



Minibus Policy

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Good Practice

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Definitions

In this **Minibus Policy**, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

- i **'The Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company named at the beginning of this **Minibus Policy** and includes all sites upon which the Company is undertaking, from time to time, being carried out. The Romero Catholic Academy includes; **Corpus Christi, Good Shepherd, Sacred Heart, Blue Sky, SS Peter and Paul, St Gregory, St John Fisher, St Patrick, Cardinal Wiseman, Shared Services Team.**
- ii **'Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company responsible for the management of the Academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the Company.
- iii **'Board'** means the board of Directors of the Romero Catholic Academy.
- iv **'Chair'** means the Chair of the Board or the Chair of the Local Academy Committee of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- v **'Clerk'** means the Clerk to the Board or the Clerk to the Local Academy Committee of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- vi **'Catholic Senior Executive Leader'** means the person responsible for performance of all Academies and Staff within the Multi Academy Company and is accountable to the Board of Directors.
- vii **'Diocesan Schools Commission'** means the education service provided by the diocese, which may also be known, or referred to, as the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service.
- viii **'Local Academy Committee'** means the Academy Committee of the School.
- ix **'Academy Committee Representatives'** means the governors appointed and elected to the Local Academy Committee of the School, from time to time.
- x **'Principal'** means the substantive Principal, who is the person with overall responsibility for the day to day management of the school.
- xi **'School'** means the school or college within The Romero Catholic Academy and includes all sites upon which the school undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- xii **'Shared Services Team'** means the staff who work in the central team across the Company (e.g. HR/ Finance)
- xiii **'Vice-Chair'** means the Vice-Chair of the Academy Committee elected from time to time.
- xiv **'Days Fleet'** means the leasing company responsible for the management of all minibuses within The Romero Catholic Academy

1. Introduction

This policy has been drawn up to ensure, as far as reasonably practical, the safety of all persons using a Romero Catholic Academy School Minibus and to also ensure that expensive assets are kept in a good and safe condition. This policy applies to ALL journeys in the school minibus, leased in the name of The Romero Catholic Academy.

The minibuses must:-

- Be used on behalf of a non-profit making organisation
- Be used for social purposes (i.e. on behalf of the community)
- Not for hire or reward
- Without a trailer attached*
- Have a maximum of 16 passengers
- Not exceed their maximum load weight of 3.5 tonnes (4.25 incl disabled ramp).

***Applicable to Cardinal Wiseman minibus ONLY. One tow bar attached for use of trailer. The driver must hold a full driving category D1 + E licence to drive the minibus with a trailer attached.**

If the driver passed their driving test before 1st January 1997, they can drive a minibus up to 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes including any specialist equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers) and tow a trailer of up to 750kg or tow a trailer over 750kg as long as the combined maximum authorised mass (MAM) of the trailer and towing vehicle is no more than 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes including any specialist equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers).

2. Scope

Drivers

1. In order to be drive our school minibus the driver must meet the following criteria:-

Car Driving Licence Obtained Before 1 January 1997

Drivers who obtained their full car (category B) driving licence before 1 January 1997 may drive a minibus in the UK because their licence included category D1. Such drivers will obviously be older than 21 years, which is the minimum age for driving a minibus.

Car Driving Licence Obtained After 1 January 1997

- Be over the age of 21 and under the age of 70 (unless they have passed the PCV Medical Test)
 - Held a full category B driving licence for over 2 years
2. The drivers driving license should be inspected every 6 months and should be free from any conviction for drunk, reckless or dangerous driving. These can be reviewed using the DVLA's website <https://www.gov.uk/check-drivinginformation>
 3. Every member of staff who drives the minibus must have a MiDAS (Minibus Driver Aware Scheme) Certificate of Competence before they can drive the bus. This must be renewed every 4 years or in line with current MiDAS/Community Transport Association guidelines.
 4. Must have permission from the Principal to drive the bus
 5. At no time must the driver drive a vehicle under the influence of either alcohol or other drugs which might impair driving ability. It should be noted that there are many "over the counter" medicines which would fall within this category. Any driver taking prescribed drugs should heed any warning given with the prescription. If any driver is found to be driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs where they are recommended not to

drive, they could be investigated under The Romero Catholic Academy Disciplinary Policy. The Romero Catholic Academy may also inform/liaise with, any necessary law enforcement agency as required.

