



St Edmund's School Canterbury

Minibus Policy 2023



Signed:

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DATED: September 2023

ST EDMUND'S SCHOOL, CANTERBURY: VEHICLE POLICY

1. GENERAL STATEMENT:

It is the School's policy to take all reasonable steps to manage the health and safety of those staff that drive school vehicles on school business. This is to comply with its legal duties as an employer and to demonstrate that it has taken all reasonable steps to introduce a safe system of work. It is for this reason that the policy not only sets out procedures on work-related driving, but details what it expects from its employees both in terms of complying with relevant legislation and its own standards. These cover a variety of areas including the documentation that it needs to see from own-car drivers, as well as basic guidelines on driver health.

2. REGULATIONS:

The Policy refers throughout to various statutory regulations and other documentation.

3. THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:

Anyone who operates a minibus/car service to carry passengers has a duty to take all reasonable precautions to ensure that it is operated safely.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Guidelines, "**Driving At Work**", state that:

"Health and safety law applies to on-the-road work activities and the risks should be effectively managed within a health and safety system".

This also applies to voluntary organisations; the HSE Guide, **Charity and Voluntary Workers: a Guide to Health and Safety at Work**, states:

"In general the same health and safety standards should be applied to voluntary workers as they would to employees exposed to the same risk. However, if the risk assessment shows that the risk to voluntary workers is different, the preventive and protective measures taken should reflect the different risks".

“HSE considers it good practice for volunteer user to provide the same level of health and safety protection as they would in an employer/employee relationship, irrespective of whether there are strict legal duties”.

It is also an offence under road traffic law to cause, or permit a minibus/car to be driven on the road when its condition, or the way in which it is used, in such a way that it could cause danger to anyone in the minibus/car or to other road users. Operators must comply with all relevant legal requirements, the advice in the Highway Code and take all other reasonable measures to protect the driver, the passengers and other road users from collision and injury risks.

Essentially, this means that, within its normal framework for managing health and safety at work, the organisation should conduct suitable risk assessments and ensure that journeys are safe, drivers are fit and competent and the minibus/car is fit for purpose and is in a safe condition. The management system must be monitored to ensure that drivers are complying with all requirements, and that adequate records are kept.

3.1 RISK ASSESSMENTS:

The School (here after known as the Operator) must conduct a written risk assessment of the management of its vehicle service. Risk assessments must be conducted by “competent persons”. They must be recorded and regularly updated, to demonstrate that the Operator has taken reasonable care and enable the service to be monitored to ensure standards, once set, are maintained, reviewed and improved.

Generic Risk Assessments

A generic risk assessment for the minibus/car service should be conducted and recorded. This addresses the process of recruiting, training and supervising drivers, issues relating to age, needs and behaviour of passengers, accident/emergency management systems, parental consent and general administration matters. The risk assessment should be recorded and regularly updated.

This Risk Assessment is conducted and reviewed on an annual basis by the Bursar in conjunction with the Health and Safety Manager.

Individual Risk Assessments

Specific journeys also need to be considered. For regular or frequent journeys it may not be necessary to conduct a separate written risk assessment for each trip. However, the risk assessment for regular trips should be periodically reviewed to ensure it remains appropriate and that it is being followed properly.

This Risk Assessment is conducted and reviewed on an annual basis by the Bursar in conjunction with the Health and Safety Manager. Any journey that from its departure point, to its final destination, which can be completed in two hours or under, is deemed as a regular and frequent journey.

An individual risk assessment should be conducted, in advance, for every unusual or non-routine journey, or when passengers have special needs. These risk assessments should be approved by the Operator and the person who has overall responsibility for the passengers, the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) via the Offsite Visit Policy and Procedures.

This risk assessment is the responsibility of the Driver/Activity co-ordinators and is to include any journey of over two hours duration.

4. LEGAL REQUIRMENTS:

Every minibus/car must:

- 1 Be correctly licensed.
- 2 Display a Section 19 permit (minibuses only)
- 3 Be adequately insured.
- 4 Be well maintained
- 5 Have a valid MOT certificate.

The above documentation is part of the management system and is administered by the Transport Supervisor

4.1 MINIBUS PERMITS:

A minibus that is used to carry passengers for hire or reward is normally classed as a Public Service Vehicle (PSV). The operator must comply with PSV Operator Licensing and Passenger Carrying Vehicle, driver licensing requirements.

However, non-profit making organisations (including schools) concerned with education, religion, social welfare, recreation or other activities of benefit to the community may be exempted if they are eligible for a minibus permit, granted under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985.

The permits are part of the management system and the responsibility of the Transport Supervisor. He/she holds spare Permits for hired minibuses.

The Operator and individual must ensure that when using a vehicle the permit 19, is clearly visible from the outside of the vehicle and not moved from the nearside windscreen. Only drivers with the D1 entitlement on their licence may drive vehicles over 3.5 tonnes. All hired minibuses must display a Permit 19 in the windscreen.

5. THE MINIBUS/CAR DRIVER:

Almost all road crashes are caused by, or involve, human error. More and more are caused by drivers losing control of their vehicles and by careless, reckless or aggressive driving.

The school will ensure that every minibus driver:

- 1 Has the appropriate licence entitlement to drive the minibus.
- 2 Receives practical driver training, as necessary, under the conditions in which they are likely to drive the minibus.
- 3 Understands his/her responsibilities.
- 4 Has a clean licence (no serious endorsements/medical conditions).
- 5 Is medically fit to drive.

All drivers are required by law to inform their employer if, due to medication or a medical condition, they can no longer legally drive or have limitations placed on them by the DVLA.

- 6 Drives for limited periods to avoid fatigue.
- 7 Is accompanied by a second driver, who is fully qualified and meets the same conditions as the first driver, on appropriate journeys.
- 8 Is accompanied by a passenger assistant where passengers needs require it.

5.1 DRIVER'S LICENCE REQUIREMENTS:

The school is responsible for ensuring that anyone that drives a school vehicle has a valid driving licence to do so. They should check the driving licence(s) of their drivers(s) annually and keep a record of the check

The Transport Supervisor holds the driving licence register which is checked annually.

