

Minibus Policy



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1. The Aims of this Policy

- To ensure that Springwood Heath Primary School complies with current legislation and guidance concerning the maintenance and driving of the school minibuses.
- To ensure that the safety of minibus users (both drivers and passengers) and other road users and pedestrians is paramount at all times.
- To ensure that Springwood Heath Primary School is meeting its health and safety and safeguarding obligations towards all members of the school community.

2. Policy Statement

- Springwood Heath Primary School follows guidance contained within Driving School Minibuses – Advice for Schools and Local Authorities (September 2013), published jointly by the Department for Education, Department for Transport and Association of Chief Police Officers.
- This policy and the procedures contained within it have been written to provide any members of staff who may need to drive vehicles on behalf of the school with the necessary knowledge and information in the light of growing legislation regarding the qualifications, insurance, operating, servicing and inspection requirements to safely operate our minibuses and carry passengers.
- Any staff member or volunteer who wishes to drive a minibus belonging to Springwood Heath will be given free of charge FULL MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) training to ensure the safe operation of the minibuses and to keep employees and others free of harm.
- All staff undertaking MiDAS training will undertake the full training to include working with children in wheelchairs and the use of the bus lift.
- Staff cannot request to just undertake the driving part of MiDAS as we are a fully inclusive school.
- This policy extends to the use of loan vehicles that are used by the school.
- All drivers are required to read the minibus policy and sign the declaration at Appendix A before driving a minibus.
- This policy and the procedures contained within it will be reviewed regularly as part of Springwood Heath Primary School Health and Safety review.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Governing Body

- The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that school minibuses operated on behalf of the school fully comply in every respect, with all legal transport and health and safety requirements. This responsibility is delegated to the Head teacher to ensure its appropriate implementation.
- To monitor the implementation of this policy.

Schools Business Manager

- Springwood Heath Primary Schools Business Manager will ensure that the school has appropriate safety procedures for the minibus based on The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Advice for Minibus Safety and their code of practice (in addition to the DfE guidance). A copy of the full code of practice is available at www.rospace.com.
- Will arrange for appropriate insurance cover and for the payment of annual road tax and Blue Badge Parking permits.

Minibus Manager

- Alan Holland is the schools designated Minibus manager.
- *Responsible for the following:*
- Ensure that servicing of the minibuses including tail lifts is performed at the correct mileage and that the service book kept is ready for inspection at any time.
- Ensuring that seats are removed and refitted on a need to do basis.
- Ensure that weekly checks are conducted on a weekly basis.
- Arranging MiDAS Minibus training.
- Maintaining a minibus log folder kept on each bus.
- Obtaining updated driver declaration forms at the start of the academic year. and associated paperwork and pass onto the business manager.
- Using the DVLA code shared by the driver to verify the licences details.
- Ensuring that the driver has completed the driver declaration form prior to driving a minibus.
- Notifying the Business Manager if a driver reports any changes to their driving status.
- For notifying the Head Teacher of any concerns or irregularities.
- Issuing a Section 19 permit which must be displayed in the minibus widescreen for all journeys.

Minibus Drivers

- Ensure that pre-use checks of the vehicle are conducted by completing the Minibus Driver Vehicle Checklist (see Appendix B). If faults that might affect the vehicle or passengers' safety are found they must be reported immediately to the Minibus Manager.
- Notifying the Minibus Manager of any problems with the minibus.
- Familiarise themselves with the relevant RoSPA (www.rospa.com) guidance e.g. Minibus Driver's Handbook and Minibus Safety – Code of Practice.
- Understand the personal legal implications if procedures are not adhered to. For example, "It is the driver's licence that will suffer if the vehicle is found to be defective. It is also the driver's responsibility to ensure the safety (including the use of seat belts) and welfare of all passengers". RoSPA February 2008

- Comply fully with all road traffic laws, respecting speed limits and ensuring use of seatbelts at all times. For longer journeys, frequent rest breaks are to be taken.
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately if unfit to undertake a journey in order that alternative arrangements can be made.
- Never use a mobile phone (hand held or hands free) as the driver of the vehicle unless it is parked in a safe place with the engine switched off and the key out of the ignition. Making genuine emergency 999 or 112 calls whilst driving is legal.
- Generate a code (<https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence>) to share your driving licence information.
- Any change in the status of your licence (e.g. penalty points) is to be reported to the Minibus Manager. Permission must be obtained from the Business Manager who will obtain confirmation from the insurance company that the driver can continue to drive.
- Ensure that the Section 19 permit is displayed for the duration of the journey.

