
OVERSTONE PARK SCHOOL

School Minibus Policy



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Overstone Park, Northampton, NN6 0DT

School Minibus Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator
September 2024	August 2025	Mrs M Brown - Principal Mrs D York – DSL Miss A West – DSL

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.

Key definitions

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:

- 1) The driver must have held their driving licence prior to 1 January 1997;
- 2) 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;
- 3) The minibus must have no more than 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver and have a maximum length not exceeding eight metres;
- 4) If the driver is transporting Overstone Park School pupils on behalf of Overstone Park School they must have an 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 following conditions **must** apply:

The driver must attend 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 received 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 another 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

The speed limit for minibuses is as follows:

- 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.
- In the case of Springfield pupils, they 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, 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. (There is a legal requirement that seat belts are worn in minibuses, other than in extremely large minibuses which are unlikely to be available to schools).
- 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
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 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

Driver 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, 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 suitable 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, driver 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 (Reasonable 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 ROSPA Mini Bus Safety Code of Practice http://www.rospa.com/roadsafety/info/minibus_code_2008.pdf . 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 minibus'. 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, 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

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- 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 of end of half term newsletters;
- Annual report to parents;
- Information displays in the main school entrance;
- Text messages
- Email
- Social media:
 - o Facebook
 - o Twitter
 - o Virtual pin boards
 - o School blog

Principal:	Mrs M Brown	Date:	September 2024
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Appendix A

MINIBUS DRIVING **NEW DRIVER INDUCTION**

Date:

Driver's Name:

Guide: Vehicle:

All drivers using a school mini bus for the first time must undergo an induction.

Familiarisation of bus

Keys/locking
Doors
Milometer
Location of first aid box
Location of fire extinguisher
Shown emergency contact details

Mini bus controls

Steering column controls
Lights
Heating
Gears

Give driver copy of:

Conditions of hire
Mini bus policy
Pre Drive Check list
Booking form

Obtain from driver:

Original licence (photo and paper)
Number of points
MIDAS certificate (if school staff)

Signed: _____
Date: _____
Driver: _____

Signed: _____
Date: _____
Guide: _____

Appendix B

MINIBUS DRIVING **PRE DRIVE SAFETY CHECK**

Date:

Driver's Name:

Registration of Vehicle:

Start Mileage:

End Mileage:

Every day the minibus is used, the driver should conduct a pre-drive safety check. This should be repeated whenever another driver takes over the vehicle. He or she should walk around the vehicle, to check for visible defects, and check the items listed below:

Exterior Check Interior Check

OK
OK

Nook
Nook

- Windscreen and windows are clean and undamaged.
- Mirrors are correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed.
- Wiper blades are clean and undamaged.
- Position and function/purpose of all the dashboard controls.
- Lights, including brake lights and indicators are clean and working.
- Position of driving seat so that all controls can be operated comfortably.
- Tyre pressures, including the spare.
- Check for pressure on brake pedal.
- Tyre tread, including the spare and inner tyres. At least 1.0mm across centre 3.4 is recommended.
- Wipers and washers are working.
- Any cuts and bulges Fuel level.
- Doors open and close properly Seat belts, are undamaged and working properly.
- Damage or sharp edges Location and contents of first aid kit and fire extinguishers.
- Other Location of relevant paperwork, emergency numbers, driving licence Luggage is securely stowed and aisles and exits are clear.
- Damage or sharp edges.
- Other.

If faults that might affect the vehicle's or passengers' safety are found, the vehicle must not be used until they are all remedied. Please report the faults immediately to the Site Supervisor/Principal.

Details of defects here:-

If no defects found please write NIL here:

Driver’s Signature:

Date:

All Overstone Park School minibuses are equipped with emergency equipment (high visibility jacket, torch warning triangle, and disposable camera). In the event of a puncture, accident or breakdown please contact :

01604 643787

Office use:

Confirm how defects were rectified:

Confirm when defects were rectified:

Other Comments:

Signed:

Date:

Name:

Appendix C

MINIBUS DRIVING **REGULAR MAINTENANCE SAFETY CHECK**

Date:

Driver's Name:

Registration of Vehicle:

Exterior Check Interior Check

OK
OK

Nook
Nook

- Oil level Mirrors are correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed.
- Coolant level Position and function/purpose of all the dashboard controls.
- Windscreen washer fluid Position of driving seat so that all controls can be operated comfortably.
- Brake level fluid Check for pressure on brake pedal.
- Windscreen and windows are clean and undamaged.
- Wipers and washers are working.
- Wiper blades are clean and undamaged.
- Fuel level.
- Lights, including brake lights and indicators are clean and working.
- Seat belts, are undamaged and working properly.
- Tyre pressures, including the spare.
- Location and contents of first aid kit and fire extinguishers.
- Tyre tread, including the spare and inner tyres. At least 1.0mm across centre 3.4 is recommended.
- Location of relevant paperwork, emergency numbers, driving licence.
- Any cuts and bulges Luggage is securely stowed and aisles and exits are clear.
- Doors open and close properly Damage or sharp edges.
- Damage or sharp edges Other.

If faults that might affect the vehicle's or passengers' safety are found, the vehicle must not be used until they are all remedied. Please report the faults immediately to the Site Supervisor/Principal via School Reception.

Details of defects here:-

If no defects found please write NIL here:

Site Supervisor's Signature:

Date:

Office use:

Confirm how defects were rectified:

Confirm when defects were rectified:

Other Comments:

Signed: **Date:**

Name:

Appendix D

General Driver Guidance

Before Setting Off

- Allow sufficient time for the journey, avoid long spells of driving and plan breaks.
- 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.
- Plan which passengers will sit in the front seats and next to doors.
- DO NOT overload the capacity of the minibus and ensure that all passengers are wearing seatbelts.
- Always ensure that disabled passengers are seated safely and comfortable and that passengers traveling in their wheelchairs are safely restrained. Wheelchairs not in use must also be securely stored.
- Make sure there is a complete list of the passengers being carried with a note of any special medical or other needs.
- Take care when using passenger lifts and other specialist equipment. Always comply with the manufacturer 'instructions.

During the Journey

- DO NOT allow any horseplay.
- DO NOT allow passengers to operate the doors.
- DO NOT leave students unaccompanied in the minibus.
- 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 moving traffic as possible.

At the End of the Journey

- Never allow passengers to disembark until the vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked.
- Always park so that passengers step onto the footway and not onto the road.
- Report any problems or incidents that occurred during the trip to the School.
- Return mobile phone and minibus pack to reception

Appendix E

Driver Guidance on Accidents/Incidents **If a breakdown/accident or incident occurs**

Care of the Group

- Ensure the safety of the group from further danger.
- Arrange search, rescue, medical care or hospitalisation as necessary.
- Ensure welfare of all concerned.

Next Steps

- Inform the **Breakdown Service Provider** as soon as possible (a **Breakdown Recovery card** listing all numbers to be used in the event of a breakdown is in the minibus pack).
- **All School minibuses are covered by Breakdown Recovery Service for roadside assistance and relay.**
- The person you will contact will need to know what has happened and the current situation.
- Try to give a telephone number/destination where you can be contacted.
- In case of a serious incident, notify the police.
- Do not interfere with any equipment etc, which could be relevant to the subsequent investigation.

A SERIOUS ACCIDENT OR INCIDENT is described as:

- An accident leading to a fatality, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious Injury.
- Serious illness.
- Circumstances in which one or more party members might be at serious risk.
- Any situation in which the presence or possible involvement of the press or media could have significant implications.

WARNINGS AND ADVICE

- Without the approval of the establishment head or appointed authority, politely decline to comment to the media.
- Avoid making any statement admitting liability.
- Those involved in an accident need not communicate with anyone other than those in an official capacity.
- Be compassionate with anyone involved.
- Keep a written record of all relevant facts and preserve any vital evidence.

Appendix F

Driver Guidance on Breakdowns If the minibus breaks down:

- Get the vehicle off the carriageway, if possible.
- Use hazard warning lights and other lights as necessary.
- Do not spend very long trying to find the problem.
- Call for assistance, without leaving the vehicle, if possible. Use the radio or mobile phone on the vehicle if you have one or ask a passenger to do so on your behalf. If you have to leave passengers in the vehicle in order to summon assistance, always instruct them to stay in or with the vehicle until you return.