Drivers are required to report any changes to their licence to the Transport Supervisor immediately.

5.2 DRIVER'S LICENCE:

If you had entitlement to drive cars prior to 1st January 1997, you may have been given D1 entitlement to drive a minibus. If this is the case you may drive minibuses provided you are 21 years or over and the minibus has a maximum of 17 seats including the driver and is not being used for hire or reward.

If you qualified for your car licence after the 1st January 1997 you will not have been given D1 entitlement. You will not be able to drive minibuses unless you are over 21 and the vehicle has a maximum of 17 seats including the driver, is under 3.5 tonnes or fitted for wheel chair access and is not being used for hire or reward.

Note that it is currently school policy that no driver under 25 can transport pupils. (Exceptions below).

A copy of your licence must be held by the Transport Supervisor on the driving licence register. Licences will be checked every twelve months by the Transport Supervisor or by the Advanced Check Company (Independent Company).

INSURANCE

The school insurance policy will cover any employee to drive school vehicles provided they over 21 years and under 70 years. This is subject to the exceptions below.

Drivers under 25 years who wish to transport pupils in school cars are subject the following conditions. They must be over 21, have held a full car licence for at least 2 years, no more than 9 current endorsement points and be subject of a driving assessment by the School.

Drivers are required by law to inform the Bursar of any changes with regards to endorsements on their licences i.e. points or convictions.

All drivers must be aware that if issued with a plastic driving licence and it expires, they are not insured to drive the operators vehicles. The individual is not insured until the licence has be renewed and in date.

Drivers with non UK or EU driving licences may not insured to drive school vehicles and must contact the Transport Supervisor for further information.

5.3 DRIVER'S PROCEDURAL TRAINING:

Driver assessment and training is essential. Trained drivers are safe drivers. Training reduces the risk to drivers, passengers and other road users. It increases the comfort of passengers and reassures parents that their children are in safe hands .New Drivers for the school (which could be teachers for field trips, PE etc.) will include:

- 1 Familiarisation with the vehicle.
- 2 Vehicle checks that should be conducted before/after each journey.
- 3 Emergency procedures:
- 4 Passenger care, including disability awareness (if applicable).
- 5 Proper use of seat belts, harness and other passenger safety equipment.
- 6 Undertaken the RoSPA / Castle online Driver Training course
- 7 Journey planning.
- 8 Dealing with luggage and equipment.

5.4 THE DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Operator has overall responsibility for ensuring that a safe service is provided. However, every driver is personally responsible for ensuring that their vehicle is roadworthy before they take it out onto the road. Indeed it is the driver's licence that will suffer if the vehicle is found to be defective. It also the driver's responsibility to ensure the safety (including the use of seat belts) and welfare of the passengers.

Before any journey, and every time a minibus/car is used, the driver must:

- 1 Plan the journey so that it can be completed safely and comfortably in accordance with the passenger's needs.
- 2 Ensure the minibus is suitable for the passengers being carried.
- 3 Conduct a walk round safety check and examination of the instrument panel.
- 4 Be fit to drive.
- 5 Be personally responsible for all speeding/parking/tolls or traffic violation fines whilst driving a school vehicle.
- 6 Complete the vehicle log sheet (Appendix 3)
- 7 Ensure vehicles are left clean and tidy on completion of the journey.

5.5 PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES USED ON SCHOOL DUTIES/ACTIVITIES:

- 1 Drivers must keep their insurance up-to-date if using their own vehicle.
2. Keep any private vehicle used on school business in a roadworthy condition.
3. Make available copies of the above documents annually when requested to do so.
4. Inform the Estates Manager of any changes in circumstances, e.g. penalty points or change in vehicle.
5. To have regular eye tests and to ensure that any necessary glasses are worn.
6. Ensure they keep up to date with any changes in the Highway Code.
7. To read any updates that the School may periodically issue on road safety and transport matters. These will include information on good practice as well as forthcoming legal changes which affect those who drive for the school.

8. The Transport Supervisor may require a valid copy of the owner's driving licence, insurance certificate and vehicle MOT.
9. Using the Operator's Occasional Business Use policy, privately owned vehicles used on official, authorised journeys will be covered by fully comprehensive cover.

5.6 MOBILE PHONES

It is very useful to have a mobile telephone in the minibus. However, it is essential that drivers do not make or receive calls or text messages while driving, as the distraction this causes (even if it is a hands-free phone) significantly increase the risk of a crash. The mobile phone should be kept by the passenger assistant, or the driver should only use it when stopped in a safe place. Operators or Managers should not expect to be able to contact a driver while he/she is driving.

5.7 SAFE DRIVER'S HOURS:

If the minibus is being driven in the UK by a paid driver, whether under a permit or not, Domestic Drivers Hours rules must be obeyed. For journeys that are not governed by Drivers Hours rules, it is strongly recommended that drivers do not exceed the following limits:

Table 1		
Recommended 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
Weekly Rest Periods	45 Hours	45 Hours

- 1 + Taking account of other work undertaken before starting a journey.
- 2 * After four and a half hours of driving, the accumulated length of breaks from driving should be at least 45 minutes.

5.8 BEST PRACTICE - JOURNEY PLANNING:

A planned journey reduces the risk of drowsiness and falling asleep at the wheel and is more efficient, saves time, stress and money. Operators should set out rules and procedures for the

journey planning and ensure that their drivers are aware and adhere to these rules. Operators, trip organisers and drivers should ensure that each journey is planned in advance in terms of its time and distance and their own and their passengers comfort. A suitable route should include places for rest, refreshment, comfort breaks and re-fuelling if necessary. Drivers should check information on road works and weather conditions that may affect their route, before they start out.

Time

Consider how long the journey will take, including time for rest breaks and unexpected delays. Avoid driving in the early hours of the morning, when drivers have had less sleep than normal or in mid-afternoon after eating a large meal, these are peak times for sleep related crashes. Avoid starting a long journey after a full day's work.

