



St. Michael's CE (VA) Junior School

Minibus Policy

(Based on ECC Health and Safety policy HSP 9.24)

At St Michael's, by God's love and through our Christian values of Love, Faith, Respect and Courage, we celebrate uniqueness and nurture curiosity, enabling each child to flourish on their own rich learning journey; whilst contributing to the wider community.

By God's love, we all flourish together

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Introduction

A minibus is a motor vehicle (small bus) constructed or adapted to carry more than 8, but not more than 16 seated passengers in addition to the driver. St Michael's Junior School uses a school minibus to transport students for registered school events and activities.

The safety of the passengers is of paramount importance. This policy and guidance apply to all employees who drive a minibus whilst at work. It equally applies to those who drive minibuses only occasionally or for short distances, as well as those where this amounts for a significant part of their working hours. It covers additional requirements which relate specifically to minibus use over and above the requirements for general driving. It is therefore to be read and applied in conjunction with the main *Driving for Work Compliance Code*. (https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Vehicles_at_Work/Driving_for_Work/)

The school expects employees to adhere to this policy in line with its obligations under equality legislation. The Headteacher must ensure that all reasonable adjustments or supportive measures are considered to allow equality of access and opportunity regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, faith or religion, gender identity, pregnancy, or marital status.

Please note:

- Wherever reference is made in this policy to employees this also means volunteers, charity or agency staff who drive a minibus on school business.
- Zurich Municipal provides insurance for minibus driving on the basis of its use being not for hire or reward only.

1. Aims and Objectives

The mini-bus provides an extra dimension to the children's learning. All children can access more sporting and cultural activities which may have been limited by the cost of external transport or parental availability to provide transport. The opportunity exists to bring children to school and from school from areas that do not have a bus service, although at present we do not use this facility. There may be practical opportunities for pupils to access extra-curricular out of school hours activities that were prohibited by current travel arrangements.

The bus is run under a standard bus licence on a non-profit making basis to benefit the pupils of St Michael's Junior School. Charges can be levied to cover running costs and some maintenance costs.

2. Responsibilities

Headteacher Responsibilities

The Headteacher, in conjunction with the business manager, is responsible for ensuring:

- Risk assessments are in place for all minibus driving activities undertaken by their employees.

- Current employees who drive minibuses understand their individual responsibility to keep to the policy, and that any new employees are made aware of their responsibilities as part of their induction.
- 6 monthly checks of employees driving licences are undertaken to ensure they are valid.
- That the appropriate licence allowing them to drive minibuses is held.
- Ensure checks are carried out by the 'driver' on minibuses prior to use and that appropriate action taken for any problems identified – see the Minibus Checklist.
- Ensure MOT, safety inspection and servicing conditions are adhered to.
- Ensure driver hours activity logs are completed.
- The driver is legally responsible for the vehicle at the time of driving, even if not the owner.
- Is the driver fit to drive?

In practice these responsibilities may be carried out through directing others within the school e.g., business manager or deputy headteacher. However, the headteacher remains ultimately responsible for ensuring those persons with delegated responsibility carry out the requirements in full. The headteacher will actively monitor that the required actions are being undertaken on their behalf.

Employee Responsibilities

Adhere to the requirements set out in this policy

Comply with the requirements of the driving policy by showing or allowing the SBM access to their driving licence.

Complete the required training/assessment courses dependent on the D1 Licence.

Carry out minibuses checks prior to use and taking appropriate action for any problems identified – see the Minibus Checklist (Appendix A)

Complete the Driver Hours Activity log.

Ensure a Permit 19 is displayed.