6. Are personally liable for any parking or speeding fines (payment and penalties). If any member of staff is found to be driving over the legal speed limit, they could be investigated under The Romero Catholic Academy Disciplinary Policy. The Romero Catholic Academy may also inform/liaise with, any necessary law enforcement agency as required. Any subsequent driving endorsements may (where necessary) be passed on to the driver.
7. The minibus is fitted with both interior CCTV and on-board dashcams for the safety of both passengers and drivers. They must remain switched on at all times. The images from these can be used if required in investigations noted in points 5 and 6 above and any allegations of misconduct (in accordance with The Romero Catholic Academy Disciplinary Policy) whilst in charge of the minibus.
8. Notify the Principal of any endorsements they receive on their driving licence immediately upon receipt, who must in turn notify the Hub.
9. Immediately notify the Principal of any health conditions (or change in any health conditions) that may affect their ability to drive.
10. Are responsible for the safety and security of the vehicle whilst it is in their charge.
11. Notify the Principal of any damage or defect that occurs, or noticed whilst the minibus is in their charge. The Principal must then notify the Academy Business Director.

3. Care of the Minibus

Employees are expected to;

- Complete a checklist (**Appendix 1**) to check the condition of the vehicle upon takeover and notify the Principal of any faults.
- Check that the equipment which must be carried on the vehicle (fire extinguisher, first aid box, red triangle etc...) are there.
- Inform the office of any use of the first aid box so that it can quickly be replenished.
- Regularly check the gauges whilst driving for signs of overheating
- STOP if there is a malfunction and ring for assistance
- Leave the vehicle clean and tidy for the next user
- If the fuel gauge is less than half-full, refill as soon as possible
- When you have completed your journey ensure that the minibus is left secure before you hand the keys back
- When you have completed your journey ensure that the minibus is left clean and tidy

4. Safety

1. Maximum load and passenger capacity must not be exceeded
2. Seatbelts must be worn at all times by all passengers. Staff must check seatbelts are worn at all times throughout any given journey.
3. The Highway code must be adhered to at all times
4. Pupil behaviour: pupils must be seated at all times. If pupils distract the driver stop the bus until they are settled.
5. At least one member of staff travelling on the minibus must have basic First Aid Training.
6. A file must be taken on every journey and contain the following;
 - a. A copy of the trip risk assessment and emergency during an offsite activity policy
 - b. Pupil names
 - c. Parental contact numbers
 - d. Medical information
 - e. School contact numbers
 - f. Minibus Useful information sheet
7. Do not eat, drink or use a mobile phone whilst driving
8. The driver must wear a high vis vest when driving the minibus.
9. Adhere to the following guidelines regarding driver hours;

	Domestic Rules	EC Rules
Maximum length of working day	16 hours	13 hours
Daily driving period	10 hours	9 hours
Time driving without a break*	5 ½ hours	4 ½ hours
Minimum length of break	30 minutes	45 minutes
Daily rest period	10 hours	11 hours
Weekly driving limit		56 hours

*The break is a period during which the driver may not perform other work and is exclusively used for recuperation. This break may be split into smaller periods and distributed throughout the 4 1/2 hour. In this case, the first period must be at least 15 minutes, and the second period must be at least 30 minutes. With each additional driving period, the break time should be extended.

Drivers should not be required to supervise children during their break, as this would not be a rest for the driver.

