

Minibus Policy

Presented to:

Full Trustees
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Date reviewed:	
Date of next review:	

- Headteacher also means Head of College and Principal
- School also means College, Academy or Academies
- References to School are taken to mean any school within the Four Cs Multi-Academy Trust

Minibus Policy

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Minibus Policy

1.0 PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The Trust greatly appreciates that staff and others volunteer to operate the minibuses thereby enhancing opportunities for pupils and students.
- 1.2 The minibuses are a valuable resource which help to provide pupils / students with access to school visits and off-site residential trips, as well as to numerous other extra-curricular activities. It is essential that all users of these resources are aware of all legal and procedural responsibilities pertaining to their use.
- 1.3 The following information and documentation clarifies procedures to ensure the safety of pupils / students, staff and property.

2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

- 2.1 The responsibility for the use of the minibuses is shared among staff as follows:

- 2.1.1 **Finance/ Site Administration Department** (Finance Manager/ Site Administrator) will be responsible for:

- Raising invoices for hire charges
- Recharging departments for minibus use
- Ensuring that services/MOTs are done on time
- Checking insurance arrangements
- Checking the faults recorded on safety checklist and journey form with the Site Team
- Arranging all driving assessments
- Maintaining the school's approved driver list

- 2.1.2 **Site Department** (Site Manager / Site Administrator) will be responsible for:

- Issuing keys to pre-booked drivers only with the minibus folder which contains the safety checklist and journey form (Appendix 1) for completion for every trip.
- Checking the general road worthiness condition of the bus (Appendix 3 – Site Team checks)
- Ensuring that the minibuses are parked in the designated areas for collection
- Ensuring that the minibuses are regularly deep cleaned
- Ensuring that any problems associated with the minibuses are recorded and addressed

- 2.1.3 **All staff** using the minibuses will be responsible for:

- Booking the minibus via the online diary (or equivalent school system) (please tick the 'Site Team Required' box and ensure every entry includes driver names, journey description, destination and estimated return time)
- Cleanliness of the bus (inside and out) on return
- Ensuring that diesel is in the bus for the next user (minimum of a quarter of a tank)
- Ensuring that the minibuses are parked in the designated areas on return
- Completing a safety checklist and journey form for every trip (Appendix 1)
- Ensuring that keys are returned to the Site Office with complete safety checklist and journey form as soon as possible at the end of each trip

- Declare to the Headteacher immediately any medical conditions which may affect their ability to safely drive the minibus or any potential licence endorsements or prosecutions relating to driving offences.

3.0 SAFETY ROUTINES

- 3.1 All safety routines must be complete before pupils / students are allowed on the minibus. Please refer to Driver Responsibilities (Section 4) for individual responsibilities.
- 3.2 A Safety Checklist and Journey Form (Appendix 1) and an Accident/Incident Checklist (Appendix 2) will be issued to the driver on collection of the minibus keys. All safety checks must be completed before the bus leaves the car park.
- 3.3 In addition the Site Team will perform
Monthly checks (Appendix 3) and a regular deep cleaning schedule.

4.0 DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1. It is greatly appreciated that Trust staff are willing to take on the considerable responsibility for driving a minibus.
- 4.2 It is hoped that all staff and hirers understand why the procedures need to be so carefully determined and adhered to and that by doing so it helps to protect the driver. The safety of the passengers and the protection of the driver are paramount. The Trust knows and expects that drivers will appreciate the need to comply with the policy.
- 4.3 Before driving a vehicle make sure that it is in a fit and serviceable condition, by carrying out the safety routines specified and certifying on the Safety Checklist and Journey Form (Appendix 1) that this has been done. **The driver is legally responsible for the condition of the vehicle.**
- 4.4 In the event of an accident due to failure by the driver to carry out the safety routines prior to using the vehicle, then it is likely that the driver would be prosecuted, if it were shown beyond reasonable doubt that the incident was due to this failure. If an incident was due to mechanical failure which was outside the control of the driver, the driver may escape prosecution.
- 4.5 Clear instructions regarding acceptable behaviour must be given to passengers, and boarding and dismounting from the bus at the roadside must be supervised. If there is baggage in the bus it must be securely stowed and the bus must not be overloaded by passengers or baggage. All passengers must be briefed what to do in the event of an enforced stop or accident. The driver and/or supervisors of the students will be responsible for directing the students to a place of safety.
- 4.6 During the journey the driver must ensure that passengers do not move around, that they wear their seatbelts at all times and that there are no passengers standing. Pupil / student behaviour must be up to the high standard expected. The driver is totally responsible for all his/her passengers enroute.
- 4.7 Check diesel. If diesel needs to be purchased during the journey request a VAT receipt with the VAT number (the amount will be reimbursed). Please see individual school procedures for details of where fuel can be purchased on account. Schools are invoiced separately. Minibuses should be left at least a quarter full. When it is necessary to add fuel please ensure to completely fill the tank – full tank. The driver must indicate on the safety checklist / journey form which service station / location they used to refuel the