3. Risk Assessment

A Risk Assessment for minibus use must be completed on an annual basis, and on individual occasions when the vehicle is used as part of our Educational Visits Policy. (Appendix A)

4. Authorisation/Licensing requirements to drive Minibuses

When considering the suitability of persons for driving minibuses, the business manager will comply with the Licensing Requirements for drivers of minibuses, as well as ensuring:

- Authorisation has been granted by the headteacher to drive the minibus.
- Drivers are aged 21 or over
- Minimum of 24 months driving experiences
- No points on their driving licence (refer to HSG021 driving Endorsements and Convictions)
- The driver can certify they do not suffer from any physical defects, disabilities or illness that might impair their driving.
- Drivers have the relevant licence to drive the minibus: Category D1 on their full licence (if they passed before 1997) or passed the NCC Driver Development Training. Where applicable, drivers must renew their driver assessment/training every three years.
- Drivers must undertake training before taking the bus out with children in it.
- Under the terms of the Section 19 licence, the bus may be driven on a one-off occasion in extremis. For example, if the bus was to break down it could be retrieved by another driver who did meet all the above requirements.
- The journey is “not for hire or reward”
- There is no towing of a trailer

5. Checks before use

The school has checks that are made before the vehicle is used. The driver should carry out the pre-journey check. Appendix B should be used.

The school specifies the length of time for which drivers may drive and the minimum lengths of rest breaks (15 minutes per 2 to 2.5 hours of driving, with a minimum of 45 minutes after 4.5 hours of driving) which should be taken. Driving time must not exceed 11 hours in any 24-hour period, including any time worked before driving commenced. It has been agreed that where staff are accompanying pupils on an extended (e.g. residential) visit, time spent with pupils will not count as working time if they are not in charge of the party or any group within it, even though staff are technically on duty for 24 hours per day. On any longer journey it is always good practice to have a second driver to share the driving. If the person not driving at any time is supervising passengers, however, this will count as part of their 11 hours worked.

The site manager, and in their absence, the school office staff will administer the use of the minibus and carry out weekly checks.

A logbook is kept to show that weekly vehicle check has been completed. Weekly checks will include the general state of the vehicle and equipment (Appendix B). The logbook will be maintained on the vehicle itself.

6. MOT, Insurance, Servicing, Maintenance and Safety Inspections

Minibuses require an MOT inspection one year after initial registration, and annually thereafter. Minibuses with up to 12 passenger seats (excluding the driver) require a Class IV MOT, the same as a car. Minibuses with more than 12 passenger seats (excluding the driver) require a Class V MOT. The tests are different, so you need to make sure you have the right one. The school's current minibus holds 16 passengers (excluding the driver).

The manufacturers recommended servicing and maintenance schedules must always be adhered to. The service documentation supplied with the vehicle will detail when (on a mileage and/or time basis) the vehicle should be serviced.

In addition, safety inspections (over and above the pre-journey checks) should be carried out to at least the public service Vehicle (PSV) standard. These checks should be carried out by a competent person – normally a garage. The frequency of the safety checks will vary depending on annual mileage, but as a rough guide:

Up to 12,500 miles	every 10 weeks
12,500 – 20,000	every 9 weeks
20,000 – 40,000	every 8 weeks

Detailed information on these safety inspections can be found in 'Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness' available on the Department for Transport's website, and the Community Transport Association's web site, both of which have valuable general advice and information for minibus use. Guidance can also be found on the VOSA website.

Passenger lifts and ramps must be inspected every 6 months and load tested in line with the Work Equipment Compliance Code P653

7. Vehicle Standards

Minibuses must be maintained in a roadworthy condition as described in the main Driving for Work Compliance Code.

8. Breakdown Procedures

In the event of a breakdown, stop in a safe place. Ensure that the children are in a safe environment either on the minibus or safely moved elsewhere. Ensure school procedures regarding safe supervision are always maintained. If on a motorway, children should get off the bus safely and move well away from the hard shoulder. Ideally, they should stand well behind a barrier or in a safe refuge. On other roads common sense should dictate whether to move the children of the bus. Vehicle breakdown cover is through RAC Motoring.

If a breakdown occurs the school office/Headteacher should be informed immediately. In the event of a road traffic accident the safety and welfare of pupils and staff are paramount. Please follow the risk assessment (Appendix A).

9. Using the minibus

Seat belts must be worn by all passengers in forward facing seats and in law it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that they are worn by any passengers. They will ensure that seat belts are worn and to deal with any problems of behaviour etc. When possible, and when more than 10 children are transported, a second adult will accompany the children. Booster seats will be used when required.