Plan the Route

If using a Sat-Nav, set the destination before starting the journey. Drivers should know not to automatically follow the Sat-Nav directions as it may sometimes send them on an inappropriate route. Drivers must obey road signs, markings and signals, no matter what the Sat-Nav says and of course, be aware of what's happening on the road around them.

A Sat-Nav is held by the Transport Assistant for the use of drivers on official driving details. The Sat-Nav covers the UK Mainland and Europe and can be signed out for relevant journeys.

If not using a Sat-Nav, write out a route that is easy to read. But do not try to read directions while driving. If necessary, stop somewhere safe to check directions. Check roadwork's of likely traffic jams and if possible, plan an alternative route to avoid any major delays. Plan where to stop for regular rest breaks (every 2 hours, or sooner if feeling tired, for a least 15 to 20 minutes).

5.9 DRIVING IN ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS:

Your task as a safe driver is to know how to adjust your driving to meet conditions on the road when you must travel, or to know how to maintain a modicum of safety when you find yourself in bad weather.

Driving in Bad Weather and Low Visibility

Your ability to see is limited in adverse weather conditions such as rain, fog, ice, snow, and dust. The most effective defensive driving techniques in these cases are to slow down and drive at speeds safe for the weather or to delay departure until conditions improve.

Make sure you are able to see and be seen. If you drive in rain or snow, make sure to stop sometimes to wipe mud or snow off your windshield, headlights, and taillights. Even in excellent weather, drive with your headlights on so as to be seen by other drivers.

Sun Glare

Driving toward the sun from sunrise to sunset can impair your visibility. Slow down when visibility is reduced in order to react to the unseen.

Bright sun or light reflections on a dirty window decrease visibility and increase risk. You should clear ice, frost, or dew from all windows before you drive.

Dark sunglasses and the sun visor in your vehicle can help you see better and diminish some of the effects of glare and reflected light from windows and chrome.

Fog

Among all weather conditions, fog is the most dangerous. Follow these tips:

- Use your wipers and defroster as necessary for the best view.
- Turn on your low-beam headlights. Do not use high-beams, it can actually decrease your visibility. High-beams will reflect back and cause a glare.
- Slow down. Fog makes it very difficult to judge speed, check your speedometer to make sure you have slowed down.
- Increase your following distance and be prepared to stop within the space you can see in front of your vehicle. Watch for slow moving vehicles. Check your rear-view mirror for vehicles approaching from behind.
- Slow down in patchy fog conditions; be sure you turn on your vehicle's low-beam headlights.

It is easy to think you can see well enough to proceed through patchy fog. However, you may suddenly encounter a heavy fog bank and find yourself in a dire circumstance of not being able to see ahead, behind, or on either side of your vehicle.

If the fog becomes so thick that you can barely see, pull safely and completely off the road. Do not continue driving until the fog lifts and visibility improves.

Rain

Slow down at the first sign of rain, drizzle, or snow on the road. This is when many road surfaces are most slippery because moisture mixes with oil and dust that has not been washed away.

Turn on your low-beam headlights.

Heavy rainfall can reduce visibility to zero. Pull over and wait for the rain to subside, or until visibility is restored.

Reduced Traction

Wet road surfaces can cause tires to hydroplane (skim on a thin layer of water). This could result in loss of control and steering ability. Hydroplaning is caused by a combination of standing water on the road, car speed, and under-inflated or worn-out tires.

If it feels like your tires have lost traction with the surface of the road and your vehicle is hydroplaning, take your foot off the accelerator and let the vehicle slow down. Do not try to stop until your tires are gripping the road again. To reduce the chances of hydroplaning, use tires with adequate water-channelling treads and check them regularly. Remember the other important factor is speed control—always slow down when water is on the road.

Snow and Ice

Streets and highways covered with snow, snow pack, or ice are extremely hazardous. They are most hazardous when the snow or ice begins to melt. The slush or wet surface acts as a lubricant and traction is reduced.

Extreme weather conditions may require special equipment (e.g., tire chains) and/or special skills by the driver (e.g., slow starts and stops).

Here are some guidelines for driving in snow or icy conditions:

- Keep the windows and windshield clear.
- Obtain maximum visibility by turning on low-beam headlights and windshield wipers.
- Drive slowly and stay farther behind the vehicle ahead. Slow to a crawl on ice. Slow down as you approach curves and intersections.
- Avoid fast turns.
- Avoid quick stops.
- Shift to low gear before going down a steep hill, but do not downshift at too fast a speed.
- If you drive in snowy areas, carry chains in case you find yourself in conditions where you can't drive without them. Learn how to put the chains on BEFORE you need to use them.

If you begin to skid, let up on the accelerator and turn the front wheels in the direction of the skid.

Wind

Wind creates additional problems for drivers. It can be especially dangerous for recreational vehicles, Minibuses, and vehicles towing trailers. The best defensive driving technique you can use for wind is driving at slower speeds.

Wind generally reduces your steering control. Tail winds push the vehicle, increasing speed. Head winds slow a vehicle down.

Crosswinds may cause a vehicle to swerve, especially minibuses and vans. Be prepared to make adjustments in speed and steering to compensate for wind conditions or safely pull over to allow gusty winds to subside.

You may suddenly be hit by a gust of wind as you cross a culvert or bridge, or drive through mountain passes and ravines. Wind gusts occur suddenly and can cause total loss of vehicle control, requiring an adjustment in speed and steering. You may encounter a small gust when being passed by a large truck or bus. Be alert.

Hot Weather

When driving in hot weather, keep an eye on the warning lights and gauges, especially the temperature gauge.

If the temperature gauge moves up to just below the red zone, turn off your air conditioner (if fitted) and turn on your vehicle's heater to its highest and hottest setting to help draw some of the heat away from the engine; immediately seek out a service station where it is safe to park and contact RAC for breakdown assistance.

