



Minibus code of practice and guidance (Whole School including EYFS)

Independent Day School

Our Lady of Sion School

Last Reviewed: October 2021
Frequency of Review: 3 years
Next Review Due: October 2024

INTRODUCTION

This Code of Practice sets out the School's Policy and Guidance for the use of minibuses on School controlled activities. The Code of Practice applies to all School owned minibuses and those used, hired or leased for School led activities.

Minibuses (or 'small buses') are defined as 'vehicles constructed or adapted to carry more than eight, but no more than sixteen passengers, in addition to the driver'.

This Code of Practice seeks to address the safety issues associated with operating and driving a minibus and provides guidance on licensing and permit requirements for driving and operating a minibus or minibuses.

SECTION 19 PERMITS

The School as a non-commercial educational establishment is permitted to operate minibuses under the Section 19 Standard Permit scheme. This scheme exempts drivers from certain requirements of the Transport Act 1985 (as amended), the requirements of which are explained further under the section Responsibility - The Driver, of this Code of Practice.

All minibuses used by Schools must possess a Section 19 Permit (formerly called a Small Bus Permit) whilst on School led activities; this permit must be displayed in the front window of the vehicle.

Permits are not time restricted and may be transferred from minibus to minibus.

RESPONSIBILITY

In order to aid the implementation of this Code of Practice, the Bursar may appoint a member of staff to act as Minibus Co-ordinator to assist them in ensuring that this Code is complied with fully. In this instance, the Minibus Policy and Practice Co-Ordinator will be the Administrator.

In order to manage the use and purpose of the minibus to support trips and excursions, the Bursar has appointed the Administrator as the Educational Visits Co-Ordinator.

The Minibus

It is the responsibility of the Bursar to ensure that all minibuses used by the School are in a roadworthy condition. It is the legal responsibility of the driver to check and ensure that the minibus is in a roadworthy condition prior to driving.

Before use each day, the minibus driver must complete the Daily Minibus Checklist; see Appendix A. These should be given to the Administrator at the end of each week.

All minibuses are required to be MOT tested annually from new. If a minibus has 12 passenger seats or fewer, the testing may be conducted at any MOT Testing Station. If the minibus has 13 - 16 passenger seats, the testing (Class V) can only be undertaken at an LGV/PCV Testing Station.

Hired, leased and loaned minibuses must also be MOT tested in accordance with the above and, where there is any concern, a copy of the current test certificate should be inspected prior to accepting possession of the minibus.

The Bursar is responsible for holding copies of MOT certificates and ensuring that no vehicle is used or stored on a public road without a current MOT certificate.

A periodic 'roadworthiness inspection' or safety inspection are conducted in addition to the MOT testing requirement. Such roadworthiness inspections are undertaken by a suitable MOT licensed garage at periods that reflect the usage and mileage of the vehicle; this to be at least twice a year, in December and July. The minibus must also be serviced at intervals recommended by the manufacturer and servicing garage; the periodic roadworthiness checks can run concurrently to any servicing requirement.

In addition to the daily roadworthiness checks and driver checks, the Bursar has delegated the Caretakers to undertake weekly roadworthiness checks on all minibuses owned or leased by the School.

The Driver

It is the responsibility of the Bursar to authorise individual drivers and ensure that they have a suitable driving licence, adequate driving experience and operate under a Section 19 Permit.

Minibus drivers must have category B and D1 on their driving licences. If category D1 is not on a driving licence (this will be the case for all persons who pass their driving test after 1st January 1997), a driver may be authorised, provided that the minibus has no more than 16 passenger seats and is not used to tow and:

- the driver operates under a Section 19 Permit on School led, non-commercial activities within the UK only
- the driver receives no payment or consideration for driving a minibus, other than out-of-pocket expenses
- the driver is over 21 years of age and has held a car licence (category B) for at least 2 years
- the driver is providing a service on a voluntary basis; and
- the minibus maximum loaded weight is no more than 3.5 tonnes (excluding any special equipment for carriage of disabled passengers).

Any traffic fines incurred by the driver during any journey shall be the liability of the driver.

