate implementation.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that the school has appropriate safety procedures for the minibus based on the ROSPA Advice for Minibus Safety and their code of practice (in addition to the DfE guidance). A copy of the full code of practice is available at www.rospa.com.

Business Manager

The Business Manager will ensure that servicing of the minibus is performed at the correct mileage and that the service book kept is ready for inspection at any time. She will ensure that mini-checks (fuel, water, oil and battery levels, tyre pressures and lights) are conducted by a trained member of the caretaking team on a weekly basis and will arrange for appropriate insurance cover and annual road tax.

Drivers

Drivers will follow and comply fully with the requirements outlined in 'Procedures and Practices' section below. They will ensure that pre-use checks of the vehicle are conducted and will complete the Vehicle Check List (see Appendix One). They will report any concerns about the safety and / or condition of the minibus to the Business Manager immediately. They will familiarise themselves with the relevant ROSPA guidance and ensure that they understand the personal legal implications if procedures are not adhered to. It is also the driver's responsibility to ensure the safety (including the use of seat belts) and welfare of all passengers. They will comply fully with all road traffic laws, respecting speed limits and ensuring use of seatbelts at all times. For longer journeys, frequent rest breaks are to be taken. They must inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately if they are unfit to undertake a journey in order that alternative arrangements can be made. They will never use a mobile phone (hand held or hands free) as the driver of the vehicle unless it is parked in a safe place with the engine switched off. Making genuine emergency 999 or 112 calls whilst driving is legal.

4. Driver Eligibility

- Drivers must be aged 25 or over.
- Minibus drivers must meet the driver licence requirements set out in Driving School Minibuses – Advice for Schools and Local Authorities (November 2014).
- Before being authorised to drive the minibus, staff must undergo a Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MIDAS) training course and pass an assessment. The assessment and training will be carried out by an external MIDAS Driver Assessor Trainer.



- Additionally, staff will have MIDAS 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.
- Staff with a medical condition that needs to be declared to the insurers should advise the Business Manager accordingly.
- The driver declaration form will be kept on file in the School office.
- It is the licence holder's responsibility to notify the Business Manager 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 Headteacher 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 Business Manager) will be eligible to drive the school minibus.

5. Servicing, MOT, Insurance and Tax

Servicing and MOT testing will be carried out at the appropriate intervals, and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Appointed staff will conduct weekly mini-checks on fuel, water, oil and battery levels, tyre pressures and lights. A signed record will be maintained to demonstrate that these checks have been undertaken.

6. Minibus Bookings and Administration

All bookings should be made using the booking diary in the Office. A list of students and staff on the journey, and journey details (to include departure and return times) is to be left with the school office prior to departure. The office should be provided with relevant contact numbers for staff using the vehicle(s). Drivers must sign for the vehicle in the booking diary when collecting the minibus keys from the Office (failure to do so may render the journey unauthorised for insurance purposes), and collect the Minibus File, which contains a copy of the Highway Code, the Minibus Policy, spare checklists, a notepad and pen. Drivers must return the vehicle's keys and the Minibus File to the Office on returning to school. If the minibus is being returned out of school hours, the keys and minibus file should be handed in on the next working day.

7. Pre-use Vehicle Checks

The school minibus must be maintained to high levels. As well as MOT, servicing and half termly checks, drivers should satisfy themselves that the vehicle is safe to drive. If the serviceability of the vehicle is in doubt, it is not to be used until it has been repaired. Pre-use checks are to be recorded on the Vehicle Check List found in the Minibus File which must be signed for on collection and return of keys from the Office. Completed Vehicle Check Lists are to be given to the Business Manager on return of the minibus who will take any action necessary. Pre-use checks must include lights (headlights, hazards, brakes, reversing, side and indicators), horn, mirrors, doors (open, close and lock correctly), steering, seatbelts and windscreen wipers (including windscreen wiper wash). A walk around the vehicle should occur to check for damage / defects and to assess tyre condition. If the driver has concerns about the condition of the vehicle it must not be used and these concerns must be reported to the Business Manager.



Mileage records should be used to help monitor fuel consumption. Prior to the start of each journey, the driver is to go through a brief talk with students regarding the wearing of seatbelts, journey time, being seated at all times, behaviour, noise levels and escape procedures. The journey is not to commence unless the requirements of the driver are complied with.

8. Equipment

It is recommended that the following equipment is carried on board the Minibus.

- First Aid Box – if items are used during a journey, the designated first aider (Jacqui Rigby) at school will be informed and they will replenish supplies.
- Fire Extinguisher - At least one fire extinguisher (which complies with BS 5432 or equivalent and has a minimum test rating of 8A or 21B) that contains foam.
- Warning Triangle - This should be used in the event of breakdown and carefully positioned 50m behind the vehicle to warn other road users of the broken down vehicle.
- Hi-Visibility Vests.

9. Tidiness

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.

10. Vehicle Operation

Capacity

No more than 16 passengers and a driver may be carried in the school minibus.