If your temperature gauge is elevated and rising, and you are stopped in traffic, briefly put the vehicle in neutral and lightly step on the gas to help circulate coolant.

If the temperature light goes on or if the gauge enters the red zone immediately pull off the road to a safe area, well away from traffic, and stop the engine. If because the area is not safe or you need to move, wait 20 minutes, start up the engine, and if the temperature light comes on, proceed directly to the nearest safe area where you can contact RAC for breakdown assistance. If at any time the gauge goes back into the red zone or the temperature light comes on, pull over immediately, turn off the engine and repeat the wait process.

If the temperature gauge moves up to just below the red zone, turn off your air conditioner (if fitted) and turn on your vehicle's heater to its highest and hottest setting to help draw some of the heat away from the engine; immediately seek out a service station where it is safe to park and contact RAC for breakdown assistance.

Never attempt to remove the radiator cap when your car is hot, and do not pour water over a hot radiator or engine. You must wait a sufficient amount of time until your engine cools.

Even when parked in a parking lot, warm weather can pose dangers. Never leave a pupil or passenger in a parked vehicle in warm weather. Even an outside temperature in the 80s can quickly bring a vehicle interior to well over 140 degrees.

There are no circumstances in which a driver should feel that they have to complete a journey in adverse weather conditions. The safety of the pupils/passengers, driver/assistant must come first.

If the road conditions are dangerous do not start the journey.

If the road conditions become dangerous jurying the journey, find a safe place to stop and ride out the weather or if safe to do so turn back.

In all these circumstances the drivers carry mobile phones, if you have to abandon a trip, or are delayed, phone ahead from a safe place to inform those individuals that require to know.

Normal Sleep Time

Drivers should avoid staying up late or reducing their normal sleep before a long journey. Journeys should be planned so that, as far as possible, drivers are not driving when they would normally be sleeping; in the early hours of the morning, for example. Eating a full meal before driving may result in a lower ability to concentrate and/or sleepiness. Drivers should not eat or drink while driving.

After the Journey

The driver must conduct a post trip vehicle check, inside and outside the minibus and record any visible damage or faults, any emergency equipment that has been used and any incidents that have occurred during the journey. Any faults should be reported as soon as practicable and the minibus should not be used again until the fault is rectified.

Drivers should report all faults and damage to the Transport Supervisor.

5.10 PASSENGER ASSISTANTS:

The role of the passenger assistant in a minibus includes:

- 1 Preventing the driver being distracted by passengers, especially when children are being carried.
- 2 Supervising children and in particular preventing any behaviour that could create a hazard.
- 3 Helping passengers who the driver may not be qualified to help.
- 4 Assisting in the event of a breakdown or emergency.

Passenger assistants are recommended under the following conditions:

- 1 Where passenger's needs require a passenger assistant to be present,
- 2 Where young children are being carried.

It may not be necessary to require a passenger assistant for every journey where children are being carried. Short local journeys to a neighbouring school, for example, may be undertaken satisfactorily without a passenger assistant. However, a risk assessment should be conducted to decide which journeys do not require a passenger assistant.

Passenger Assistants must be present on all journeys when pupils under the age of 5 are present, also on all journeys of over two hours duration.

Passenger assistants have a wide range of duties. It is the Operator's responsibility to ensure that passengers assistants are provided when necessary (in accordance with the above risk assessment) and that they are suitable and capable of carrying out their duties. Operators should ensure that passenger assistants receive an introduction to their duties and are familiar with the vehicle, especially the emergency exits, first aid kit, fire extinguisher, emergency/breakdown procedures and trip details.

Duties of a passenger assistant is located at Appendix 5

Advice for passenger assistants is located at Appendix 6

5.11 BREAKDOWN PROCEDURES:

The school will ensure that there is a clearly defined written procedure which must be followed in the event of a collision or breakdown and that all drivers and escorts are aware of, and adhere to it. Regular vehicle checks and maintenance will reduce the likelihood of the minibus breaking down during a journey. Contact details of the breakdown company used by the school are displayed in every school vehicle.

In the event of a breakdown:

- 1 The driver should move the vehicle off the road/carriageway (onto the hard shoulder on a motorway) and switch on the hazard warning lights. If this is not possible, it should be moved as far away from moving traffic as possible. If the warning triangle is used, it should be placed on the same side of the road and at least 45 meters from the minibus. Always take great care when placing and retrieving a warning triangle and never use them on the motorway.
- 2 The passengers should be moved out of the nearside of the vehicle and as far away from it and other traffic as possible. No one should stand between the vehicle and oncoming traffic. On motorways or other busy roads passengers should be taken onto the embankment or grass margin and as far from the traffic as is practicable. The hard shoulder on a motorway is very dangerous.
- 3 Passengers should be kept together in one group. Children should be kept calm and under constant supervision.
- 4 In some circumstances, it may appear safer to leave passengers inside the vehicle; this should not happen under any circumstances and all passengers must be removed from the vehicle to a safe place.
- 5 If necessary, the driver should go for help, leaving the passengers with the passenger assistant, he/she should not leave the children alone. The driver will need to give the police or breakdown service, accurate details of the vehicle's location and inform them if children or passengers with mobility problems are being carried.

- 6 The Driver should also telephone the school or nominated contact person, preferably with a mobile telephone kept on board for this purpose, to tell them what has happened and ask them to relay messages to parents and others. They should have out-of-hours contact details for this purpose.
- 7 If the breakdown occurs on a motorway, it is better to use the roadside emergency telephone as this will enable the Police to pinpoint the vehicle's location. The nearest emergency telephone is indicated by arrows and numbers on small markers posts at the edge of the hard shoulder.

5.12 ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS:

In the event of a road traffic collision, the driver and/or the passenger assistant must make the collision scene as safe as possible:

- 1 Use the hazard warning lights and any other safety devices supplied.
- 2 Do not move injured passengers unless they are in immediate danger from other vehicles or from fire or explosion.
- 3 Call the emergency services immediately; provide them with information about the situation, any special circumstances and if any passengers have special needs.
- 4 Ensure one person (driver or passenger assistant) remains with the children if child passengers are involved.
- 5 Do not allow child passengers to assist with repairing or re-starting of a vehicle and never allow them to push the vehicle.