Although current UK drink-drive legislation permits drivers to drive vehicles after having consumed a moderate amount of alcohol, this is unacceptable when driving a minibus. Drivers are therefore warned not to consume any alcohol between a period of 12 hours before driving a minibus, until after the minibus has been garaged/parked at the end of the journey.

The Bursar should hold a register of all authorised drivers within the School.

The Driver is responsible, before and during journeys, for ensuring that:

- they inform the Bursar of any licence endorsements
- all passengers are seated and the vehicle is not overloaded, ie, no seat sharing
- passengers are aware of the need to use seat belts
- passengers must be instructed not to open doors or lean out of windows
- all doors are closed but not locked

- luggage is safely stowed
- no hazardous material or inflammable liquids are conveyed
- emergency doors are not obstructed
- reversing manoeuvres are carried out with great care, particularly if passengers are being conveyed
- smoking is not permitted on board
- carrying or consuming alcohol is not permitted
- pick-up/drop-off points are safe for passengers and other road-users
- a maximum 9-hour day is not exceeded
- on-board emergency procedures are fully understood
- **the engine must be turned off and keys removed from the ignition on each occasion that the driver leaves the driving seat**
- Road Traffic legislation, including speed limits, must be strictly observed
- bad behaviour by passengers is reported
- they stop immediately after any collision or suspected collision and exchange details with affected parties. Use the Accident Information Log which is in the glove compartment of every minibus.
- vehicle faults and/or damage is reported to the Bursar or Administrator as soon as is practically possible
- vehicle interior is left in a clean condition, ie, free from rubbish and that at least ¼ tank of fuel is left to begin the next journey
- drivers complete the requisite minibus daily checklists (stored in the minibus) and that records are retained for at least 15 months.
- report any breakdowns or roadside assistance to the Bursar/Administrator immediately.
- all regulations and conditions governing travel abroad are adhered to

THE LAW FOR MINIBUS DRIVERS

You are responsible for the state of your vehicle at all times. This includes tyres, steering, brakes, headlights, etc, and the fire extinguisher and first aid kit. If in doubt, don't go out.

You must obey the instructions of a uniformed police officer, and give your name and address, that of the vehicle owner, your date of birth and the vehicle registration number if requested. You may be asked to produce your driving licence, the insurance certificate, and the latest MOT test certificate at a police station. This must be done within 7 days.

If involved in an accident, you must stop and exchange details with other parties. Use the Accident Information Log which is in the glove compartment of every minibus. If this cannot be done immediately, you must report it to a police station as soon as possible within 24 hours. If someone is injured, this must be reported.

When driving with passengers:

- all doors must be unlocked
- you must be able to see through all windows
- all gangways must be kept clear
- you must ALWAYS switch the engine off when refueling or leaving the vehicle, even if only for a short period
- **you must behave in a civil manner**
- you must not talk to anyone else
- you must not allow alcohol to be carried
- Where no traffic signs set a lower limit, speed limits are as follows:
 - Street lights closer than 200 yards apart - 30 mph
 - Other single carriageways - 50 mph
 - Dual carriageways - 60 mph
 - Motorways - 70 mph
- Drive slower at night or when poor road or weather conditions prevail.
- You must be at least 21 years old and the holder of a full (not provisional) car driving licence to drive a minibus, unless you have an appropriate PSV licence.
- You and the front passenger must wear seat belts in minibuses for 12 or fewer passengers. You are legally responsible if someone under 14 years is sitting in the front without a seat belt on.
- You should not use the horn in built up areas after 11.30 at night (23.30 hrs) or before 7.00 in the morning.
- At night you should always park on the nearside of the road, at least 10 metres away from the nearest road junction, and with your sidelights left on.
- It is illegal to use a blue badge for purposes other than disabled people.
- If you are likely to drive more than 4 hours a day, you may have to comply with the Domestic Drivers' Hours Regulations.
- You must put your lights on in poor visibility. You can only use hazard flashers when the minibus is stationary.
- No more than one passenger on each seat.
- If you do not have the permission of the Permit holder to be driving this minibus, then you may well be committing an offence, because the insurance will no longer be valid.

NB For the sake of brevity, much of the detail surrounding the above law has been compressed. (With acknowledgements to the Community Transport Association).

If a driver is concerned about the condition of a minibus, it should not be used. Remember, if there is a legal fault (eg, lights not working, bald tyre, etc) then the driver will be liable in law.

