



## **MINIBUS POLICY**

These procedures are designed to make each journey in a minibus as safe as possible. However, it is recognised that no matter how safe the procedures, accidents are still possible.

These procedures are mandatory. It is a condition of using a self-drive minibus on behalf of Nidderdale High School that the driver follows all the procedures applicable to him/her. Any person driving a minibus is directly accountable to the Headteacher and to the Governing Body.

It is greatly appreciated that staff are willing to take on the considerable responsibility for driving a minibus, and it is hoped that staff understand why the procedures need to be so carefully determined and adhered to. The safety of the passengers and the protection of the driver are paramount, and Governors know and expect that drivers will appreciate the need to adhere to the spirit of the document as well as to the letter.

### **A. DRIVERS**

1. The Site Manager is the school's Minibus Officer. Any decision taken by him concerning a minibus is binding.
2. Any person wishing to drive on behalf of the School must have satisfactorily completed an approved assessment and training course through MIDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) and hold a D1 licence or hold a PSV licence and a CPC certificate. Drivers must be between 25 and 70 years of age.
3. Driving licences should be shown to the Site Manager for approval and copies held on file. It is the duty of any driver to inform the Site Manager if there are any changes to that driving licence as soon as that happens. If these conditions have not been fulfilled, the driver will be uninsured and driving illegally.
4. Once familiarisation, approval and insurance requirements have been met, the driver will be added to the list of current drivers authorised to drive on behalf of this school. This list is kept by the Office Manager.
5. One year after a driver has been on this list, his/her name will be removed if the minibus has not been driven during that year, or a short refresher familiarisation course will be given for the driver to remain on the list for a further year. After each period of one year, the Site Manager will check all current drivers to see that insurance requirements have still been met.

### **B. JOURNEY**

1. Once a minibus has been booked for use with the Office Manager, the procedures for ANY school journey whether in a minibus or hired vehicle or on foot have been followed,

no further permission is needed by an authorised driver for journeys of less than 25 miles there and 25 miles back. If there are abnormal circumstances such as:

- \* Exceptional road or weather conditions
- \* The load is exceptional
- \* There are concerns about the passengers
- \* The activity undertaken at the end of the journey poses significant risk for the driver or where there could be any other cause for concern

then of course advice from the Site Manager or the Headteacher should be sought, thus ensuring a shared responsibility of any perceived risk if such a journey still goes ahead. It is incumbent on the driver to seek advice when in the least bit unsure.

2. For journeys of more than 25 miles each way, each such journey must specifically be approved by the Headteacher. Before granting permission, the Headteacher will take into account circumstances such as the distance, the route (especially hazardous roads and motorways), the weather conditions, the driver's workload that day, the activity at the end of the journey, the time returned to school, the number and nature of the children or adults carried, and the level of additional adult supervision and alternative drivers in the party.

### **C. DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Before driving the minibus, making sure that it is in a fit and serviceable condition, by carrying out the safety routines specified and certifying on the Driver's checklist that this has been done.

#### **N.B. The driver is legally responsible for the condition of the vehicle.**

In the event of an incident due to failure by the driver to carry out the safety routines prior to using the vehicle, then it is likely that the driver would be prosecuted, if it were shown beyond all reasonable doubt that the incident was due to this failure. If an incident was due to mechanical failure which was outside the control of the driver, the driver may escape prosecution.

2. During the journey the driver must ensure that passengers do not move around, that they wear their seatbelts at all times, and that their behaviour is up to the high standards expected. No food is to be eaten on the minibus. The driver is totally responsible for all his/her passengers en route.

3. Use of the minibus during the current Covid climate. The minibus may only be used at a reduced capacity which will meet government guidelines for social distancing. If face coverings are advised by the government then they should be worn in the correct manner by the driver and passengers.

4. At the end of each journey, the driver must complete the vehicle's log-book recording mileage etc., must ensure the bus is clean and tidy, and write down any vehicle faults experienced. However in addition, the driver must report any vehicle faults or problems in handling which have given rise to any concern to the Site Manager.