4. Procedures and Practices

a) Driver Eligibility

Persons Entitled to Drive the Minibus

- Drivers with a valid MiDAS Certificate and correct category licence.
- Drivers with a D1 can drive any of our buses
- Drivers WITHOUT a D1 can only drive the new lightweight bus.
- Drivers must be medically fit and legally qualified to drive a minibus and are required to complete and sign a driver declaration form (Appendix A) to that effect before driving the minibus. The driver declaration form will be kept on file by the Minibus Manager and should be updated at the start of each academic year.
- Drivers must not take the minibus without the permission of the Minibus Manager.
- Staff with a medical condition that needs to be declared to the insurers should advise the Business Manager accordingly.
- Comply with the guidance on eyesight which can be found in the Minibus Driver's Handbook issued by RoSPA.
- It is the licence holder's responsibility to notify the Minibus Manager of any changes to their driving licence.
- Where a driver informs the school that they have acquired penalty points on their licence, the Business manager will inform the insurance company to see whether they are still permitted to drive the minibus.
- Only those named on the approved drivers list (a copy of which is held by the Minibus Manager) will be eligible to drive a minibus on behalf of the School.

b) Vehicle Readiness and Maintenance

Servicing, MOT, Insurance and Taxation

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

Pre Use Vehicle Checks

- The minibuses must be maintained to high levels. As well as MOT, servicing and regular checks, drivers should satisfy themselves that the vehicle is safe to drive. If the serviceability of the vehicle is in doubt, it is not to be used until it has been repaired.
- A pre-use checklist (Appendix B) must be completed by the driver before the start of each journey. A walk around the vehicle must occur to check for damage / defects and to assess tyre condition.
- If the driver has concerns about the condition of the vehicle it must not be used and these concerns must be reported to the Minibus Manager.
- Prior to the start of each journey, the driver is to go through a brief talk with all passengers regarding the wearing of seatbelts, journey time, being seated at all times, behaviour, noise levels and escape procedures. The journey is not to commence unless the requirements of the driver are complied with.

Fuel

- The school minibuses have a fuel card that enables fuel to be purchased and charged to the school's account.
- Alan Holland will regularly check the minibuses to ensure that the vehicles have adequate fuel. It may, however, be necessary for the minibus driver to refuel whilst on a long journey i.e residential.

c) Equipment

- The following equipment is carried onboard the Minibus. If items are used and need to be replaced, please inform the Minibus Manager who will replenish supplies:
 - First Aid Box
 - Fire Extinguisher
 - At least one fire extinguisher (which complies with BS 5432 or equivalent and has a minimum test rating of 8A or 21B) that contains foam.
 - Hi-Visibility Vest.

Tidiness

- The Minibus should be left tidy. Eating and drinking on it should be discouraged (exceptions can be made in circumstances of long delay).
- Bin bags are to be carried and made available for rubbish.

d) Vehicle Operation

Capacity

- The driver and number of passengers should not exceed the capacity of the vehicle.

Seat Belts/Luggage

- Before setting off, the driver must ensure that **ALL** passengers are wearing seat belts. All passengers are to be informed that seatbelts are to be worn at all times when the vehicle is in motion and should only be removed once the driver has switched off the engine.
- Any luggage is to be securely stowed and is not obstructing passageways.

Driving Rules

- Drivers are responsible for driving within the law and in accordance with the Highway Code. Springwood Heath Primary School will not refund fines or other costs incurred by drivers as a result of any road traffic or parking offence. Drivers must inform the Mini Bus Manager of any penalty points received whilst using the school minibus; failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.
- A minibus is not permitted to be driven in the third lane of a motorway.
- Vehicles are not to be driven by anyone who has consumed any amount of alcohol or illegal substance.
- Some medication may impair a driver's ability and employees who are taking medicines of this nature are not to drive vehicles.
- All accidents, whether or not they cause injury to persons or damage to property, are to be reported to the school as soon as possible after they occur using the Vehicle Accident Reporting Form provided at Appendix D.
- Keys must not be left in an unattended vehicle at any time.
- Due consideration must be given to parking in secure areas as much as possible, particularly where overnight stays are required.
- Vehicles must not be driven at any time if the load being carried exceeds the maximum allowable weight capacity.
- Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is prohibited on the minibus at any time.

Reversing of Vehicles

- Reversing vehicles can be particularly hazardous. The best way of avoiding a reversing accident is to avoid reversing a vehicle wherever possible.
- Always check behind your vehicle before reversing – where possible, ask someone to watch the area into which you will be reversing.
- If you use a guide, ensure they can be seen at all times whilst manoeuvring and wear a hi-visibility vest- if two members of staff are present, one must at all times be the guide when reversing.
- Ensure rear view mirrors are clean and properly adjusted at all times.

Distraction During Driving

- The use of mobile phones is strictly prohibited unless it is parked in a safe place with the engine switched off or to make a genuine emergency 999 or 112 calls, which is legal.
- Avoid any action which may cause a distraction whilst driving, such as drinking, eating or even changing a radio channel.
- Springwood Heath Primary School permits the use of integrated or standalone (but not mobile phones) satellite navigation devices. A driver should only operate such devices when the vehicle is stationary and the engine is switched off and the key is out of the ignition.
- Minimise actions which necessitate removing a hand from the steering wheel.

