



Minibus Policy

Minibus Policy

Audience:	Headteacher Minibus Drivers All Staff
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Other related policies / procedures:	Crofty Health & Safety Arrangements Administering Medicine
Owner:	Estates Manager
Policy / procedure model:	Trust and school policy: all Crofty schools use this policy
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Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Eligibility
4. Risk Assessment
5. Procedures
6. Health and Safety
7. Breakdowns
8. Accidents
9. Monitoring and review

Appendices - Maintenance Checklist

Statement of intent

Crofty Education Trust (the Trust) understands that minibuses are a useful form of transport and are often required for outings such as educational visits or trips.

The Trust also understands that safety on the minibus, and of the minibus itself, is paramount when travelling. As a result, this procedure has been created to provide guidance on the responsibilities and procedures associated with the use of minibuses.

1. Legal framework

- 1.1 This procedure has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:
 - 1.1.1 Road Traffic Act 1988 (as amended)
 - 1.1.2 The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1999 (As amended 2015)
 - 1.1.3 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- 1.2 This procedure also has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - 1.2.1 DfE and Department for Transport (2013) 'Driving school minibuses: advice for schools and local authorities'
 - 1.2.2 RoSPA (2015) 'Minibus safety A Code of Practice'
 - 1.2.3 GOV.UK (2016) 'Child car seats: the law'
 - 1.2.4 GOV.UK (2014) 'Seat belts: the law'

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 The Trust is responsible for:
 - 2.1.1 Ensuring that a full MOT on the school minibus is carried out by the required date.
 - 2.1.2 Providing appropriate tax and licensing for the minibus.
 - 2.1.3 Ensuring that the minibus is appropriately insured, and roadside assistance is organised.
- 2.2 The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that there is at least one first aider on the bus.
- 2.3 The driver is responsible for:
 - 2.3.1 Ensuring that they are eligible to drive as per the eligibility requirements outlined in this policy.
 - 2.3.2 Adhering to all relevant road rules and laws, including any driving hours regulations.
 - 2.3.3 Ensuring that all passengers are wearing a seatbelt.
 - 2.3.4 Conducting safety checks on the minibus before travelling.
 - 2.3.5 Declaring if points have been added to their licence.
- 2.4 Additional staff are responsible for:
 - 2.4.1 Ensuring that passengers continue to wear their seatbelts throughout the journey.
 - 2.4.2 Ensuring that passengers model good levels of behaviour, and responding to any disruption appropriately.
 - 2.4.3 Ensuring that passengers do not consume food or drink on the minibus.
 - 2.4.4 Keeping all exits clear for the duration of the journey.

- 2.5 Passengers are responsible for:
 - 2.5.1 Following all instructions issued by the driver and supervisors.
 - 2.5.2 Wearing their seatbelt at all times during the journey.
 - 2.5.3 Conducting good levels of behaviour, and not distracting the driver.
 - 2.5.4 Conducting good levels of behaviour towards drivers in other vehicles.

3. Eligibility

3.1 A minibus is defined as a motor vehicle with between 9 and 16 passenger seats. It is described as a category D1 vehicle by the Driving Vehicle Licencing Authority (DVLA).

3.2 Before any individual is permitted to drive the minibus, they are required to provide their driver's licence to the headteacher, who will record confirmation of this and make a photocopy for school records and if the headteacher is not satisfied that the driver's licence is sufficient, they will inform the driver that they are not eligible to drive the minibus.

3.3 Drivers will also be eligible to drive a minibus if they passed their category B (car) driving test **before** 1 January 1997, provided the minibus is not being used for hire or reward and have passed the minibus competency course.

3.4 Drivers will also be eligible to drive a minibus if they passed their category B (car) driving test **on or after** 1 January 1997, provided the minibus is not being used for hire or reward, and the following conditions are met:

- 3.4.1 The gross vehicle weight of the minibus does not exceed 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes if including any specialist equipment to carry disabled passengers).
- 3.4.2 The driver is over 21 years old and has held a category B (car) driving licence for at least two years and has completed the minibus competency course.

3.5 Drivers with more than **three** points on their licence will not be eligible to drive the minibus and regular checks of drivers driving licences needs to be carried out by the headteacher.