The driver is responsible for ensuring that:

- any non-routine journey should be arranged with the Administrator as far in advance as possible
- the daily checklist contained in the minibus is completed before use (including when used by the PE Department)
- only approved drivers are to use the School's vehicles. Drivers can check with the Administrator if they are approved by the School

The Bursar is responsible for ensuring that:

- re-assessments of driver competence are undertaken at least every 3 years
- the list of qualified minibus drivers available is always up-to-date
- a second driver is appointed to share driving duties on journeys that exceed recommended hours
- no driver exceeds a 9 hour working day at maximum

DRIVERS HOURS - Applicable to driving within the UK only

It is important to note drivers should not drive when they are feeling tired or unwell or on any medication which may affect their driving.

Daily Driving

The daily driving limit is 9 hours.

Continuous Driving

After driving continuously for 4 hours and 30 minutes you must take a break. The minimum rest break is 30 minutes.

Daily and Weekly Driving

The maximum number of hours that a driver may drive in any 24-hour period is 9 hours and a weekly maximum of 56 hours.

Where possible, it is recommended that a second authorised driver should be present on journeys of any significant distances in order to provide cover in the event of an unexpected incapacity of the driver.

Where the driver is required to participate in outdoor or strenuous activities in addition to their driving duties, a risk assessment must be undertaken to ensure that the driver is not being required to undertake an unreasonable task.

Length of Working Day

The driver is not permitted to work for more than 16 hours (including driving and non-driving duties) in any one working day.

Weekly Rest Periods

A weekly rest period of at least 45 consecutive hours must be taken after six daily driving periods.

Fortnightly Driving

No more than 90 hours may be driven in any one fortnight.

INSURANCE

In order to be authorised to drive School owned, leased, used or hired minibuses, the driver must firstly be authorised and insured by the School's Insurance.

Where minibuses are hired and School insurance is not utilised, confirmation of adequate driver insurance is required from the hire company.

The School should keep a copy of authorised drivers' driving Licences and all driving Licences should be inspected annually to ensure that no driving penalties have been applied. Where a driver receives endorsements, stipulations or medical restrictions they must notify the School and seek confirmation of authorisation to drive.

DRIVING ABROAD

Drivers should be aware that Section 19 Permits are not valid outside the UK. Europe wide regulations exist which lay down rules for international journeys and which apply to all passenger vehicles constructed to carry 9 or more persons; including the driver. There are regulations covering drivers' hours, rest periods and record keeping obligations. Further information may be obtained from the Bursar; it is not recommended, however, that the school's minibuses be taken abroad.

MINIBUS SAFETY

Minibus seating

It is the School's policy to use only minibuses, either leased, owned or hired, that comply with the following seating patterns (as recommended by the HSE):

- Forward Facing Seats
- Lap and Diagonal Seatbelts

Side sliding doors

Due to a design fault, which is common on several types of minibus, there have been reports of sliding doors being opened onto passengers' arms, which were protruding from adjacent open windows.

Although none of the School's minibuses has the fault identified, all employees must ensure that any externally hired minibuses are free of this design fault.

Seat Belts

It is recommended that all minibuses used by the School have lap and diagonal seat belts fitted to all seats. Seat belts must be worn at all times whilst the vehicle is travelling or in stationary traffic and it is expected that the most senior member of staff or the driver shall ensure that passengers wear their seat belts.

The driver of the minibus is legally responsible for ensuring that all passengers wear seat belts.

Contents of minibus (see Appendix B)

All minibuses must possess the following items and, where necessary, for these to be clearly marked:

- First Aid kit
- Fire extinguisher
- Reflective warning triangle
- High Visibility tabard
- Serviceable spare tyre
- Emergency exit information clearly marked
- Vehicle carrying capacity clearly marked
- Vehicle height (including roof rack) clearly marked
- Minibus Daily Checklist
- Accident Information Log book
- Torch
- Mobile phone - a phone is provided for each minibus route and is kept with the keys. Personal mobiles should not be used.

Carrying of Goods

Gangways and aisles must be kept clear and not be obstructed by luggage or equipment. No flammable liquids or hazardous materials may be carried on a minibus. Where goods are transported within a minibus, these should be secured so as not to be displaced in the event of an accident or incident.

