

OVERSTONE PARK SCHOOL

School Minibus Policy



School Minibus Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator
September 2026	September 2027	Mrs M Brown - Principal Mrs D York – DSL Miss A West – DSL Mrs L Vippond - Administrator

Rationale

Overstone Park School is responsible for ensuring that any school minibuses operated on behalf of the school or hired through the school fully comply in every respect, with all legal transport and health and safety requirements.

This responsibility is delegated to the Principal to ensure its appropriate implementation.

Aims

The aim of this document is to catalogue the various procedures that must be followed to ensure the safe use of the academy minibuses. This document will be given to all minibus drivers as part of the overall induction package.

Legal requirements

The law requires that a minibus must:

- Be adequately insured.
- Be correctly licensed.
- Be well maintained.
- Have a valid MOT certificate (if more than one year old).
- Display a valid tax disc.
- Correct seating with correctly fitted seat belts.

The Principal will ensure that the school has its own safety policy and procedures for the minibuses in line with the ROSPA Advice for minibus safety and code of practice. A copy of the full code of practice is held by the Principal.

The Principal will ensure that all drivers of a minibus comply with the requirements issued in April 2006 by the DfE in their statement, 'Licensing incidental drivers of the school minibus'.

Driving a school minibus

Driving a school minibus with D1 entitlement

Where a member of staff wishes to drive a school minibus the following conditions must apply:

- The driver must have held their driving licence prior to 1 January 1997;
- The driver must have full entitlement to drive cars before 1 January 1997 – shown as group A (B for automatics) or have categories B and D1 not for hire or reward on their licence;
- The minibus must have no more than 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver and have a maximum length not exceeding eight metres;
- If the driver is transporting Overstone Park School pupils on behalf of Overstone Park School they must have attended training through The Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (Midas). This training will be updated every 4 years.

Driving a school minibus without D1 entitlement

Where a member of staff wishes to drive a school minibus and does not have the D1 entitlement on their licence, the driver must apply for a provisional D1 on their licence and take both a theory and practical test to acquire the D1 requirement. Once the tests have been successfully completed, the D1 will be added to the licence, and the requirements above will apply and the MIDAS test needs to be completed.

All new drivers will receive an induction; once completed they will be added to the list of authorised minibus drivers which is held by the Principal.

Social purposes

Social purposes are considered to be non-commercial activities within the school day or as an extra-curricular activity, including school trips and travel to and from sporting fixtures.

Hire and reward

Under DfE specifications, a minibus is not being used for hire and reward where pupils are not obliged to pay in exchange to be passengers.

Voluntary basis

If the terms and conditions of a teacher's contract state that driving minibuses is a part of their duties, or if they are paid an additional sum for driving the minibus (other than out of pocket expenses), they will be deemed as receiving payment and would not be driving on a 'voluntary basis'.

Out of pocket expenses

A driver can only be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses, namely: fuel costs, parking fees, toll fees, or similar expenses incurred as part of a trip. Drivers will not receive any other payments for driving the mini bus.

Driver's Responsibilities

Whilst school will ensure a weekly check of the condition of the minibuses, drivers are responsible for the following checks before embarking on their trips:

- Do a visual inspection of the minibus and complete the pre-drive checklist.
- Ensure that food and drink are not consumed on the vehicle.
- Make sure that no rubbish is left on the vehicle and ensure that no malicious damage has occurred inside or outside of the vehicle.

At the end of the journey the driver must return the vehicle and park it in the designated parking bay, lock the vehicle and make the vehicle secure. Keys should be returned to the School office immediately after use.

Speed Limits

- 30 mph not 40 mph on urban carriageways
- 50 mph not 60 mph on single carriageways
- 60 mph not 70 mph on dual carriageways
- 70 mph on motorways

Health and Safety of Drivers and Passengers

The named drivers should state the following to the pupils before the commencement of the journey:

- Seatbelts must be worn at all times. This is a legal requirement. (It is the driver's responsibility to check this).
- Everyone should remain seated at all times.
- Which entry and exit doors are to be used. (It is recommended that side doors be used except in emergencies).
- Gangways and doorways are to be kept clear at all times. Bags should be kept on laps or stored under seats securely.

Passenger Responsibilities

- Should wear seat belts and always remain in their seats until instructed otherwise.
- Should never distract the driver by shouting, etc.
- Not eat or drink on the vehicle.
- Must make sure that escape routes are not blocked by bags, etc.
- Pupils are ambassadors of the school and must never bring its name into disrepute by gesturing, etc.
- Passengers found to have vandalised the minibus may face a ban from using it again and will be required to pay for damages.

Seat Belts

- Minibuses carrying three or more children aged at least 3 but less than 16 years, on unorganised trips or to and from school, are required to be fitted with forward facing seats and seatbelts. These requirements also apply to coaches but not buses.
- The law requires either 2-point (lap) or 3-point (lap and diagonal) belts to be fitted. 3-point belts provide better protection in the event of an accident than 2-point belts, although 2-point belts are better than no belts at all.
- Where seatbelts are fitted, each child must occupy one seat.
- Seatbelts should be worn at all times by pupils and staff.
- The driver is legally responsible for enforcing the requirement and ensuring that seatbelts are worn, except in the case of adults and children aged 14 and over who are personally responsible for the wearing of their seatbelt.

