



Dame Alice Owen's School
The Dame Alice Owen Foundation - 1613

USE OF MINIBUS POLICY

Agreed by the Governing Body Finance & Audit Committee
To be reviewed
(reviewed every 2 years)

November 2023
Autumn 2025

To be monitored by the Governing Body Finance & Audit Committee

The Aims of this Policy

- To ensure Dame Alice Owen's 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 Dame Alice Owen's School is meeting its health and safety and safeguarding obligations towards all members of the school community.

Policy Statement

- The 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.
- The behaviour and competence of the minibus drivers will be fully assessed to ensure the safe operation of the minibuses and to keep employees and others free of harm.
- This policy extends to the use of hired 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. An electronic version of the policy can be accessed via the school's website. A copy of the policy will be included in the minibus folder.

- Use of a school minibus (including hire vehicles) for anything other than school business requires the permission of the Head Teacher and in anything other than exceptional circumstances will not be permitted.

Roles and Responsibilities

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.
- monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Premises Manager must:

- Ensure servicing and MOT testing will be carried out at the appropriate intervals, and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Ensure that weekly checks are conducted.
- Keep the Herts Council or Approved Driving Instructor (ADI) competency test forms and associated paperwork.
- Obtain updated driver declaration forms at the start of the academic year.
- Use the DVLA code shared by the driver to verify the licence details.
- Ensure that the driver has completed the annual driver declaration form.
- Be the keeper of the minibus keys and minibus documentation.
- Ensure the Section 19 permit is displayed in the minibus widescreen for all journeys

Minibus Drivers must:

- Ensure that the driver's log book is completed before each trip. If faults that might affect the vehicle or passengers' safety are found they must be reported immediately to the Premises Manager and the vehicle must not be used until they are all remedied. The completed checklist must be returned to the Premises Manager.
- Notify the Premises Manager of any problems with the minibus.
- 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 over two hours, frequent rest breaks are to be taken.
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team / Premises Manager 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. Please use the provided sat navigation rather than your mobile phone. 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 Premises Manager. Permission must be obtained from the School 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.

Driver Eligibility to Drive the Minibus

Persons entitled to drive the minibus must:

- Have a valid D1 category licence
- Undergo a competency driving test with Herts County Council or approved driving instructor classed as a Grade 6 (old system) or Grade A (new system), unless the D1 test was passed in the last 5 years. If the D1 test was passed in the previous 5 years then they should undergo the competency driving test once 5 years has lapsed since the test.
- Pass the internal DAOS School Minibus familiarisation drive whereby the Premises Manager and two members of SLT and a regular DAOS minibus driver will sit in a journey of at least 15 minutes with the driver in a school minibus.
- Every 2 ½ years, all drivers will be reassessed. After 2 ½ years, they will redo the DAOS School Minibus familiarisation test and after 5 years they will undergo the competency driving test with Herts County Council or approved driving instructor as set out above. This rotation every 2 ½ years will continue.
- Be medically fit, legally qualified to drive a minibus and complete and sign a driver declaration form (Appendix A) to that effect before driving the minibus. The annual driver declaration form will be kept on file by the Premises Manager.
- Not take the minibus without the permission of the Premises Manager.
- Declare any medical condition to the Premises Manager or School Business Manager so that this can be reported to the insurers.
- Notify the Premises Manager of any changes to their driving licence. Where a driver informs the school that they have acquired penalty points on their licence, the School Business Manager will determine whether they are permitted to drive the minibus.
- Only those named on the approved drivers list (a copy of which is held by the Premises Manager) will be eligible to drive a minibus on behalf of the school.
- An exception to the above is that a member of staff can drive the minibus provided there are no passengers on board provided the member of staff has D1 on their driving licence. This should only be in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the Premises Manager and a member of the SLT in advance.

To drive the Minibus Lite

- All points above apply EXCEPT the driver does not need a valid D1 category licence.