If the emergency services are called, the driver must stay at the scene of the collision until the emergency services (and anyone else with reasonable cause) have taken all the details. If possible, the names and addresses of all independent witnesses should be obtained at the scene.

If the collision is "damage only" and no one is injured, the driver should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy before continuing the journey. The incident must be reported to the operator on their return.

If there is any injury or the names of people involved are not exchanged or there is damage to property other than the driver's vehicle (including street furniture), the driver must report the collision to the Police as soon as possible or in any case within 24 hours.

Any other incident, including traffic offences, must also be reported to the operator.

Drivers, in the event of an accident and damage is caused to the school's vehicle or to someone else's vehicle or property, or if someone is injured, drivers should exchange the following with the owner of the vehicle/property:

- 1 Registration Numbers.
- 2 Names and Addresses'.
- 3 Details of the owner`s Insurance.
- 4 Do Not Admit Liability.
- 5 Details of any witnesses to the Incident/Accident.
- 6 An Incident Report Form (Appendix 8), is attached for drivers` to complete at the scene of the Incident/Accident.
- 7 Report the Incident/Accident to the Transport Supervisor as soon as possible.

5.13 EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS:

In the event of an accident such as fire, an emergency evacuation should be conducted. The best way to evacuate the vehicle will depend upon the nature of the incident, the passenger group and the type of the minibus. Therefore, the driver and passenger assistant(s) will need to exercise their judgement at the scene of the incident.

Drivers and passenger assistants who have been trained will be far better equipped to make appropriate decisions and cope with such difficult circumstances.

Passengers should exit the vehicle as they would normally, if possible and move as far away as possible. If passengers need assistance to the exit the vehicle, the passenger assistant(s) should provide what help is necessary. If it is necessary to use the rear exit, care must be taken against approaching traffic.

Each vehicle is fitted with a Fire Extinguisher which is fitted to the rear of the vehicle. Drivers and Passenger Assistant(s) should only use this equipment if it is required to clear a route to safety from the vehicle.

In the event of an engine fire, the driver should operate the bonnet release catch, so that on arrival the Fire and Rescue Service can gain access to the engine

Drivers and passenger assistant(s) should not attempt to tackle a vehicle fire, their priority is the safe evacuation of pupils/passengers and their safe management until the Fire and Rescue Service arrive.

5.14 IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT/ COLLISION OR BREAKDOWN:

In the event of a breakdown/collision/accident the following should be informed:

- 1 The Emergency Services as required.
- 2 Breakdown Services. All school vehicles are covered via RAC, who`s contact details are in each vehicle. Each vehicle has the following cover:

- a. Onward Travel
- b. At Home
- c. Minibus Recovery (vehicle & passengers will be recovered to an agreed location)
- d. Windscreen Cover

3 In the event of an accident, collision or breakdown the activity coordinator will need to refer to his/her form. The Residential or Hazardous Trips Form, with regards to emergency contact numbers in relation to that trip.

Located in each vehicle is a first aid kit, fluorescent jacket and warning triangle.

6. PASSENGER CARE:

The behaviour of passengers can also increase the likelihood of an accident occurring. Operators, Drivers and Passenger Assistant(s) have a duty of care to their passengers. Complying with the points outlined in the previous paragraphs will go a long way to fulfilling this duty. To summarise some of the main points, ensure:

- 1 The minibus is suitable for the needs of the passengers, including any passengers with disabilities.
- 2 The minibus is roadworthy.
- 3 All drivers are properly trained and regularly re-assessed.
- 4 A second driver is provided when appropriate.
- 5 There is a properly trained passenger assistant when appropriate.
- 6 All passengers have a seat fitted with a seat belt.
- 7 Journeys are properly planned with adequate rest stops.
- 8 Drivers and passenger's assistant(s) know the emergency procedures.
- 9 All luggage and equipment is safely stored.
- 10 The doors are closed, but not locked, before moving off.
- 11 The journey details are left with the nominated person.
- 12 The aisles and exits are clear.

Passengers may have a wide range of needs, which could include physical and medical difficulties.

Drivers and passenger's assistant (s) need to be aware in advance of the needs of passengers who are being carried. It is important that the driver and passenger assistant(s) understand the nature of the needs and are qualified to assist the passengers.

Activity/Group co-ordinator`s must ensure that the driver/passenger assistant(s) are made aware of any of the above. If the driver/passenger assistant(s) does not know the passenger group they are transporting they must check with the Activity/Group co-ordinator for this information.

6.1 PICK UPS AND DROP OFFS:

Places where passengers are picked up and dropped off should be pre-arranged. Consideration should be given to the safety of passengers waiting for the minibus to arrive and boarding and leaving the minibus at these places.

This is particularly important for children and other vulnerable passengers. They should not be left alone at a drop off point if their parents/carers have not arrived to collect them. Parents must, of course, know when and where they are expected to collect their children.

Drivers must make certain that all passengers have boarded, are safely seated and are wearing properly adjusted seat belts, if fitted, before moving off. The doors must be properly closed, but not locked, before the driver moves off. Equally, they must make sure that all passengers have left the minibus and are clear of the doors before moving off. They should be aware of the danger of passenger`s clothes becoming trapped in a door.

Drivers should use only suitable, agreed drop of point. They should ensure that passengers do not exit from doors opening into traffic. When collecting or dropping off passengers from/to premises on the offside of a one-way-street, the vehicle should stop on the nearside and the passengers escorted across the road when it is safe to do so.

6.2 PASSENGER BRIEFING:

Passengers should be aware of the behaviour expected of them. Children in particular should be briefed before the journey begins so that they understand why boisterous behaviour is inappropriate. Passengers should be aware of the rest stops.

7. THE MINIBUS/CAR:

The suitability and condition of the minibus/car itself can contribute to the likelihood of a collision occurring and to the severity of injuries sustained in the event of a collision.