vehicle, including the school's designated fuel account location, in order that Finance can keep track of where fuel is purchased.

- 4.8 At the end of each trip, the driver must complete the Safety Checklist and Journey Form recording mileage etc and ensure that the minibus is clean and tidy. Note on the Safety Checklist and Journey Form any vehicle faults or problems in handling which have given rise to any concern and return the form to Reception with the keys asking them to inform Site Team or Finance/Administration Team. There is a cloth, dustpan and brush available on request from the Site team so minibuses can be cleared of rubbish, cleaned out or mirrors cleaned if required before or after a journey (during site opening hours).

5.0 DRIVER INFORMATION AND ADULT SUPERVISION

- 5.1 **Drivers** - All drivers must be on the school's approved driver list. The Headteacher or nominated SLT member must confirm all drivers' competency to drive the minibus before they are added to the list.

Recent advice:

HM Government Advice 'Driving School Minibuses' September 2013

- 5.3 School staff can drive the school minibus without any special licence, as long as their employer agrees and the following conditions are met:

- The staff member obtained their car driving licence before January 1997
- The staff member obtained their car driving licence later than January 1997 - but has held it for at least two years - and is over 21
- The staff member is not being paid to drive the minibus (because exemption depends on no consideration being received by the driver); and
- The minibus weighs no more than 3.5 tonnes (unless modified for disabled passengers which allow an additional 750 kg) and is not used for hire or reward
- A minibus is driven for hire and reward if there is a clear and logical link between payment and the transport provided and that link is not too remote.

[Driving school minibuses: advice for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK](#)

- 5.5 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. The MAM is always the second largest number listed if not labelled.

Hire and reward means that there is no payment made specifically to allow the person to travel. A payment towards a trip or outing would not constitute hire and regard unless specific reference was made to the transport costs.

- 5.6 **To become an approved driver for inclusion on the school's approved driver list staff, volunteers will be required to prove their confidence and competence.**

- 5.7 Competency can be achieved in a variety of ways, which include:
- Suitable and sufficient previous experience in driving larger vehicles within a work or volunteer capacity
 - Completion of the MIDAS or similar course within the past three years
 - Completion of a driver assessment with a driving instructor (1 hour). Note, a 30-minute pre-test lesson can be arranged for drivers who are unfamiliar with driving larger vehicles.
 - Renew the driver assessment every 5 years with the driving instructor (1/2 hour).

Before being approved or taking passengers, all drivers must have completed a practical vehicle familiarisation session with an approved driver in the minibus. This must include an understanding of the vehicle's controls, pre-use checks, policy, paperwork and emergency procedures. The driver must be able evidence their confidence and competence in driving the vehicle safely within this practical session. If confidence and competence is not shown, then additional driver assessment training must be provided through an external party either through a driving instructor or MIDAS training course.

5.8 The nominated administrator keeps the 'Minibus Permit To Drive Log', which is used to record the most recent test date and recommended test review date for each driver who is permitted to drive the school minibuses. The Administrator also holds copies of each driver's driving licence details which are held securely.