Driver Responsibility

It is the driver's responsibility to:

- Satisfy themselves that the vehicle is safe to drive. If the condition of the vehicle is in doubt, it is not to be used and the concerns reported to the Premises Manager
- Ensure the passengers wear seatbelts, remain seated at all times, and are aware of the behaviour required for the duration of the journey. The journey is not to commence until the requirements of the driver are complied with.
- Ensure the driver and number of passengers does not exceed the capacity of the vehicle.
- Ensure 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.
- The 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 Director of Finance & Operations of any penalty points received whilst using the school minibus; failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.
- National speed limits apply to the school minibus.
- Under normal road conditions, 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.
- 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
- Drivers **MUST NOT** drive for a continuous period of more than two hours without taking a suitable break.

Accident and 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 front of the driver's log book which (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.

In the event of an accident:

- Deal with any injured persons.
- Ensure the safety of everyone involved.
- Use hazard warning lights and any other safety devices provided.
- 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 driver's log book (carried on all journeys).
- The driver should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy before continuing with the journey.

Insurance and Breakdown Cover

Details of the school's motor vehicle insurance and breakdown cover, including contact details, can be found in the Minibus Folder which the driver should have at the start of each journey. The school holds motor vehicle insurance for the following vehicles:

- FX59 XMS
- FV59 GNP
- HX68 CMK

Please refer to the insurance policy for all conditions that apply. This is a summary of the key conditions:

- The driver must have permission to drive the vehicle on behalf of the school controlled by a booking system in the Premises Manager's office
- The driver must be aged between 21 and 70
- The driver must have no penalty points
- The driver must have a valid licence and be medically fit to drive
- Drivers must have a minimum of 12 months' experience for the class of vehicle being driven

Drivers who fall into any of the above categories must obtain special dispensation from the insurers to drive the minibus. Contact the Premises Manager to request this and refrain from driving the minibus until clearance is obtained from the insurer.

Appendix A Declaration of Fitness to Drive a Minibus on behalf of the school

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

Driver Declaration

Name of Driver: _____

I declare that:

1. I hold a current vehicle licence which has D1 entitlement shown on it which permits the holder to drive a minibus *or (delete the one that doesn't apply)*

I hold a current vehicle licence with a D1 (101) category and I hold a 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 Premises Manager if I receive penalty points.
4. I am responsible for notifying the Premises Manager of any change in my circumstances.
5. I have read and agree to adhere to the school Minibus Policy.
6. I agree to follow all school protocols and procedures when driving the minibus.

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

DVLA Driver Code: _____

Licence Number: _____

If the licence held is a D1 (101) category:

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: _____

To be checked by: Premises Manager

Please attach evidence of DVLA checks

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Confirmation of Permission to Drive a Minibus on behalf of the School

Confirmation by the Premises Manager that the driver has permission to drive a minibus on behalf of the School.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B Vehicle Accident Reporting Form

The driver of the vehicle involved in the accident should complete this form. It must be completed in detail as soon as possible after the accident and provided to the Premises Manager.

Driver name:				
Vehicle registration:	Make:	Model:	Colour:	School owned or hire vehicle Trust / Hire (please circle)
Number of persons (including driver) in School vehicle:				
Date and time of the incident: __ / __ / 20 __ ____ am / pm				
For what purpose was the vehicle being used?				
Was a trailer attached: Yes / No				
Where did the accident occur (e.g. road name, town)?				
Estimated speed of the vehicle:				
Weather conditions / visibility			Condition of road surface:	
Name and contact details of any independent witnesses:				

Was there police involvement: Yes / No	Provide details:		
Was damage sustained to another person's property or vehicle: Yes / No			
Owner's name and address:			
Insurance Details:	Make:	Model:	Registration:
Description of damage sustained:			

Did anyone sustain an injury: Yes / No
If yes please give details (e.g. name, address, nature of injury, hospitalised)

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The information provided is for internal use by the school. No admission of liability or blame should be made to any third party.

Driver's signature: _____

Date: _____

If you have any queries regarding the completion of this form, please contact the Premises Manager.

Please provide a description of the accident below (use additional sheets if required). Give as much detail as possible (include road markings, signals given and who you think is at fault for the accident):

Please provide a sketch plan of the accident. Use the diagrams provided over the page to indicated damage to the school vehicle. Take photographs if safe and legal to do so.