3.6 **All drivers** are required to successfully pass the MAT's driving competency course, **MIDAS**, before they are eligible to drive the minibus.

3.7 Drivers will be subject to a re-assessment at least **once** every **three years**, or in response to any incidents.

3.8 The minibus is used by a non-commercial body for non-commercial purposes, e.g. school sports team travelling to a fixture. But not for loaning to a commercial body who use the vehicle for carrying goods, or passengers who pay.

3.9 The driver receives no payment other than the recovery of their out-of-pocket expenses, e.g. fuel and parking costs. They must have a receipt and submit through Edupay.

3.10 The driver does not tow a trailer.

4. Risk assessment

4.1 The **headteacher** will also conduct a generic risk assessment of the minibus usage, including supervising drivers, parental consent, journey planning, accident procedures, etc. Additional risk assessments may also be completed for specific journeys, if necessary

5. Procedures

5.1 The keys for the minibus are held in the **school office**. The keys will be signed in and out of the **school office** by the driver of the minibus – they will be signed back in as soon as the minibus returns to the premises.

5.2 The driver of the minibus will ensure that:

5.2.1 They are legally entitled, and properly insured, to drive the minibus.

5.2.2 The minibus is well-maintained and legally allowed on the road.

5.2.3 Has carried a Pre- drive checklist (see appendix)

5.3 If the driver has any serious concerns regarding the safety or roadworthiness of the minibus during the journey, e.g. a flat tyre, a call will be made to the **school office**, and the breakdown procedure will be followed (see section 7)

5.4 If the driver notices any minor defects during the journey which do not compromise the safety of the driver or passengers, e.g. one broken windscreen wiper, these can be reported to the **School Office** after the journey.

5.5 The minibus will not be used in any situations where a cause for concern has been identified by a qualified mechanic.

5.6 In addition to the Pre-drive checklist, and before beginning the journey, the driver will:

5.6.1 Plan the journey so that it can be completed safely and comfortably with the passengers' needs.

5.6.2 Ensure that they are fit and able to drive.

5.6.3 Conduct a moving brake test.

5.6.4 Ensure that the minibus is suitable for the passengers being carried.

5.6.5 Ensure that passengers are aware that they must not consume food or drink on the vehicle.

5.6.6 On return ensure that all rubbish is removed and there is no damage to the inside or outside of the vehicle.

5.7 In addition:

5.7.1 The driver of the vehicle will plan all routes accordingly, ensuring that the route is suitable and safe for use by minibuses.

5.7.2 Mobile phones including hands free are not permitted for use by the driver whilst they are driving the minibus. If the driver must make a call, they will pull over to a safe stopping place to do so.

5.7.3 A mobile phone will be carried by at least **one** member of staff in case of an emergency. The member of staff will have emergency contacts for the school.

5.7.4 A nominated person at the school, and who is not on the journey, will be aware of the destination of the minibus, its route and its expected time of arrival and return.

5.7.5 Parents/carers will also be informed of the above information and will be provided with the school phone number for contact.

- 5.7.6 Smoking, drinking alcohol and taking drugs is strictly prohibited by pupils, staff members and the driver at all times whilst on the vehicle.
- 5.7.7 The driver will ensure that the legal speed limits for minibuses are followed at all times during the journey.
- 5.7.8 Pupils will be required to maintain good levels of behaviour at all times whilst on the minibus, and will avoid any behaviour that may distract the driver.

6. Health and Safety

6.1 If a driver is taking any prescribed drugs or medicine that may affect their ability to drive, they are not permitted to drive the minibus.

6.2 In light of the above, if the driver feels unwell before or during the journey and that this may affect their ability to drive, they are not permitted to drive the bus. Another member of staff who holds a relevant licence will be available to drive the minibus in such cases.

6.3 Drivers will not drive for longer than **two hours** without taking a break for at least **15 minutes**.

6.4 For long journeys (more than 100 miles from your school), a second driver with a valid licence will be available to take over driving the minibus during driving breaks, or if the driver is ill, or the schools critical incident policy will be followed.

6.5 A first aid kit will always be available on the minibus and will be fully stocked, and at least **one** member of staff on the minibus will be a qualified first aider.

6.6 Additional medicine may be taken for pupils with medical conditions, though only staff trained to administer medicine will do so, in accordance with the school's **Administering Medicine Policy**.