Minibus Breakdown on the Motorway

- If practicable leave the motorway at the next exit and seek assistance.
- Otherwise pull safely off the carriageway onto the hard shoulder. Park as far to the near side of the hard shoulder as possible.
- Try to stop near an emergency phone, which is a mile apart, or use your mobile phone when stationary. Red and white posts positioned every 100 meters have a narrow indicating the direction of the nearest telephone. The emergency phones are free and connect you directly with the Motorway Police Control Room. They will arrange any help you need. The emergency phones are coded so your exact location is known.
- Switch on the vehicle's hazard warning lights and at night switch on all other lights except headlights including saloon lights.
- If possible get all the passengers out of the vehicle using near side exits. Then keep passengers well away from the carriageway, preferably on the embankment. In the case of passengers in wheelchairs, it may not be practicable or safe to do so.
- **NEVER CROSS THE CARRIAGEWAY.**
- If your vehicle carries an emergency triangle, position it on the hard shoulder 150meters behind the vehicle.

Fire

- Stop and switch off the engine.
- Leave the gear lever in neutral in case the engine re-starts due to an electrical short-circuit.
- **GET THE PASSENGERS OUT OF THE VEHICLE** and away from it. Always evacuate the vehicle if possible **BEFORE** tackling the fire.
- **CALL THE EMERGENCY SERVICES.**
- Tackle the fire, **ONLY IF IT IS SAFE** to do so. If you suspect an engine fire, release the bonnet catch from the inside of the minibus if possible. **DO NOT OPEN THE BONNET.**
- Use the fire extinguisher through the aperture between bonnet and grill.
- When the emergency services arrive, inform them if all passengers are out of the vehicle, and if there are any hazardous containers on board, i.e. gas cylinders.

If a Passenger is Taken Ill

- Stop in a safe place.
- Administer first aid if you feel able to do so.

- Call for an ambulance if required, either by mobile phone or by stopping passing traffic, to get them to call for help. If near a hospital or Health Centre it may be appropriate to drive there directly.
- Contact the School with details of the circumstances.
- Offer reassurance to the other passengers.

Appendix G

Driver Guidance on mobile phone use

Mobile phones are for school use and should only be used in emergency situations.

As from December 2003 it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone whilst driving

The Law in the Highway Code regarding mobile phones must be complied with by all staff: -

“You MUST exercise proper control of your vehicle at all times. Never use a hand held mobile phone or microphone when driving. Using hands free equipment is also likely to distract your attention from the road. It is far safer not to use any telephone system while you are driving - find a safe place to stop first”.

Guidelines

1. Only use the mobile phone when it is necessary to do so and do not use for longer than is strictly necessary and **never** whilst driving.
2. Leave a gap between the phone and your ear. Do not press it to your ear or the side of your head.
3. Where possible make calls using hands-free equipment in the vehicle. Make sure the vehicle is stationary while doing so.
4. When calling another mobile phone user, always ask whether it is safe to speak.
5. Ensure that the phone is removed from the vehicle when it is unoccupied.
6. Before switching a phone on, consider whether being in touch is so essential that you need to compromise your safety and that of others.
7. When driving, never initiate calls, even in traffic queues and at traffic lights.
8. Only acknowledge incoming calls with a short response indicating that you will call back when it is safe to do so.
9. Never look up numbers or attempt to take notes while driving.
10. Encourage colleagues to consider your safety first and to place non-urgent calls to an answering service or to take messages on your behalf rather than giving your number to a third party.

Hand-held Mobile Phones

- This type of phone should never be used to make or receive calls when driving a vehicle, unless it is stationary, i.e. parked correctly according to road traffic regulations.
- The one exception to this is clear that the jam situation where it is clear that the jam will not clear itself for some appreciable time.
- The phone should not be used at traffic light queues or in other situations where the traffic queue is likely to clear within a matter of minutes.
- At all other times, the phone should be turned off and a message answering facility employed.
- When calls are made they should be of as short duration as possible and the phone should always have its aerial extended.
- Users should be encouraged only to make essential calls from the mobile unit, with the majority being made via the landline system.

General Recommendations

- Outgoing calls should only be made from a mobile phone when the vehicle is stationary.
- The person using the mobile phone must always be allowed to be in control of the car, even when speaking to a more senior member of staff, so that they can instantly terminate the call should it prove necessary for reasons of safety.

The Driver

Drivers are legally obliged to have proper control of their vehicle at all times.

Examples of existing maximum penalties for unsafe driving offences are:

1. Failure to have proper control - Maximum Fine £2500.
2. Careless and inconsiderate driving - Maximum fine £2500, endorsement of three to nine penalty points and discretionary disqualification.
3. Dangerous driving - Maximum penalty of two years in prison, unlimited fine, minimum one year disqualification.