Tiredness

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

Safety

- Whilst driving the minibus, drivers should ensure that all doors are unlocked to assist with emergency egress if the need arises.
- Drivers should ensure that internal lights are off whilst driving so that their vision is not impaired by the internal light.
- Exits/gangways should be clear of obstructions (such as bags) at all times.
- Check weather conditions in advance of the journey and in the event of extreme weather conditions avoid making the journey.
- In the event of a fire do not attempt to extinguish. The priority is for the safe evacuation of all passengers.

- Dealing with 'road rage':
 - If threatened by another driver, do not retaliate by flashing lights, sounding the horn or making offensive gestures; this only attracts a response and will often make a situation worse
 - If forced to stop, stay in the vehicle with windows closed and doors locked and be prepared to drive off
 - If necessary, use your mobile phone to contact the police for assistance but only if safe to do so. Ask someone else to make the call if possible.
 - Note the registration number of the vehicle, and the make and colour, plus a description of the driver and occupants and give the police these details.
 - If you feel that driving cannot be in complete safety, do not continue. Members of staff are not required to put themselves at risk at any time whilst driving on behalf of the trust.

e) Security

- Whenever the vehicle is left unattended, all windows are to be closed and doors locked.

5. Accident and Breakdown Procedures

Breakdown Procedures

Standard breakdown procedures are to be followed where necessary:

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

Accident

In the event of an accident:

1. Deal with any injured persons.
2. Ensure the safety of everyone involved.
3. Use hazard warning lights.
4. If necessary, call the emergency services.

- In all cases, stop at the scene and take the names, addresses and telephone numbers of people involved, including independent witnesses. Take photos of the accident scene from various angles if possible. Complete the Vehicle Accident Reporting Form provided at Appendix D.
- Breakdown procedures should be carried out if necessary.
- In the event of a serious incident, emergency contact numbers are available in the going out folder (carried on all journeys).
- The driver should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy before continuing with the journey.

6. Breakdown Cover

Details of the motor vehicle breakdown cover, including contact details, can be found in the Minibus folder which the driver will fill in at the start of each journey.

7. General

Any member of staff who has queries relating to the driving of the schools minibus or the condition of the vehicle should bring them to the attention of the Minibus Manager.

Appendix A

Declaration of Fitness to Drive a Minibus on Behalf of Springwood Heath Primary School

To be completed upon first use and annually at the start of each school year.

Driver Declaration

Name of Driver: _____

I declare that:

1. I hold a current vehicle licence which permits the holder to drive a minibus
I hold a valid MIDAS certificate.
2. I am aware of the need to declare any illness that would impair my ability to drive the minibus in a safe and controlled manner.
3. I am aware of my responsibility to inform the Minibus Manager if I receive penalty points.
4. I am responsible for notifying the Minibus Manager of any change in my circumstances.
5. I have read and agree to adhere to the Springwood Heath Mini Bus Policy.
6. I agree to follow all MiDAS and school protocols and procedures when driving the minibus.

I agree that the Mini Bus Manager can view my driving licence information on line and have generated the following code to do so:

DVLADriver Code: _____

Licence Number: _____

MIDAS Certificate Number: _____

Renewal Date: _____

(Attach a photocopy of both sides of the current licence and MIDAS certificate to the declaration)

Signature of Driver: _____

Date: _____

Minibus Incident/Accident Report Form **Appendix B**

Registration No

Driver

.....Email:.....

Other vehicle involved

Type of vehicle	
Registration number	
Name of driver	
Address	
Telephone number	
Insurers details	
Brief details of damage	
Their policy number	

Where & when

Date	
Time	
Visibility	
Road Conditions	
Weather conditions	
Speed limits	
Place	
Town	
Did the police attend?	
Damage to other vehicle	
Damage to Minibus	
CCTV Image asked for?	

Witness

Name	
Telephone number	
Address	

Details of incident

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Driver's Walk-round Check and Vehicle Defect Report

Date:		Vehicle reg:	
		Out	
Driver:		Mileage:	
		In	
Complete all boxes: ✓ = OK X = fault or damage			
Outside:			First Aid Kit
No leaks. Fuel, water, oil...	Head/Side/Brake Lights	Fire Extinguisher	
Bodywork condition	Indicators/Hazards	Paperwork present?	
Mirrors	Lift operation (if fitted)	With engine running:	
Windows - clear, undamaged	Inside:	Steering - OK?	
Tyres and Wheel Fixings	Interior condition	Exhaust - no excessive smoke	
Doors & Exits	Seat belts (check all)	Wipers, Washers	
Side step working	Removeable seats secure	Horn	
Number plates	W/chair restraints (if appl.)	Heating, Ventilation	
Fluid levels - oil, water etc	✓ Emerg. break glass hammer	Brakes - include rolling check	
Please give brief details of faults and / or symptoms:			
			Driver's signature:
If no faults write nil :			
For office use:			
Defect repaired / rectified:	Yes / No	Vehicle booked into garage:	Yes / No
Remarks:		Remarks:	
Date:		Date:	
Name:		Name:	