All minibuses/cars purchased, hired or leased are suitable for the school`s transport requirements and provide the maximum level of safety possible.

7.1 SEATBELTS:

Minibuses carrying groups of children on organised trips, including school trips, must provide children with either a lap-belt or a three-point belt on a forward-facing seat.

All minibuses manufactured or first used on or after 1 October 2001 (whether they carry adult or child passengers) must by law be fitted with either three-point seat belts or lap belts on forward or rearward-facing seats.

However, seat belts are no use if they are not worn, so ensure that your child/passengers know that they must wear their seat belt at all times.

Seat belts are designed for adults, and the safest option would be for children to use a child seat that is suitable for their weight, when travelling by minibus. Unfortunately, this is rarely possible because it is not practical for the Operator to carry a range of different child seats on their vehicles.

If younger children are travelling on an organised trip or minibus route, the activity organiser/driver should think about child seats in advance, although the school does not hold large quantities of seats, JS do hold some. It may be possible to use one if it can be fitted to a minibus seat. However some minibuses have lap belts and some have lap and diagonal belts, so check whether the seat is compatible with the type of seat belt fitted on the vehicle.

In most cases, it is likely that the children will have to use the normal seat belt. Although not ideal, this is still far safer than not using any restraint. To maximise the protection provided by the seat belt:

- 1 The belt should be worn as tight as possible
- 2 The lap belt should go over the pelvic region, not the stomach
- 3 The diagonal strap should rest over the child's shoulder, not their neck.

Three-point seat belts (lap and diagonal) provide greater protection than lap belts. However, lap belts are far better than no belt at all.

Drivers transporting young children in any of the school cars must ensure that the correct seats (booster) are used. Minibuses are exempt from the need for booster seats.

7.2 SCHOOL BUS SIGN:

Under the Road Vehicles Lighting (Amendment) Regulations 1994, minibuses carrying children to or from school must display a prescribed "school bus" sign to the front and rear of the vehicle. The driver may use hazard warning lights when the vehicle is stationary and children are entering or leaving the vehicle.

7.3 EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT:

Regulations 42 and 7 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 specify that every minibus must carry a British Standard Fire Extinguisher of Water or Foam, with a minimum

test rating of 8A or 21B. If passengers in wheel chairs are carried, the minibus should carry two fire extinguishers, one of which is kept in the passenger compartment. Drivers and passenger assistant(s) should be trained in their use.

The regulations also specify that a suitable, clearly marked first aid box is kept readily available and in good condition (Appendix 7 lists the minimum content of first aid kits).

The driver and passenger assistant(s) must know where the emergency equipment is kept in the vehicle and how to use it. The driver should check all the items are present before each trip. Every time an item is used the driver should inform the Transport Manager, who will ensure the item is replaced or re-filled.

A fire extinguisher is fitted between the driver and passengers seat on all minibuses and conforms to the regulation standard (cars are not fitted with extinguishers). Inside each vehicle is a red warning triangle and fluorescent jacket.

First Aid kits are located in all the minibuses and cars.

If any of the equipment above is used during your journey, it must be reported to the Transport Supervisor.

7.4 FIRE HAZARDS:

Procedures for dealing with a vehicle fire are an important part of minibus driver training courses. The presence of a passenger assistant(s) will reduce the risk to passengers if a fire breaks out.

In the event of a vehicle fire, the passengers should be evacuated first and moved as far away from the vehicle as possible, no attempt is to be made to extinguish the fire unless it is necessary to evacuate the vehicle. Under bonnet fires should “NEVER” be tackled, but left for the Fire and Rescue Service.

Drivers can assist the Fire and Rescue Service by pulling the bonnet release (but “NOT” opening the bonnet any further) as they evacuate the vehicle. Fire extinguishers should be checked regularly. “NEVER” carry a fuel can, either empty or full, in the minibus.

7.5 LUGGAGE:

There are three ways of carrying luggage and equipment in a minibus, inside the vehicle, on the roof or in a trailer. However it is carried, all luggage and equipment must be securely stored. It should also be evenly distributed so one side of the vehicle is not weighed down. The gross weight (specified in vehicle handbook/metal plate on vehicle) must not be exceeded by the combined weight of the passengers, luggage and equipment.

Roof Racks

Roof racks or roof boxes may be preferable if bulky equipment, or a large amount of luggage, is to be carried. If they are used, they must be loaded properly in accordance with the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations. If a tarpaulin cover is used it must be securely tied and all items carried must be securely held so they cannot come loose and fall off the vehicle.

Drivers must be aware of the maximum weight capacity of the roof rack. This is commonly well below what it can be filled with and if overloaded the stability and safety of the vehicle is adversely affected. The manufacturer's recommended maximum weight for a roof rack should never be exceeded.

The driver and passenger assistant should be trained in the use of roof racks. Drivers need to be aware of how a loaded roof rack affects the vehicle's handling. The use of a roof rack also presents some manual handling issues, for which drivers and passenger assistants must be trained.

Departments that can clearly identify a need to use roof racks should contact the Transport Manager, so that training may commence for those drivers/assistants, who need it.

Trailers

Alternatively, a trailer may be used to carry luggage or equipment. Lower speed limits apply to minibuses with trailers, 50 mph on single carriage roads and 60 mph for dual carriageways and motorways. Minibuses with trailers are also prohibited from using the outside lane of the motorways with three or more lanes except when passing an abnormally wide load.

Lower speed limits, usually 30 mph, apply to all vehicles on restricted roads that either have streetlights at intervals of not more than 200 yards or are designated as restricted and have "repeater" speed limit signs erected.

Drivers who passed their driving test before 1 January 1997 may tow a trailer of any weight, up to the maximum train weight of the minibus. Drivers who passed their driving test on or after 1 January 1997 who a D1 entitlement on their licence may tow a trailer up to 750 kgs on a minibus. To tow a trailer above 750 kgs, the driver must have D1+E entitlement on their licence. Without these entitlements, drivers who obtained their car driving licence on or after 1 January 1997 are not permitted to tow a trailer on a minibus.