Using Trailers

Drivers with post 1997 driving licences are not entitled to drive minibuses with trailers. Therefore only drivers with D1+E (not for hire or reward) on their driving licences will be permitted to tow a trailer. All other drivers without this classification on their driving licences are required to take the D1 driving test and where necessary the D1+E driving test.

It is recommended that before authorising a driver to tow a trailer that a MIDAS assessment is also undertaken to ensure that they are competent to tow and reverse a trailer and ensure its safe loading.

The Bursar must confirm that:

- the driver has previous experience and feels confident of towing trailers,
- the vehicle is fitted with specialist electrical equipment to ensure lights, indicators, etc, are operable on both vehicle and trailer,
- trailers must not be towed unless all passengers have access to at least two exits of the vehicle.

Note: with the trailer in position and loaded it must still be possible to open the rear doors and exit from the vehicle unless there is an offside emergency exit. Many minibuses are not suitable for towing trailers whilst maintaining an unobstructed rear exit and should not be used for this purpose.

Wheelchair Users

The School does not have minibuses incorporating wheelchair lift equipment. In the event of hiring a vehicle with such equipment, drivers must ensure they receive appropriate training, as per arrangements below, prior to use.

When hiring vehicles with specialist equipment, a request must be made by the hirer for full training in its use to be given to the driver at the time of delivery. This instruction must be passed on to any driver on handover.

Minibus Reversing

As minibuses have a significant blind spot whilst reversing, great care must be exercised when the vehicle needs to be reversed, whether or not passengers are on-board.

Wherever possible, a second person must assist the driver whilst reversing by guiding them on the outside towards the rear driver's side of the minibus. The person guiding the driver must remain in vision of the driver at all times and the driver must follow and understand their instructions.

In order to reduce the risk whilst reversing, it is recommended that a rear-view lens to the rear door window to improve vision be fitted.

Hiring a Minibus

When hiring a minibus, the person hiring and/or the driver has a responsibility to ensure that the vehicle and its use shall be in accordance with this Code. It is usually felt that a hire vehicle has already undergone a safety inspection prior to its receipt, however it should be pointed out that it is the driver who is legally responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition and should therefore carry out the appropriate checks.

In the case of specialist equipment included with the hired vehicle, full instruction on the use must be given on receipt of vehicle.

For hired minibuses:

- *The School has 2 spare Section 19 Permits. These permits are transferable and must be used accordingly between any minibus undertaking school activities.
- on receipt of the minibus, a permit must be issued by the Bursar and displayed in this vehicle prior to its use.
- the permit must be returned to the Bursar on completion of the journey

**If, at any time, all available permits are in use - no further minibuses may be used until a permit becomes available*

Problems during minibus journeys (Appendix C) – including mechanical breakdown

Should a minibus break down on the highway or motorway, the occupants are immediately at risk and it is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is placed in the safest possible position before assistance is summoned. To assist the drivers in dealing with any unforeseen emergencies, a mobile phone must always be carried in the minibus. Mobile phones are provided by the school for parental contact and emergency use. Phones contain confidential information and they should be safeguarded at all times. They should remain with the driver and not be left unattended on the minibus. Personal phones should not be used to adhere to GDPR and safeguarding requirements.

Illness/Injury

It is possible that any occupant of a minibus may become ill or receive an injury during a journey and require some form of medical treatment.

It is therefore reasonable to expect that the driver, or a passenger, should have received some basic first-aid training to deal with minor emergencies, and the vehicle should carry a first aid kit.

In the event of a serious medical problem, minibus drivers are advised to summon an ambulance by dialing 999.

Any injuries and/or use of first aid kits must be reported to the Bursar/Administrator on returning vehicle to enable restocking of first aid equipment.

Accidental Vehicle Damage (see Appendix D)

In the event of an accident the driver must:

Take steps to ensure the safety of the passengers. These will include moving the vehicle (if possible) to a place of safety, administering first aid (where trained/necessary) and summoning medical help (also if necessary).