5. Accident or Breakdown

1. In the event of an accident all normal procedures should be followed. Details of time, place, road conditions, vehicles, drivers involved, damage, injury, photos taken (if possible), must be noted. The school Principal must be notified as soon as possible. It is not advisable to tackle an engine fire. The Principal will then notify the Academy Business Director.
2. If you breakdown; the recovery telephone number is on the Minibus Useful information sheet (**Appendix 2**) that can be found in the glovebox.
3. Contact the school
4. Pupils should NOT remain in the broken down vehicle on the motorway/dual carriageway hard shoulder but are to stand at a safe distance behind the barrier.
5. Drivers need to pay attention to the minibus, ultimately, because of the people it contains. No two incidents are the same – different passengers with different needs, road conditions, hazards etc.
6. The driver must therefore always assess the situation – in order to decide what is the safest course of action. In effect the driver is doing an on-the-spot dynamic risk assessment to decide the safest course of action

7. If a minibus breaks down on a motorway it is vital that it pulls over as far as possible to the left of the hard shoulder. The passengers should leave the minibus – by the nearside door only (unless an emergency evacuation is required) Do not allow passengers around the back of the vehicle but get them over the crash barrier and up/down the embankment.
8. However – some passengers may be in more danger if they leave the vehicle, or will be incapable of getting over the crash barrier. In which case they must stay on board – seat belts on. Make the vehicle as visible by putting on all the lights, hazard flashers etc. **DO NOT USE A WARNING TRIANGLE.**
9. On roads other than motorways, decide whether there is a safer place nearby. If you decide that it is safer for them to stay inside the minibus, make sure they keep their seat belts on, in case another vehicle collides with the minibus.
10. In all breakdown situations, keep your passengers reassured and informed about what is going on and the actions you have taken.
11. Children are to wear high vis vests (stored on minibus) in the event of a breakdown/emergency
12. Staff are not to attempt repairs. They must wait for help.

6. Minibus Sharing

If you lend your minibus to another school within the Romero Catholic Academy.

If you borrow a minibus from another school you should return the minibus in the same condition as when you collected it from the school i.e. with the same amount of fuel, and clean (inside and out) and tidy, any of the first aid kit that you used must be replenished.

If the minibus is returned without the fuel being replenished to the same level as when it was collected, the school borrowing the minibus will be charged for fuel and running charges for the mileage they used, at a cost of 45p per mile plus a £5 administration fee. This will be re-charged from your GAG funds and re-credited to the school where you borrowed the minibus from.

7. Admin - School

1. Ensure keys to the minibus are kept secure at all times when the minibus is not in use.
2. Ensure that the driver completes the Daily Checklist (**Appendix 1**) before starting the journey and that the mileage is completed at the end of the journey.
3. Ensure that the above checklists are completed accurately and are kept in date order available for inspection by Days Fleet as required.
4. Ensure that their drivers report any new license endorsements to Principal immediately. This must in turn be reported to the Academy Business Director.
5. Once every half term submit to Days Fleet the current mileage of your vehicle. This must be done via the Days Fleet website (driver area) at <http://daysfleet.com/driver-area/submit-mileage/>
6. Develop a system for “booking out” the minibus, including times for routine servicing, 12 weekly safety inspections and MOTs these must be booked via Days Fleet Driver Line 0345 296 4423 or <http://daysfleet.com/my-fleet/book-service-mot/>
7. Each school must nominate a dedicated person as a point of contact for the Hub
8. Familiarise themselves with the Days Fleet Driver Area website <http://daysfleet.com>
9. Advise the Hub of any faults, breakdowns or accidents
10. Any excess mileage over and above the contract of 30000miles over the 60-month term will be charged to the individual school at a rate of 4.58p per mile.
11. The school must keep accurate records for servicing by ensuring that the dealer affixes an appropriate stamp in the service book provided.
12. Arrangements for purchase and payment of fuel

13. Arrangements for cleaning the minibus both inside and out.
14. Notify the Hub if the school minibus is lent out and returned without the fuel being replenished.
15. Schools may only charge for transport in their minibuses if they hold a permit issued under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. In some cases, the permit exempts the school from Public Service Vehicle (PSV) operator and driver licensing requirements. A permit is not required if no charge is made in cash or kind. Schools should apply to their LA for a permit for each minibus they operate individually. Guidance on [Driving School Minibuses](#)
16. Any charges made may be used to recover some or all of the costs of running the vehicle, including loss of value. The school may not make a profit, even if it is intended to go towards the school's other running costs or charitable purposes. Further information is available from LAs or the regional Traffic Commissioners.