In addition to complying with the appropriate licence requirements, all drivers must be trained or already experienced in towing before being permitted to drive a minibus with a trailer.

A trailer must not be used on any minibus with rear facing doors which is carrying passengers, unless there is an emergency door on the nearside of the vehicle. In the event of a collision, it is likely that the trailer will obstruct the rear doors. It is the Operator's responsibility to ensure that when passengers are carried, access through the emergency rear exit is not restricted in any way by the trailer.

Drivers: a plate is located in the near side entrance doorstep of each vehicle, stating the maximum permissible weights. The gross vehicle weight must not be exceeded by the combined weight of the passengers, luggage and equipment. When in doubt, drivers must check the vehicle gross weight at the nearest weighbridge.

Canterbury: Located on the A28, Vauxhall Industrial Estate.

Drivers should be aware that driving a minibus which is close to its maximum weight limit may increase the vehicle's braking distances.

MISCELLANEOUS:

8. BOOKING:

Booking for the School minibuses/cars may be made in the 'Minibus booking out folder' located in Reception.

Would users please ensure:

- 1 They have booked the minibus for the period during which they are required.
- 2 If minibuses/cars are to be used at short notice, check that they are not already booked.
- 3 In case of a clash of bookings PLEASE CONSULT rather than double-book.

8.1 VEHICLE LOG FORM

Contained within each vehicle is the vehicle log form (Appendix 3), drivers must fill in the relevant details requested. The log is important and these documents will be retained for a minimum of 18 months.

8.2 PERMISSION FOR TRIPS:

The Headmaster's permission is required for all excursions, field trips, and cultural visits at home and abroad. Please contact the Bursar for information on insurance etc. for trips abroad.

8.3 NOTIFICATION OF PASSENGER LIST:

For all journeys exceeding 30 miles in total make sure there is a completed list of passengers being carried with a note of any special medical needs. Keep the list with other relevant documents in a place where it can be readily found in the event of an accident. A list of all drivers of minibuses and other self-drive vehicles and passengers is held in Reception. If there is a serious delay during the journey, inform the School and/or designated organisation so that information may be passed to the relevant parties.

The above rules apply, as appropriate, to all hired vehicles.

8.5 FUEL:

Drivers ensure you use the correct fuel when filling a vehicle, (check label above fuel cap). Fuel can be obtained from any Fuel Station using the All-Star fuel card, bearing the correct vehicle registration number. The Driver will need to give the PIN and current mileage of the vehicle to the garage staff when purchasing fuel. The fuel cards must be returned to sun visor of the vehicle. On returning from your journey please hand in any fuel receipts to the Finance Department.

8.6 USE OF MINIBUSES ABROAD:

Anyone considering taking a party to the Continent by minibus is to discuss this with the Bursar and Transport Supervisor well in advance, to allow Insurance and Current Legislation arrangements to be completed which are not covered in this document.

8.7 CARRIAGE OF ANIMALS:

Arrangements have not been made by the operator for the carriage of animals in its vehicles. Animal owners who transport pets within the vehicles will adhere to the following:

1. Where possible provide the correct carrier and ensure the animal is secured within it.
2. Where a carrier cannot be provided, the animal is to be secured within the vehicle. It is not allowed to move around the vehicle at any time.
3. Animals moving freely around a vehicle will cause distractions to the driver, increasing the risk of an accident or incident and also significantly increasing the severity of injuries sustained to the driver, staff and passengers on the vehicle.
4. The owner must ensure that at the end of the journey, any mess made by the animal is cleared and the vehicle is left clean and tidy.

Animal owners should be very clear that in the event of the above not being followed, any accident, incident or injury caused to third parties, staff or passengers resulting in animals not being transported within the rules above, will lead to legal proceedings from the Operators Insurance Company and Criminal proceeding from the Police and The Health & Safety Executive.

9. SUMMARY:

The above policy sets out a clear Management System for the Operator, Manager, Driver and Passenger Assistant(s) to follow and adhere to. This system is in line with current legislation and as promoted by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

The guidelines set out the system which exists to maintain the Operators "Duty of Care", to all persons involved in using school vehicles that transport Pupils and Passengers.

The Management System is constantly being monitored and updated.

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF APPENDICES ATTACHED TO THE REAR OF THIS DOCUMENT:

- 1 NO SMOKING POLICY
- 2 ADVICE FOR MINIBUS DRIVERS.
- 3 THE DUTIES OF A PASSENGER ASSISTANT.
- 4 ADVICE TO PASSENGER ASSISTANTS.

Appendix 1

No Smoking Policy: (The School is a totally No Smoking Environment)

England

Regulations relating to smoking in company vehicles came into force on 1 July 2007. The position is that:

1. Enclosed vehicles which one or more persons use for work will be no-smoking premises and covered by the ban. The ban applies to cars, vans and lorries at all times if they can be used by one or more persons, as driver or passenger, in the course of paid or voluntary work regardless of whether they are in the vehicle at the same time.

Disciplinary Action will be taken against individuals who do not conform to the Operator's Policy of No Smoking in any of its Vehicles.

Appendix 2

Advice for minibus drivers:

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

Before setting off

1. Allow sufficient time for the journey. If using a SatNav, set it before you start.
2. Avoid long spells of driving and plan breaks to ensure you are fresh to continue and that children do not get restless.
3. Conduct a pre drive safety check before every journey.
4. Never allow passengers to board until the vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or other traffic free area. If you need to leave the vehicle, switch off the engine.
5. Passengers should enter the minibus from the pavement adjacent to the minibus, not from the road itself (unless using a ramp or lift at the rear). If driving abroad, the nearside door may open onto the road and therefore, extra care will be needed.
6. Ensure that children are supervised when boarding the vehicle, especially if they are using a rear door. Plan which passengers will sit in the front seats and those by the doors.
7. Do not exceed the carrying capacity of the minibus. Make sure everyone is sitting, one to a seat and that passengers are using seat belts.
8. Make sure there is a complete list of passengers being carried with a note of any special medical or other needs. Keep the list with other relevant documents in a place where it can be readily found in the event of an accident. Check that children who require medication are carrying it and it is in date.
9. Take care when using passenger lifts and other specialist equipment. Always comply with the manufacturer's instructions.
10. Check that no bags or clothing are caught in the doors and check all mirrors every time before moving away in case latecomers are approaching the vehicle.
11. Check that all luggage is secured and that gangways and exits are clear.
12. Know the height, width, length and weight of the vehicle and the position of the exterior fuel cap.