## **SAFETY ROUTINES**

1. Check oil, fuel, (also fuel type to use) water and additive levels. Top-up as necessary.
2. Examine tyres for wear and damage. Adjust air pressures when cold as necessary.
3. Check brakes.
4. Check all seats are secure
5. Check driving mirrors, windscreen wipers and washers for satisfactory operation.
6. Check effective operation of horn or other audible warning.
7. Check effective operation of driving lights, stop lights and direction indicators, together with cleanliness of reflectors and number plates.
8. Spare wheel, fire extinguisher, First Aid Kit and tool kit.
9. Clean windscreen inside and out and all other windows in the passenger saloon of the vehicle, including rear windows and reversing aid lenses (where fitted).
10. Those with the extra disabled Midas qualification should check all special equipment, provided with purpose built vehicles for the transport of the disabled.
11. Ensure the hoist/tail lift if fitted to the vehicle is in proper working order both in electrical/manual operation mode.
12. Ensure all latches; safety belts/straps are present in the vehicle and in sufficient numbers in proportion to the number of wheelchairs to be carried.
13. Driving vehicles in a safe manner in compliance with the law, with due regard to the need for economy in the use of fuel.
14. Completing any record of work, record of driving and any other record of vehicle utilisation that may be required by law, or by the Authority.
15. Reporting on the minibus vehicle checklist and Driver's Record any vehicle defect which comes to his/her notice as a result of carrying out the safety routines, or whilst driving, or where no defects come to his/her notice completing the section 'no defects found'.
16. Reporting all accidents or incidents involving damage that may occur whilst driving a vehicle to the insurance company and the Headteacher.
17. Ensuring that he/she holds an up-to-date driving licence or licences valid for the type of vehicle being driven.

## **D. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR DRIVERS IN THE CASE OF AN ACCIDENT, BREAKDOWN OR DISASTER ON AN EXCURSION OR TRIP**

**ACCIDENTS:** In the event of an accident/incident inform the school immediately you are able. To assist you in the possible confusion after an accident a checklist has been prepared:

1. Stop - it is an offence not to stop after an accident.
2. Switch off the vehicle engine. Ask others involved to do the same.
3. Ensure your passengers are safe from other hazards. If passengers are uninjured get them to leave the vehicle and go to a place of safety. Ensure children are supervised. Do not leave children unattended after an accident. Use reflecting vests (kept in minibus) to make sure people are visible.
4. Make sure no one smokes near the accident site.
5. Warn other road users of the danger.
6. If anyone is injured contact police and emergency services by dialling 999.
7. Administer First Aid if required and if you are able.
8. Do not move casualties unless absolutely necessary.

9. Do not move the vehicles involved (unless they are a danger to traffic) until the police arrive or if they are not attending, until an independent person has noted their position.
10. Give your name and address, the registration number and in case of personal injury, insurance particulars to any person having reasonable grounds for requiring them.

Should, for any reason, the particulars not be given at the time of the accident then the circumstances must be reported to a police constable or at a police station as soon as possible and in any case within 24 hours. The police will require to see the certificate or evidence of insurance and this must be produced at a specified police station within seven days of the accident or as soon as possible thereafter.

11. Obtain from the other person(s) involved in the accident/incident their name, address and registration number of their vehicle and insurance details.
12. If there are any witnesses to the accident, obtain their name(s) and address(es).
13. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ADMIT LIABILITY FOR THE ACCIDENT/INCIDENT.**

### **BREAKDOWNS**

The driver's first responsibility is to minimise any disruption, discomfort, to his/her passengers. This is particularly important if any passengers are disabled. Drivers are also responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and security of the vehicle and having reported the breakdown should remain with the vehicle until assistance arrives.

### **IN THE EVENT OF A DISASTER ON AN EXCURSION OR TRIP**

***This written guidance should be held by each adult member of the party.***

1. Establish the nature and extent of the emergency.
2. Make sure all other members of the party are accounted for and are safe (i.e. carry out a head count). Remember you must carry with you a list of the members of your party.
3. Call the appropriate emergency services. If there are injuries, establish their extent and administer appropriate first aid if you have been trained and feel capable. Be aware of consequences that might follow were you to give incorrect treatment. Have regard to your own safety vis a vis blood contact.
4. Advise other party staff of the incident and of actions taken. Decide, if appropriate, who is in charge and responsibilities to be undertaken by each adult member of the group.
5. Ensure that an adult accompanies any casualties to hospital. If only one adult is available in the circumstances a decision will have to be reached as to the best course of action.
6. Ensure that remaining students are adequately supervised and arrange for an early return to base.
7. Arrange for one adult to remain at the site of the incident to liaise with the emergency services until the incident is over and all students are accounted for.

8. Contact the senior members of staff on call – telephone number given on Risk Assessment.

Control access to telephones until the senior member of staff has contacted parents/others directly involved. Give full details of the incident including:

- ***nature, date, location and time of incident***
- ***details of injuries, etc.***
- ***names and home telephone numbers of those involved***
- ***action taken so far***
- ***telephone numbers for future communication***

9. Do not discuss matters with the media.
10. The senior member of staff should contact the Headteacher and establish who will take charge of the situation and what immediate action will be taken. The Head will advise the Chair of Governors (and the LA/area office).
11. The party leader should, at the first opportunity, make notes on the incident, as should other people involved. A record should be kept of the names and addresses of any witnesses or people involved.
12. Do not discuss legal liability.
13. Ensure accident forms are completed as soon as possible.
14. Inform parents of any delays that will be necessitated.

Reapproved 29 June 2020