FUEL: the minibus uses DIESEL. The school charge card will be used to purchase fuel for the minibus, this is held by the Site Manager. Any costs resulting from correcting the use of incorrect fuel will be charged to the driver. The minibus should be returned to the school with, as a minimum, a quarter of a tank of diesel. A VAT receipt is required for all fuel purchased and should be returned to the school office for processing.

The vehicle should be left in a clean condition inside and out. It is the responsibility of the driver to identify any cleaning or maintenance required to the Site Manager before the minibus is reused.

These items should be in the vehicle on all journeys: First aid kit, sick bags, fire extinguisher, fire blanket.

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the person using the minibus displays the highest standards of behaviour not only because they reflect, the standards and ethos of the school but because it could create a driving hazard for the driver and leave him/her open to prosecution.

It is the driver's responsibility to know and follow the speed limits as follows:

Single carriageway roads where no lower limit applies	50 mph
Dual carriageways	60 mph
Motorways	70 mph

Minibuses can use designated bus lanes unless the word 'local' is included on the blue signage or the road markings. Minibuses fitted with a speed limiter, are not allowed in the right-hand lane of a motorway with three or more lanes.

If a minibus is parked on the road at night, side and rear lights must be left on. They must also be parked on the nearside of the road unless in a designated parking area.

National guidelines produced by the Department for Transport are contained in the code of Practice VSE87/1 "The Safety of Passengers in Wheelchairs on Buses". If you are likely to carry passengers in wheelchairs you will need to obtain a copy of this Code of Practice and abide by the guidance:

We do not anticipate using the school minibus for journeys abroad. Strict regulations govern the use of minibuses on international journeys. Operators of minibuses abroad will be subject to the laws of

the countries they will be visiting, and these can vary depending on whether the country is part of the EU or not. If you are intending to drive a minibus abroad, you must establish what regulations and laws will be applicable for the country being visited.

As a minimum, to drive a minibus abroad, you must normally hold a full PCV Licence, Category D or D1 (obtained through examination). You will also be required to use a tachograph to record drivers' hours.

Appendix A

General Minibus Use Risk Assessment

What is the Hazard?	Who is at Risk?	Risk of harm being caused to the participants			List the measures already in place to reduce risk of harm	Is the risk adequately controlled, yes/no?	If yes, the activity can proceed. If no , then list the additional measures to be implemented to control the risk. (If no additional measures can be implemented then the activity cannot proceed).	Is risk adequately controlled yes/no?
		Low	Medium	High				
Distraction due to poor behaviour	Entire party on minibus	√			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual risk assessment of pupils if behaviour concerns • Use of seatbelts • Expectations reiterated with pupils before leaving • Additional adult on bus 	Yes	<p>If poor behaviour occurs, driver to stop in a suitable place and reassess the situation</p> <p>Additional adult to contact school for support</p> <p>See below advice</p>	
Breakdown of minibus	All Other road users	√			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks before minibus is taken out • Maintenance and servicing undertaken 	Yes	<p>N/A</p> <p>See below advice</p>	

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road assistance 			
<p>Road traffic accident (unlikely).</p> <p>Major injury possible.</p> <p>Minor injury likely.</p>	Entire Party on affected minibus.	√			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driver complying with school minibus driver procedures. • Minibus is checked by the driver immediately before the journey. • Minibus is maintained by the hire company. Insurance is valid & MOT is in date. • Passengers will wear the minibus seat belts. • School accident procedure & trip registration procedure is complied with. 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is assumed at least one volunteer will have access to a working mobile telephone. <p>Notes</p> <p>Ensure that getting all the people in (maximum one per seat) will allow any kit to be stored without blocking access to exit doors.</p> <p>You are legally required to have two clear exits (normally one side door and the rear doors from the passenger compartment). If you pile rucksacks, sports bags etc in the well behind the rear seats and the rear doors the driver can be fined by the police and the vehicle prevented from continuing its journey until exits are cleared.</p> <p>More importantly if the minibus is involved in a road traffic accident and catches fire having a clear exit route from the minibus could save your life.</p> <p>See below advice</p>	Yes

Signed: Date:

Activities required of the driver before and during the journey

- A minibus driver must not consume any alcohol on the day of driving the vehicle until after the driving has been completed.**

- A minibus driver must not consume alcohol to excess on the evening before driving the minibus.**

- A minibus driver must not be taking any medication which could affect fitness to drive (consult with your GP or the Health Centre if taking medication).**

- Pre-plan the journey, be fully prepared and allow sufficient time for the travel
- Do not work for more than a maximum of 12 hours or exceed a maximum of 9 hours driving in any 24-hour period.
- Drive safely and with due care, observing all traffic regulations, including speed limits.
- Carry out reversal manoeuvres with great care, particularly if passengers are being conveyed. Make full use of mirrors and the reversing lens (if fitted). Request the help of a society official to guide you.
- Do not use a handheld mobile phone while driving** (when stopped at traffic lights or in a queue of traffic you are still considered to be driving). *Using hand free mobile telephones when driving is not illegal however the Guild strongly recommends mobile telephones are not used when driving.*

Activities required of the driver before and during the journey (continued)

- Ensure all passengers are seated and that the carrying capacity for passengers is not exceeded.
- Check all luggage is correctly stowed, with aisles unobstructed.
- Check the vehicle is not overloaded.
- If a roof rack is in use, make sure the load is evenly distributed and within the recommend weight limits for the vehicle.
- Ensure all doors are closed, but not locked and that emergency exit doors are not obstructed.
- Check that all seatbelts are used according to legal requirements.
- Ensure no hazardous materials or flammable liquids are being carried.
- Make sure that no one on board smokes
- Ensure that specialist equipment is used correctly and in accordance with manufacturer's

instructions.

- Identify and use safe pick-up and drop-off locations.
- Complete the vehicle logbook.
- Leave the vehicle interior in a clean condition.
- Ensure that there is sufficient fuel left to allow the next user to begin the next journey and re-fuel or **ensure the fuel tank is full if this is a hire condition.**

Legal requirement for parking a minibus

- Always park on the nearside of the road unless in a designated parking space.
- Never be less than 10 metres from a road junction.
- Never be in contravention of a parking restriction (e.g. yellow lines).
- Never cause an obstruction.
- If parking on the road at night, leave the side and rear lights on.

Other useful equipment to carry on a minibus

- Instructions and contact details for handling an emergency.
- Insurance policy details
- Breakdown policy details, contact numbers etc
- Mobile telephone/phonecard/change for telephone- for emergencies
- High visibility coat (BS EN 471)
- Portable flashing beacon/working torch
- Webbing cutter
- Pen and paper!

What to do if your minibus catches fire

- Stop immediately and switch off the engine
- Leave the gear stick in neutral in case of accidental engine re-ignition
- Engage fuel cut-off switch (if fitted)
- Get the passengers out and away from the vehicle, closing the vehicle doors behind

them.

- Call the emergency services
- If you have time, remove the ignition key, engage the battery isolation switch (if fitted), close all windows and, if you think there may be an engine fire, release the bonnet catch. Do not open the bonnet.
- Tackle the fire ONLY IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO (this means you have received training in using fire extinguishers)
- When the emergency services arrive, inform them if there is a hazardous load on board, for example gas containers.

What to do if your minibus breaks down on a road other than a motorway

- Park as far to the left side of the road as possible in the safest possible position.
- If possible, get all the passengers out of the vehicle using near side exits and keep them as far off the road as possible
- Do not cross the road or allow passengers to do so
- Ensure hazard warning lights are turned on
- Deploy the warning triangle on the same side of the road 50 metres behind the vehicle.
- Summon assistance

What to do if your minibus breaks down on a motorway

- If practicable, leave the motorway at the nearest exit and seek assistance
- Otherwise, pull safely off the carriageway on to the hard shoulder
- Try and stop near an emergency phone; they are one mile apart. You may coast along the hard shoulder to reach one. White posts positioned every 100 metres have an arrow indicating the direction of the nearest telephone
- Park as close to the near side of the hard shoulder as possible
- Switch on the vehicle's hazard warning lights and, at night; switch on all other lights including saloon lights.
- If possible, get all the passengers out of the vehicle using near side exits
- Keep passengers well away from the carriageway, preferably on the embankment
- Position the emergency warning triangle on the hard shoulder 150 metres behind the vehicle

- Phone the police. 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 will be known.