Seat Belts/Luggage

Before setting off, the driver and/or driver's assistant must ensure that passengers are wearing seat belts and any luggage is securely stowed. Students are to be informed that seatbelts are to be worn at all times when the vehicle is in motion.

Driving Rules

- Drivers are responsible for driving within the law and in accordance with the Highway Code (a copy is held in the Office and in the minibus).
- The School will not refund fines or other costs incurred by drivers as a result of any road traffic or parking offence.
- Drivers must inform the Business Manager of any penalty points received whilst using the school minibus; failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. National speed limits apply to the school minibus.
- It is school policy that under normal road conditions, a minibus should not be driven in the third lane of a motorway.
- Vehicles are not to be driven by anyone who has consumed any amount of alcohol or illegal substance.
- Some medication may impair a driver's ability and employees who are taking medicines of this nature are not to drive vehicles.
- All accidents, whether or not they cause injury to persons or damage to property, are to be reported to the school as soon as possible after they occur.



- Keys must not be left in an unattended vehicle at any time.
- Due consideration must be given to parking in secure areas as much as possible, particularly where overnight stays are required.
- Vehicles must not be driven at any time if the load being carried exceeds the maximum allowable weight capacity.
- Smoking is prohibited on the minibus at any time.

11. Accompanying Adult

A second member of staff or an adult volunteer will normally be on every journey as the driver's assistant. This person should be positioned near the back of the minibus to observe behaviour and maintain good order. They can also make and receive phone calls so the driver does not have to. They should also help with reversing and need to be visible at all times to the reversing driver. They should assist in a breakdown or accident and can act as a relief driver if they are trained and authorised to do so.

12. Distractions / Tiredness

The use of mobile phones is strictly prohibited whilst operating the vehicle. There are other similar activities, which can be unsafe and thus may attract the attention of the police, such as drinking (soft drinks), eating, smoking, or even changing a radio channel. To this end, any action whilst driving, which could cause distraction must be avoided.

Driving when tired greatly increases the risk of an accident. The Highway Code recommends that a driver takes a minimum break of at least 15 minutes after every two hours of driving. However, after a full working day, drivers **MUST NOT** drive for a continuous period of more than two hours without taking a suitable break. If an authorised relief driver is available to drive a journey can be continued without a break. Drivers should use common sense to ascertain their suitability to drive at a given time (consider tiredness, recent alcohol or medicine consumption, illness etc).

13. Safety

Whilst driving the minibus, drivers should ensure that all doors are unlocked to assist with emergency egress if the need arises. Drivers should ensure that internal lights are off whilst driving so that their vision is not impaired by the internal light. Exits/gangways should be clear of obstructions (such as bags) at all times. Bags can go on spare seats and under seats. If the driver feels that driving cannot be in complete safety, they must not continue. Members of staff are not required to put themselves at risk at any time whilst driving on behalf of the school. Whenever the vehicle is left unattended, all windows are to be closed and doors locked.

Dealing with 'road rage':

- If threatened by another driver, drivers must not retaliate by flashing lights, sounding the horn or making offensive gestures; this only attracts a response and will often make a situation worse.
- If forced to stop, drivers and passengers must stay in the vehicle with windows closed and doors locked and be prepared to drive off.
- If necessary, mobile phones can be used to contact the police for assistance.



- The registration number of the other vehicle must be noted if possible, and the make and colour, plus a description of the driver and occupants. Details will be passed on to the police.

14. Accident and Breakdown Procedures

Breakdown Procedures

Standard breakdown procedures are to be followed where necessary:

- If on a public road, get out of the vehicle on the safe side – nearest the path or verge.
- If on a motorway, follow the instructions of the emergency operator, which may include staying in the vehicle, or getting out of the vehicle and not getting back into the vehicle again.
- Avoid going near the traffic flow and exercise extreme caution at all times.
- If possible, leave a motorway, dual carriageway or main road if a fault occurs, which will reduce the risk of collision, but park in a well-lit place so that the vehicle can be seen by other road users.
- In the event of breakdown contact **Breakdown Company TBC**
- It is best to use a roadside emergency telephone if possible as this will pinpoint your location.
- School should also be contacted, when practical, in the event of a breakdown.
- Staff should not change a tyre or attempt repairs. This should be carried out by a breakdown team.

Accident

In the event of an accident:

- Deal with any injured persons.
- Ensure the safety of everyone involved.
- If necessary, call the emergency services.
- In all cases, stop at the scene and take the names, addresses and telephone numbers of people involved, including independent witnesses.
- Take photos of the accident scene from various angles if possible.
- Breakdown procedures should be carried out if necessary.
- In the event of a serious incident, emergency contact numbers are available in the Minibus File (carried on all journeys).
- Any member of staff who has queries relating to the driving of the school minibus or the condition of the vehicle should bring them to the attention of the Business Manager.

15. Trained Drivers

Jon Gilbert (*date of training: 23/01/2017*)

Jacqui Rigby (*date of training: 08/03/2018*)

Sam Skirrow (*date of training: 08/03/2018*)