During the journey

1. Do not allow noisy or boisterous behaviour, or passengers to trail flags or any other article from the vehicle.
2. There is no "Smoking" on any school vehicle.
3. No "Alcohol" is to be consumed on any school vehicle.

Appendix 3 (Continued)

4. Do not allow child passengers to operate the doors and supervise any operation of the doors by responsible persons.
5. Approach each stop slowly and with care.
6. Use Hazard Warning Lights on school trips when children are boarding or leaving the vehicle.
7. If there is a serious delay during the journey inform the school, so that information may be passed to parents/teachers. A mobile phone is very useful for this purpose, but must not be used by the driver while driving.
8. Children must not be left unaccompanied in the minibus.
9. If the vehicle breaks down, or if there is a collision, give clear instructions to the passengers and see that children remain together and supervised: their safety is paramount.
10. If there is a risk of fire, however small, evacuate the vehicle and move the occupants to a safe place.
11. If you have to stop for an emergency or breakdown whilst on a motorway, only stop on the hard shoulder and as far away from the carriageway and passing traffic as possible. Again ensure that passengers, especially children, remain together and supervised.
12. If requested by the police, or any other person having reasonable cause, give particulars of the drivers name and driving licence and the name of the minibus operator or owner.

At the end of the journey

1. Ensure that children are supervised when leaving the vehicle, especially if they are using a rear exit.
2. Never allow passengers to leave until the vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or other traffic free area and that the hand brake is engaged.
3. Always park so that passengers step onto the footway and not onto the road.
4. Take particular care when reversing the vehicle if children are nearby. Avoid unnecessary reversing, but if it is unavoidable, seek adult assistance for direction, but ensure the assistant does not stand directly behind the vehicle.
5. Children alighting from the vehicle should be closely supervised.
6. Do not leave children alone if no one has arrived to collect them. Ensure you know what to do if a child is not collected.
7. Report any problems or incidents that occurred during the trip to the Operator.

Appendix 3

The duties of a passenger assistant – advice for Operators

1. Supervise the passengers when boarding or leaving the vehicle, taking particular care if they are leaving by the rear exit. If driving abroad in a country that drives on the right, be aware that some doors may open onto the roadside.
2. Check that no passenger boards or leaves the vehicle until it is at a complete standstill and safely parked by a pavement or other traffic free area.
3. Ensure the driver does not move off until everyone is safely seated, facing the front and wearing a properly positioned and adjusted seat belt (fitted), or using a securely fixed and properly adjusted special harness, seat or child restraint if appropriate.
4. Ensure that passengers behave in an acceptable manner during the journey and do not distract the driver in any way. Boisterous play must not be allowed; neither must smoking nor drinking alcohol. Passengers must remain seated and wearing their seat belts throughout the journey.
5. Ensure that luggage is securely stored and that all gangways and exits are kept clear.
6. Ensure that when passengers are dropped off, they leave the vehicle safely, that no parts of their clothing are caught in the vehicle's doors, that there is someone to meet them (parent/guardian)
7. Ensure that children are never left unsupervised in the minibus.
8. Only operate lifts, ramps and specialist equipment if trained to do so.
9. Keep a complete list of the passengers, including details of any special needs and ensuring that all passengers have returned to the vehicle after any rest stops.
10. In the event of a breakdown or accident, ensure children remain supervised, are given clear and firm instructions and if necessary, help in evacuating the minibus.
11. Help to direct the vehicle if the driver needs to reverse, but do not stand directly behind the vehicle out of the drivers sight, children must never direct a reversing vehicle.

4. Advice for passenger assistants on minibuses

Before setting off

1. Reserve the most appropriate seat for yourself to allow you to supervise the passengers.
2. See that the children are supervised when boarding the vehicle, especially if they are using a rear door.
3. Never allow passengers to board until the vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or traffic free area.

4. Make sure there is a complete list of the passengers being carried with a note of any special medical or other needs. Keep the list with other relevant documents in place where it can be readily found in the event of an accident.
5. Take care when using passenger lifts and other specialist equipment. Always comply with the manufacturer's instructions.
6. Check that no bags or clothing are caught in the doors and check all mirrors every time before moving away in case latecomers are approaching the vehicle.
7. Check that all luggage is secured.

During the journey

1. Do not allow noisy or boisterous behaviour.
2. Try to keep the children occupied the journey will seem quicker.
3. Enforce the "No Smoking, No Alcohol" rule.
4. Do not allow passengers to operate the doors, unless supervised.
5. If there is a serious delay during the journey inform the school so that the relevant information can be passed onto the parents/guardians. Ensure a mobile phone is taken on your journey.
6. Children must not be left unaccompanied in the minibus.
7. If the vehicle breaks down, or if there is a collision, give clear instructions to the passengers and see that children remain supervised: their safety is paramount.
8. If there is a risk of fire, however small, evacuate the vehicle and move the occupants to a safe place.
9. Ensure that any rubbish is disposed of properly and not thrown around the vehicle.

At the end of the journey

1. Ensure that children are supervised when leaving the vehicle, especially if they are using a rear exit.
2. Never allow passengers to leave until the vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or other traffic free area.
3. Do not leave children alone if no one has arrived to collect them.

4. If necessary, assist the driver to reverse the vehicle. Never allow a child to do this. Do not stand directly behind the vehicle while it is reversing.

5. Ensure that passengers take all their personal belongings with them.