8. Admin – Hub

1. Whilst the schools insurance contract is maintained via the Hub, the Hub will be responsible for ensuring that relevant insurance is in place.
2. The Hub will remain responsible for applying for the relevant S19 permits.
3. Ensure all MiDAS certification for all drivers remains up to date and update the Days Fleet Client Dashboard accordingly.
4. Ensure all driving license checks are undertaken as detailed above. These checks should be free from any conviction for drunk, reckless or dangerous driving. If there are more than 6 points on a license it should be referred to the Hub for further consideration by the Academy Business Director.
5. Periodically inspect school minibus records to ensure adherence to this policy and our minibus contract with Days Fleet
6. Administer all banking and payments with the contract lease company Days Fleet, and recharge as necessary to the schools via their monthly GAG
7. Act as the main point of contact with Days Fleet and to manage the Days Fleet contract.
8. Re-charge any fuel costs as per minibus sharing detailed above.

9. Recommended Reading

Community Transport Association - <http://www.ctauk.org/>

ROSPA Minibus Safety Code of Practice - <http://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/practitioners/minibus-code-of-practice.pdf>

Days Fleet website - <http://daysfleet.com>

DFE - Driving School Minibuses -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/494266/Driving_school_minibuses_and_advice_for_schools_and_local_authorities.pdf

10. Links to other policies

This Minibus Policy is linked to our;

- CCTV Policy

11. Monitoring and Review

The Board of Directors delegate the implementation of this policy to the Academy Committee. This policy will be reviewed by CC2 Strategy, People and Organisational Development.

Appendix 1

Minibus Driver Checklist

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. Walk around the vehicle to check for visible defects and the items listed below:

Exterior Check	OK	Not Ok	Defect Reported to
Oil Level (once only at start of day)			
Coolant Level (once only at start of day)			
Windscreen washer fluid level (once only at start of day)			
Brake fluid level (once only at start of day)			
Windscreen and windows are clean and undamaged			
Exterior mirrors are correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed			
Lights, including brake lights and indicators, are clean and working			
Tyre pressures, including the spare			
Tyre tread, including the spare. At least 3.0mm across the centre $\frac{3}{4}$ is recommended			
Any cuts and bulges on tyres?			
Doors open and close properly			
Ramp (if fitted) works safely and is securely stowed			
Roof Rack is properly fitted, and all luggage is securely held			
Damage to bodywork or sharp edges			
Fluid Leaks			
Passenger ramp is working and securely stowed (if fitted)			

Trailer Check (if applicable)	OK	Not Ok	Defect Reported to
Tyre pressures on the trailer			
Tyre tread on the trailer. At least 3.0mm across the centre $\frac{3}{4}$ is recommended			
Trailer brake lights and indicators work			
Trailer is properly fitted including cover and all luggage is securely held			
Trailer number plate in place and visible			
Driver must ensure emergency exit at the rear of minibus is cleared with immediate removal of the trailer			

Signed

Date

Print Name

Appendix 2

Minibus Driver Useful Information Sheet

The Romero Catholic Academy Emergency Contact's telephone: 02476 451888

Academy Business Director – Patrick Taggart - 07970722594

Days Fleet 24hr DriverLine for maintenance, servicing, breakdown, tyres and glass: 0345 296 4423

Insurance: Zurich Insurance Policy Number KSC – 242052-7293

In the case of an Incident

- Report to the Academy Business Director (above)