5.9 Onus is on drivers to:

- Advise the school (notify the Administrator) if they are not fit to drive the minibus for a medical or other reason
- Advise the school (notify the Administrator) if any points are incurred on their driving licence. This will be considered and staff notified if they can continue to drive the minibuses. The final decision is with the school's Headteacher
- Never drink and drive and be aware that alcohol can remain in the body for up to 24 hours. Neither should staff drive if they feel ill or affected by medicines. Drivers who drive for more than 2 hours after a day's work are significantly more likely to be involved in an accident
- On each trip drivers must complete a Safety Checklist and Journey Form (issued with the minibus keys) to record the journey, checks completed and for charges. This must be returned immediately, along with the key box, as soon as the minibus has returned to site.

5.10 **Loading And Parking**

5.10.1 All students must embark from the school site and on return disembark on the school site.

5.10.2 Please note Health and Safety regarding driving on school property must be paramount. Please ensure site speed limits are observed at all times.

5.11 **Breakdowns**

5.11.1 In the event of the vehicle breaking down the driver's first responsibility is to ensure the safety of the passengers. This is particularly important if any passengers are disabled. Drivers are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and security of the vehicle. Please use high-visibility jackets (located in minibus) when exiting the vehicle, especially when the minibus has stopped in an unsafe position.

5.11.2 Contact should be made to the school to inform them of the situation.

5.11.3 Breakdown cover is available. Current details are held within the clipboard/folder and further details with Finance Department/Administrator.

5.11.4 Insurance details are held within the clipboard/folder and full details of the school's insurers and Insurance Agent are held with the Finance Department.

5.12 General Rules For The Use Of The Minibus

- The operation of the minibuses has at all times to be carried out in a safe manner and within the law. Drivers must be familiar with the rules laid down in the current Highway Code which should prevail at all times
- The procedures set out are designed to ensure adequacy of insurance cover, conformity with legal requirements, serviceability of the vehicle and the safety, comfort and enjoyment of the drivers and passengers and must be abided by at all times
- At all times the driver is responsible for the safety of the passengers and minibus. Decisions in the event of any difficulties as to whether or not to continue a journey is the responsibility of the driver
- The Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Trust, has the authority to stop minibuses or drivers from leaving the premises if it is believed safety will be compromised
- Passengers must wear seat belts whilst in the minibus

5.13 Recommended Driving Times And Adult Supervision

5.13.1 The Trust recognises the danger of driver fatigue and distraction, especially on long journeys, by applying the following recommendations.

- A minimum break of at least 15 minutes after every two hours of driving is recommended (rule 91 Highway Code)
- At any point of a journey if a driver feels they are in need of a rest from driving, no matter how long the journey is, they should seek to stop at the next sensible opportunity
- A journey for a single driver should not be longer than 5 hours

5.13.2 Mobile telephones are not be used by the driver when driving the minibus.

6.0 BOOKINGS

6.1 Minibuses must be booked via the online diary (or equivalent system). The 'Site Team Required' box must be ticked as this alerts the Site Team that a minibus has been booked out. (Please ensure every entry includes driver names, journey description, destination and estimated return time are included). The minibus ignition key and gate fob will be held by Site and collected by the driver with the Safety Checklist and Journey Form.

6.2 A condition of the Trust is that the minibus should only be used for the purposes of carrying young people from the school, educational establishment or community group (see Section 11). The minibuses are not available for hire or for any other purpose and **cannot be taken abroad.**

7.0 IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT: COMPLYING WITH THE LAW IN THE UK

7.1 In the event of an accident resulting in damage to another vehicle, an animal or other property, the driver must stop and give their name, work address and the registration particulars of the vehicle driven to anybody who has reasonable grounds for requiring the information. Insurance details will be provided with the Safety Checklist and Journey Form so these can be shown to the police or to anybody who has reasonable grounds to see it.

7.2 If the driver is unable to comply with these requirements at the time of the accident the details must be reported to the police as soon as possible and in any case within 24 hours.