If the crashed vehicle causes an obstruction or traffic hazard:

- * the police should be notified
- other motorists should be warned (eg, using triangle and hazard lights)
- the vehicle should be evacuated and the passengers kept well away (there are high visibility jackets for all passengers to use at the back of the minibus if leaving the vehicle, where possible)

The Accident Information log in the glove compartment of the minibus should be completed for insurance and Police enquiries. In addition, photographs of all of the vehicles involved in the accident should be taken. Photographs of all elevations should be taken, not just the damaged parts.

All details must reported to the Bursar immediately on return.

Giving details to other people

A person involved in an accident that causes:

- a) injury to another person;
- b) injury to certain animals (including dogs, sheep, horses, pigs, goats but not cats);
- c) damage to another vehicle; or
- d) damage to fixed property, eg, bollard, lamp post;

must stop and give their name and address, the name and address of the School and the vehicle's registration number to anyone reasonably requiring the information.

AT NO TIME SHOULD YOU ADMIT LIABILITY FOR THE ACCIDENT OR DAMAGE AS THIS MAY INVALIDATE THE INSURANCE.

If for any reason this is not possible, eg, the accident involves a parked car and the owner cannot be found, the accident must be reported to the police as soon as practicable and in any event within 24 hours.

Vehicle Fire (see Appendix E)

In the unlikely event of a fire on board a minibus, the driver and/or the person in charge must have knowledge of in-vehicle fire procedures. Each minibus should carry a fire extinguisher. However, the prime concern must always be passenger safety and welfare. Should fire break out, passengers must be evacuated from the vehicle immediately and led to a safe place. Only then can firefighting attempts begin, and then only if the crew consider it prudent to do so.

Approved by Chair of Governors October 2021

DAILY MINIBUS CHECKLIST - LIST CONCERNS OVERLEAF

WEEK BEG: _____

REG NO: _____

	Mon AM	Mon PM	Tues AM	Tues PM	Weds AM	Weds PM	Thurs AM	Thurs PM	Fri AM	Fri PM
MIRRORS										
LIGHTS / REFLECTORS										
INDICATORS										
WIPERS										
FUEL LEVEL										
SEATBELTS (CHECK THEY'RE RETRACTED AND NOT TWISTED)										
MUDGUARDS (VISUAL CHECK THAT NOT LOTS OF DEBRIS ON THEM)										
TYRES (VISUAL CHECK)										
BODYWORK (VISUAL CHECK)										
TORCH (CHECK IT'S WORKING)										

Driver.....

Signed.....

Date.....

Please return to Administrator at the end of each week.

Comments/Concerns - List and report to Administrator

Date

MINIBUS WEEKLY CHECKLIST

***REG: GU59 FYJ / GU59 MYX / GU12 ZHG / GX63 CXR /
GV13 FTE / GX18 UNW / GX18 UNY**

Week beginning: _____

<u>CHECK</u>	<u>TICK</u>	<u>CHECK</u>	<u>TICK</u>
LIGHTS / REFLECTORS		WATER COOLANT LEVEL	
INDICATORS		BATTERY FLUID LEVEL	
MIRRORS		BRAKE FLUID LEVEL	
HORN		ENGINE OIL LEVEL	
WIPERS		POWER STEERING FLUID LEVEL	
SEAT BELTS (NOT TWISTED/WORN)		TYRES INC SPARE, CONDITION AND PRESSURE (INFLATE IF NECESSARY)	
BODYWORK (NO RUST HOLES OR PROTRUDING ITEMS)		FAN BELT (NOT SPLIT/WORN)	
SMALL BUS PERMIT DISPLAYED		ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT (APP. B OF MINIBUS POLICY)	
GENERAL CONDITION OF INTERIOR			
MUDGUARDS		<u>OTHER</u>	
VISUAL CHECK OF EXHAUST		FILL UP WASHER BOTTLE	
		CLEAN WINDOWS, MIRRORS, LIGHTS	

**List any defects here (and overleaf if necessary) and arrange for rectification of faults
Notify the Bursar immediately of any major issues.**

PRINT NAME: _____

SIGN: _____

CONTENTS OF MINIBUS

Each minibus should have the following items.