6.7 Seatbelts and seats will be fitted and worn in accordance with relevant seat belt laws.

6.8 The minibus is fitted with child car seats for pupils between 3- and 12-years old, or 135 cm tall, whichever is first, and in accordance with relevant child car seat laws. If a child needs to travel in the front then consideration of height and weights needs to be given and the need for booster seats or full child booster chairs.

Group	Seats
15kg to 25kg	2 Rear- or forward-facing child car seat (high-backed booster seat or booster cushion) using a seat belt, harness or safety shield
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22kg to 36kg	3 Rear- or forward-facing child car seat (high-backed booster seat or booster cushion) using a seat belt, harness or safety shield

6.9 Additional seat belts will be fitted for those that require additional postural support.

6.10 The driver will instruct all pupils to wear their seatbelts throughout the journey; supervisors will ensure that they continue to do this whilst on the minibus.

6.11 Passengers will ensure that all emergency exits are clear at all times.

7. Breakdowns

7.1 In the event of a breakdown, the driver will move the vehicle off the road and switch on the hazard warning lights.

7.2 Passengers will be moved out of the nearside of the vehicle, and as far away from it and other traffic as possible.

7.3 If it may be safer for passengers to remain in the vehicle, e.g. if there is not a safe place outside, the driver and supervisors will assess the situation and decide whether to stay on the minibus.

7.4 The driver or a supervisor will contact the relevant breakdown cover company immediately and call school/Mat office.

7.5 If the breakdown occurs on a motorway, the driver or a supervisor will use the roadside emergency telephone, and will provide the police with the breakdown service, the vehicle's location, and if any pupils on board have specific additional needs.

7.6 All passengers will be kept together in one group and pupils will be constantly supervised.

7.7 If necessary, the driver will seek help, leaving the pupils with the supervisors. If the driver is the only adult present, pupils will not be left alone.

7.8 The driver, supervisors and pupils will all wait in the safe place until it is safe to return on the minibus.

7.9 If passengers are unable to return on the minibus, appropriate transport will be arranged by staff in the school office/CET to collect pupils, supervisors and the driver.

8. Accidents

8.1 An emergency procedure/ critical incident plan will be established by the **headteacher** prior to beginning the journey, and a copy will be kept inside the **glove compartment/minibus bag** in the minibus.

8.2 The emergency procedure will be communicated to the driver and all supervisors on the journey, to ensure they are fully aware of the process to be followed.

8.3 In the event of an accident, emergency services will be contacted immediately and supervisors will remain with pupils at all times.

8.4 The driver or a supervisor will contact the school office/CET as soon as possible after calling the emergency services.

8.5 All passengers will remain at the scene of the accident in a safe place until the emergency services and any additional transport has arrived.

8.6 If injuries are sustained, the names of those involved will be reported to the school office and an Accident Log will be completed upon return to the premises.

8.7 If no injuries are sustained and the vehicle is not damaged, the driver will ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and safe before continuing the journey. An Accident Log or Near Miss will be completed upon return to the school.

9. Monitoring and review

9.1 This policy will be reviewed every year by the MAT; the next scheduled review date for this policy is April 2027.

9.2 This policy will also be reviewed in response to any incidents or accidents that occur.

9.3 Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

9.4 All drivers and supervisors are required to familiarise themselves with the procedures in this policy when planning a journey.

Appendix 1 - Maintenance Checklist

Check	Checked? (Y/N)	Details of defect	Reported (date)
Tyre pressure			
Tyre condition and tread depth			
Lights – operation/cleanliness			
Engine oil level			
Coolant level			
Brakes, including fluid level			
Battery			
Windscreen wipers/jets/reservoir			
Seat belts/buckles/fixings			
Operation of steering/gears/clutch			
Fire extinguisher			
Jack/handle/wheel brace			
First aid kit			
Operation of horn			
Doors, latches, locks			
Condition of wheel rims and trims			
Road fund licence/transport permit			
Condition of mirrors			
Operation of dash controls			
Excessive exhaust smoke			
Condition of body work/number plates			

Silhouette signs			
Rear scope			
Cleanliness of exterior			
Cleanliness of interior			

All checks have been made, and all defects have been reported to name of staff member.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____