The information above is general advice and your circumstances may justify an alternative course of action. For example, waiting outside the vehicle in mid-winter may be inadvisable; some passengers with disabilities may be unable to climb over the crash barrier to reach the embankment, and so on. You should therefore assess the situation, taking account of your individual circumstances and follow the safest course of action.

Note that a driver can legally use a hand-held mobile telephone for calling the emergency services or 999 or 112 in response to a genuine emergency when it is unsafe or impractical to stop driving to make the call.

Action in the event of an accident

In the event of an accident:

- The driver must stop the vehicle if any person, or vehicle, or any fixed property or any domesticated animal is damaged or injured.
- The driver must give his or her own name and address that of the vehicle's owner and the registration number to any other driver, road user or pedestrian involved.
- Where any person is injured or there is no exchange of details, the police must be informed as soon as possible, certainly within 24 hours. In addition to the details outlined, the police can be expected to ask for the driver's licence, and an insurance certificate for the vehicle, both of which may have to be produced at a police station of the driver's choice within seven days.
- The school must be notified of any accident within 24 hours.
- Ensure that the 'Insurance Claim Post Accident Form' is completed and submitted (pages available through the insurance company)

How to assist wheelchair users in an emergency

If you are transporting wheelchair users in a lift- equipped vehicle the following methods are recommended in order of preference

- Use the passenger lift. Even in a fire emergency it is the safest way for wheelchair users to evacuate a vehicle
- If the lift cannot be used in the usual way but the vehicle has a relatively low floor, the lift may be positioned halfway between ground and floor and used as a step. In this case bring the passenger in the wheelchair out backwards.
- If the lift cannot be used at all and another person is available to help, the passenger

should be lifted, while seated in the wheelchair, backwards through the vehicle door

If no other help is available, or the wheelchair cannot be released from its restraints, the passenger must be carried from the vehicle. Check with the passenger how best to carry them. If they are unconscious, drape their arms around your shoulders and, with their face to your back, carry them to safety

Bad behaviour by passengers

- Passengers have the responsibility of ensuring that their behaviour is of an acceptable standard which does not compromise the health and safety of themselves or other occupants of the vehicle, and which does not distract the driver in any way.
- Passengers must not be removed from the vehicle during the journey; being told to travel home by public transport, for example is not acceptable.

Appendix B

Before your journey, complete the following checks (please tick):

Oil		Water		Fuel		Tyre condition	
Tyre pressures		Lights		Mirrors		Indicators	
Washers/Wipers		First Aid Kit		Fire extinguisher		Doors unlocked	
Booster seats		Tax					

Weekly Checks

Date w/c									
Oil									
Water									
Coolant									
Battery									
Tyres									
Wiper blades									
Washer fluid									
Lights and indicators									
Horn									
Seat belts									
Doors/windows									
Seat condition									
Floor condition									
General condition									
First aid kit									
Fire extinguisher									

Appendix 4

MINIBUS DRIVERS' ACCIDENT SLIP

In the event of an accident please use this form to gather important information and report the incident as soon as possible to the Site Manager or School Business Manager.

Driver to keep this section

Driver Name - _____ Third Party Name: _____
Driver Vehicle Reg.: _____ Third Party Vehicle Reg.: _____
Date of accident: _____ Time: _____
No of passengers in third party vehicle: _____

Any injuries:

Third party address and contact details:

Witness details

Take photos of third-party damage if safe to do so

PTO to note any additional information

Complete the section below with your registration number and name and leave with the third party

Third Party to keep this section

Please
Email: insurance@essex.gov.uk

Driver Name:	
Driver Vehicle Reg:	
Insurer & Policy No:	Zurich Municipal - QLA-19AA01-0063-59
Policyholder Name:	Essex County Council

MINIBUS DRIVERS' ACCIDENT SLIP
Driver to keep this section

Additional information / Sketch of accident:

Please send this accident slip along with your completed claim form to the School Business Manager.