- First Aid kit
- Fire extinguisher
- Reflective warning triangle
- High Visibility tabard
- Serviceable spare tyre
- Emergency exit information clearly marked
- Vehicle carrying capacity clearly marked
- Vehicle height (including roof rack) clearly marked
- Minibus Daily Checklist
- Accident Information Log book
- Torch
- Mobile phone - a phone is provided for each minibus route and is kept with the keys. Personal mobiles should not be used.

APPENDIX C

PAYG AA Breakdown (through Allstar Account): **0370 419 5165** and select **Option 3, then Option 1**. You'll need to give the Allstar card number or Account number. All this information is on a card in the bottom left of the front windscreen. The card number is individual to each minibus.

Insurance Details: **Marsh 01444 313263** Certificate No: **CV-025718974/15/04**

Our Lady of Sion Senior School: Gratwicke Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 4BL 01903 204063

Our Lady of Sion Junior School: Westbrooke, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 1RE 01903 204062

SPECIFICATIONS

	GU59 FYJ	GU59 MYX	GU12 ZHG	GX63 CXR	GU13 FTE	GU18 UNY	GU18 UNW
COLOUR	White	Silver	Silver	Silver	White	White	White
TYPE	Ford Transit	Ford Transit	Ford Transit	Ford Transit	Ford Transit	Ford Transit	Ford Transit
FUEL	Diesel	Diesel	Diesel	Diesel	Diesel	Diesel	Diesel
SEATS (inc driver)	17	17	17	17	17	15	15
TYRE PRESSURE Front	68.2 psi 4.7 bar 470 kPa	68.2 psi 4.7 bar 470 kPa	68.2 psi 4.7 bar 470 kPa	68.2 psi 4.7 bar 470 kPa	68.2 psi 4.7 bar 470 kPa	49.3 psi 3.4 bar 340 kPa	49.3 psi 3.4 bar 340 kPa
TYRE PRESSURE Rear	59.5 psi 4.1 bar 410 kPa	59.5 psi 4.1 bar 410 kPa	59.5 psi 4.1 bar 410 kPa	59.5 psi 4.1 bar 410 kPa	59.5 psi 4.1 bar 410 kPa	71.1 psi 4.9 bar 490 kPa	71.1 psi 4.9 bar 490 kPa

Accidental vehicle damage

In the event of an accident the driver must:

- Take steps to ensure the safety of the passengers. These will include moving the vehicle (if possible) to a place of safety, administering first aid and summoning medical help if necessary.
- If the crashed vehicle causes an obstruction or traffic hazard, the police should be notified. Other motorists should be warned (eg, using triangle and hazard lights). The vehicle should be evacuated and the passengers kept well away. There are high visibility vests for all passengers at the back of each minibus. If it is safe to do so, children should be instructed to wear these.
- The crash position should be noted carefully using the Accident Information Log found in the glove compartment and photos taken - for insurance and police enquiries.
- All details must be reported to the Bursar immediately on return.
- A person involved in an accident that causes:
 - a) injury to another person;
 - b) injury to certain animals (including dogs, sheep, horses, pigs, goats but not cats);
 - c) damage to another vehicle;
 - d) damage to fixed property eg, bollard, lamp post;

must stop and give their :

name and address, the name and address of the School and the vehicle's registration number to anyone reasonably requiring the information.

AT NO TIME SHOULD YOU ADMIT LIABILITY FOR THE ACCIDENT OR DAMAGE AS THIS MAY INVALIDATE THE INSURANCE.

If for any reason this is not possible, eg, the accident involves a parked car and the owner cannot be found, the accident must be reported to the police as soon as practicable and in any event within 24 hours.

WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF MINIBUS FIRE

- * Stop immediately and switch off the engine
- * Engage handbrake
- * Carry out a head count
- * Get the passengers out and away from the vehicle, closing the vehicle doors behind them
- * Call the emergency services
- * If you have time, remove the ignition key, close all windows and, if you think there may be an engine fire, release the bonnet catch. Do not open the bonnet.
- * Tackle the fire **ONLY IF YOU FEEL CONFIDENT AND IT IS SAFE TO DO SO, ie, not near any inflammable substances or areas, ie, garage forecourt AND IF THIS DOESN'T INVOLVE LEAVING ANY STUDENTS UNATTENDED.**
- * When the emergency services arrive, inform them if there is a hazardous load on board, for example gas canisters.