Accident Procedures

In the event of an accident involving injuries or damage to others, the driver must contact the emergency services, the police, and the School as soon as possible. Any damage to the vehicle must be reported to the Principal on return to the School. Further driver guidance is attached as appendix E. An accident information form must be completed.

Breakdown and Recovery

All school minibuses are covered for breakdown and recovery. Details of how to contact them and our membership numbers are attached to the minibus windscreen. Further driver guidance is attached in the appendices. Any issues should be reported to the Principal.

First Aid

All minibuses contain first aid boxes which are checked at the end of each term. The contents of these boxes include antiseptic wipes, bandages, assorted adhesive dressings, plasters, eye pads and scissors.

Any use of the first aid kit must be reported to the Principal as soon as possible to ensure a full kit at all times.

Smoking

Smoking is strictly prohibited in the vehicle.

Purchase of fuel

Fuel is to be purchased using a garage selected by the bursar.

Care and Cleaning of the minibuses

The minibuses will be cleaned on a weekly basis by our Site Supervisor. Passengers should not be allowed to wear muddy boots in the minibuses and should be encouraged to get changed at the end of matches in order to stop them sitting on the seats with damp and dirty clothing.

The Site Supervisor has responsibility for conducting weekly checks on the minibuses and passing on their findings to the Principal.

Alcohol, drug, tiredness and ill health

Drivers must observe a 'no alcohol policy'. Similarly, no one may drive if taking drugs that may affect their driving capabilities.

No one should drive when his/her ability is affected by tiredness or ill health. Drivers must drive no more than two hours without a break, no more than four hours in total on the evening of a working day, and no more than eight hours on any day.

It is essential that for all journeys in the School minibuses with a distance over 60 miles they be staffed by the named driver and at least one other qualified minibus driver.

Trailers

No one may tow a trailer unless he or she has experience of towing a trailer and has been briefed on trailers by a suitably qualified person.

Roof racks

Roof racks must not be overloaded as it affects the handling of the vehicle. All items must be securely fastened.

Unsuitable roads

Experience has shown that some narrow single-tracked roads are unsuitable for vehicles of this size. Routes should be planned accordingly.

Mobile Telephone

A mobile phone should be carried by at least one member of staff in case of emergency. As with all journeys, drivers should refrain from using mobile phones whilst driving. If it is necessary to make a call, drivers must pull over to the side of the road when and where it is safe to do so. Further driver guidance is attached as appendix H.

Keys

Keys are kept with the school bursar. Keys can be collected immediately before use and returned immediately after use. A sign out sheet must be completed once the key is collected and returned.

Booking of the minibuses

To book a minibus please contact the Principal or email opschool@aol.com and complete the booking form.

Management of the minibuses

The Principal has overall responsibility for the management of the minibus. The responsibility will be carried out on a daily basis by the Principal and the Site Supervisor.

The management system, detailed below, will be monitored termly by the Deputy Principal (Responsible Officer) to ensure that both organisers and drivers are complying with all the requirements. Records should be kept for a minimum of 15 months. These records should be regularly inspected by the Responsible Officer.

Management System

The Principal will ensure the following:

- All staff use the proper booking procedures for use of the school minibus. Buses are provisionally booked with the Principal using the minibus booking form.
- All drivers are familiar with, and adhere to, the ROSPA Mini Bus Safety Code of Practice. A copy of which is on our website and a hard copy is retained by the Principal.
- All drivers complete a pre-drive checklist. This form must be returned to the Principal at the end of the journey.
- Insurance cover, MOT and tax are up to date.
- Vehicle registration documents are held securely.
- In liaison with the Site Supervisor, to ensure that the minibus is securely parked, and keys held securely.
- Access to the minibus keys should be restricted to authorised users.
- In liaison with the Site Supervisor, to ensure that the weekly maintenance checks are completed on time and documented in the maintenance log.
- Fuel usage will be regularly checked to ensure fuel purchases are for legitimate school use.
- The Proprietors approve whether, and how, the mini bus is used by non-school users on an annual basis.
- That the licences of all drivers are checked to ensure that they are permitted to drive minibuses. This should be recorded and the check repeated every 12 months.
- Familiarisation training (Initial MIDAS training) must be completed by all school staff driving the minibus.
- That the minibus is fitted with a fire extinguisher and a first aid box.
- That the minibus has an emergency bag on board.
- New drivers receive an induction during which they will receive a copy of the Minibus code of practice, a copy of the mini bus policy and a pre-driver check list.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Principal will report termly on the operation of this policy.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

- School Handbook/Prospectus; School website; Staff Handbook;
- Meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops;
- School events; Meetings with school personnel;
- Written communications with home such as weekly newsletters and end of half term newsletters;
- Annual report to parents; Information displays in the main school entrance;
- Text messages; Email;
- Social media: Facebook, Twitter, virtual pin boards, school blog.

Appendices A–H (New Driver Induction, Pre-Drive Safety Check, Regular Maintenance Safety Check, and General Driver Guidance on journeys, accidents/incidents, breakdowns and mobile phone use) are held on file and issued to all minibus drivers as part of induction.

Principal:	Mrs M Brown	Date:	September 2026
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