7.3 ALWAYS

- Switch off the engine and ask others to do likewise
- Do not smoke, as there may be a spillage of diesel
- Switch on the hazard warning lights and ensure no-one obstructs them
- Help all those who are not injured to a safe place away from the road
- Should anyone be injured summon an ambulance and the police immediately
- Do not move anyone who is seriously injured but attempt to keep them warm and comfortable
- Write names, address and phone numbers of all those involved, including witnesses, together with registration numbers
- Do not discuss who was at fault. Only give statements to the police
- Wait for the police to come before moving vehicles (unless they are in a dangerous situation)
- If the police are not involved, make sure wherever possible, that an independent witness has noted the position of the vehicles
- Please take as many photographs as possible giving regard to the safety of yourself and passengers. Weather and road conditions should be noted with any other relevant information

7.4 **Accident/Incident checklist (Appendix 2) will always be provided for each journey (in the clipboard/folder collected with the ignition keys)**

8.0 CONTACT NUMBERS

8.1 Please see internal school procedures for contact telephone number.

8.2 Please see internal school procedures for out-of-hour school emergency contact numbers.

9.0 EMERGENCY PLANS

9.1 **Accident.** In the event of an accident draw a plan to show what happened as soon as possible after the accident that clearly shows:

- Approximate road layout, speeds and direction of travel of everybody concerned
- Position of cars/vehicles immediately before and after the accident and distances they were from each other, from road junctions and from the side of the road
- Position and length of any skid marks
- Names, widths and gradients of roads
- Positions of any witnesses
- Any traffic signs and road markings
- Any obstructions of the view of traffic (eg sharp bend, brick wall, hedge, parked cars, etc)
- Which direction is north, weather and road conditions with any other relevant information
- Please take as many photographs as possible giving regard to the safety of yourself and passengers

9.2 **Dealing with a major incident.** This written guidance should be held by each adult member of the party.

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency
- Make sure all other members of the party are accounted for and are safe (ie carry out a head count). Remember drivers must carry with them a list of the members of their

party; this is a requirement of the Trust's Trips and Visits Policy and School Journey Insurance.

- Call the appropriate emergency services. If there are injuries, establish their extent and administer appropriate first aid if appropriately trained and feel capable
- Advise other staff member 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
- 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
- Ensure that the remaining students are adequately supervised and arrange for early return to base
- 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 the students accounted for
- Contact the senior member of staff on call (as agreed before departure)
- Control access to telephones/mobiles until a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team has contacted parents/others involved
- Give full details of the incident including:
 - Nature, date, location and time of incident, details of injuries, if any casualty taken to hospital etc.
 - Names and home telephone numbers of those involved
 - Action taken so far
 - Telephone number for future communication
- Do not discuss matters with the media
- The member of senior staff should contact the Headteacher and establish who will take charge of the situation and what immediate action will be taken. The Headteacher will advise the Trust CEO and the Chair of Governors

9.3 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.

9.4 The party leader should not discuss legal liability and ensure that accident forms are completed as soon as possible.

10.0 COSTS

10.1 All drivers should ensure that the minibus is delivered back to the school with **a minimum of a quarter of a tank of diesel**. If this is not the case the school will recharge the cost of refueling to the relevant capitation budget.

10.2 In all cases if the bus is not clean on return a valeting charge of £30 will be charged to the user.

11.0 COMMUNITY USE

11.1 The Trust minibuses can be hired by local non-profit community groups or local other educational establishment as long as drivers are on the school's "approved list" maintained by the Site Administrator. All users will be charged a rate per mile travelled.

11.2 The school will require completion of the Booking Form for Community Minibus and a non-refundable deposit of £20.00 payable to the Finance team. There is an excess payable by hirer in event of accident.

12.0 USE OF A TOW BAR

- 12.1 Drivers wishing to tow must receive permission from the Finance Manager/Administrator. They must ensure they are covered by their licence and provide this evidence to the Finance Manager/Administrator.
- 12.2 Weight of vehicle to be checked and agreed before approval.

13.0 POLICY REVIEW

- 13.1 The Trustees (or responsible committee) will review this policy in line with the procedure for policy review.
- 13.2 Date for Review
If there is no other reason for a review, this policy will be reviewed every three years by the Trust.

APPENDIX 1

Safety Checklist and Journey Form

Name of Driver _____ Date of Journey _____

Brief details of route _____

Start time _____ End Time _____

All safety routines must be checked (ticked) and where necessary with comments.

Action	✓ Tick	Comments
Trip documentation completed, approved and filed with Educational Visits Co-ordinator.		
Passengers briefed on what to do in the event of an enforced stop or an accident.		
Fuel/Water levels (dashboard)		
Tyres – visual check		
Brakes are operational		
Mirrors/windscreen wipers/windows are operational		
Horn works		
Fire extinguisher, Jack and High Visibility Jackets in place		
Driving lights are operational		
First Aid Kit in place		
Latches, safety belts/straps in place and in use		
Interior lights are off after all doors are closed.		
Bus is locked at all times when not in use.		
Minibus left clean and tidy		
Sufficient fuel for next journey (at least a quarter of a tank)		

Any other comments (please report concerns or items used in first aid)

Speedometer Readings

Start (klms/mls) _____ End (klms/mls) _____

Total Journey (klms/mls) _____ Fuel Purchased £ _____ (Receipt)

Please indicate where fuel was purchased:

Accident/Incident (Please ✓ relevant box)

I can confirm no accident/incident took place during the journey

☐

Or

Accident/incident took place and full report is attached.

☐

Signature of Driver _____ Date _____

I can confirm I have read and understood the Minibus Policy, that I am an authorised driver and that I will abide by the guidance given in the Minibus Policy.

CAPITATION BUDGET / DEPARTMENT TO BE CHARGED

APPENDIX 2

Accident/Incident Checklist

In the event of an accident/incident inform the Headteacher as immediately as you are able. To assist you in the possible confusion a checklist is provided below.

No	Action	√Tick
1.	STOP – it is an offence not to stop after an accident	
2.	Switch off the minibus engine	
3.	Ensure your passengers are safe from other hazards (use high visibility jackets)	
4.	Account for all members of the trip (head count). Do not leave students unattended	
5.	Make sure no one smokes near the accident site	
6.	If anyone is injured contact the emergency services and the police	
7.	Administer first aid if required and you are able	
8.	Do not remove casualties unless absolutely necessary	
9.	Do not move vehicles involved until the police arrive	
10.	Notify the school through agreed contact. Give full details: Nature, location, time of incident, injuries (any casualties to hospital), action taken so far and number for further communication if required.	
11.	Give your name, work address, the registration number and in case of personal injury, insurance particulars to any person having reasonable grounds for requiring them	
12.	Obtain from the other person involved in the accident/incident their name, address and registration number of their vehicle and insurance details	
13.	If there are any witnesses to the accident obtain their name(s) and address(es). Take photographs of scene, if possible.	
14.	Under no circumstances admit liability for the accident/incident	
15.	If the police are not called to the scene of the incident make sure the incident is reported to the police within 24 hours	
16.	Make a plan to show what happened – if a road accident include road layouts, weather conditions, road conditions (sharp bend, gradient, hedge obstructing view) where your vehicle was in relation to others both before and after the incident. Use photographic evidence if possible.	
17.	Accident form(s) completed, where necessary	

APPENDIX 3

SITE TEAM CHECKLIST	CHECKED / LEVEL	OK ☐
1. Oil level		
2. Water level		
3. Coolant level		
4. Brake fluid		
5. Clutch fluid		
6. Fan belt		
7. Fuel (quarter tank)		
8. Fuel cut-off		
9. Tyre condition		
10. Tyre pressure		
11. Lights and indicators: • Hazards • Indicators • Side lights • Main beam / dip • Cab / interior lights • Brake lights • Reverse lights		
12. Brake operation		
13. Horn (working)		
14. Mirror alignment and cleanliness		
15. Wipers and washers		
16. Door locks		
17. Emergency exit		
18. Driver seat adjustment		
19. Seat belt condition		
20. First aid kit (check contents)		
21. Fire Extinguisher, Jack and High Visibility Jackets in place		
22. Reverse buzzer		
23. Battery		
24. Washer fluid		
25. Power steering fluid		

Mileage: _____