

Minibus Policy



Equalities Statement

In our Trust we work to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all members of our community who hold a range of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, as well as having regard to other factors which have the potential to cause inequality, such as socio-economic factors.

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1. Rationale and Aim

1.1 School/Minibus Details

This policy relates to Peacehaven Community School's minibus transport. A minibus is a motor vehicle with between 9 and 16 passenger seats (but not including the driver's seat).

Peacehaven Community School has one minibus:

Minibus Make and Model	FORD TRANSIT 460 LEADER ECOBLUE
Number of Passenger Seats	16
Vehicle Registration Number	WD73XCA
Owned/Leased (provide name of lease company if leased):	Day's Fleet
Gross vehicle weight (GVW):	4,600 kg

1.2 Section 19 Permit

Organisations that provide transport on a 'not-for-profit' basis (such as educational bodies) can apply for permits under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. These permits allow the holder to operate transport services for hire or reward without the need for a full public service vehicle operator's (PSV 'O') licence. For schools, a Section 19 Permits exempts them from the need to hold a PSV Operator's licence when providing transport for a charge. Each school minibus (whether owned or hired) by Swale Academies Trust and its Academies will be subject to a Section 19 Permit.

Information on making an application for a Section 19 Permit can be found [here](#)

The Section 19 permit should be displayed on the windscreen of the Minibus. A Section 19 permit is not specific to one vehicle and may be transferred between different vehicles. However, a permit can only be used on *one vehicle at a time* and so there may be a requirement to apply for more than one.

1.3 Responsibility

The school's Office and Media Manager (with support from the Administrative Assistant who oversees fixtures and trips) shall be responsible for ensuring that the school is compliant with all legal / permit obligations and that the minibus remain in a legal and drivable state

2. Authorisation to Drive the Minibus

2.1 Licence Requirements

All drivers that wish to drive a minibus heavier than 3,500kgs (or 4,250kgs where a vehicle is fitted with specialist disabled access equipment) must hold a D1 licence. Drivers wishing to drive a minibus under 3.5 tons, must have a B licence.

2.2 MiDAS Training

Completion of a Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) training course is not compulsory but is strongly recommended. All references to MiDAS training throughout this policy are therefore at the discretion of Headteacher.

2.3 Conditions to be Met

The driver is authorised to drive, providing they are a paid member of staff of the school and until any of the conditions below are met (all drivers have a duty of care to inform the Headteacher if any condition below is met during the school year):

- a. Accumulating more than 6 live points on their licence or committing a driving offence;
- b. Have a collision resulting in significant damage to the minibus or 3rd party vehicle as determined by Headteacher, unless it was clearly the fault of a third party;
- c. Have a collision resulting in injury to passengers/third parties in the minibus unless it was clearly the fault of a third party;
- d. Have serious complaints about their driving confirmed;
- e. Have a collision resulting in minor damage to the minibus or 3rd party vehicle as determined by the Headteacher, unless it was clearly the fault of a third party. Light damage would likely be considered minor dents, scratches, scrapes or paint damage;
- f. Acquire a medical condition that would affect their ability to drive;
- g. They reach 70 years of age & cannot provide a medical certificate to satisfy the insurance / DVLA licensing requirements;
- h. There is a change in DBS clearance or an offence is found during a licence check;
- i. A DVLA check code is not provided when requested, usually in preparation for the start of the academic year or before completing an internal MiDAS course.

Should any of the above conditions be 'triggered' the proposed corrective actions are suggested as follows (although the school reserves the right to suggest/implement alternative actions subject to the context of the above):

- a. The driver will not be permitted to drive the school minibus whilst the number of active points exceeds 6 and/or the offence is not considered spent and therefore shows as active on a DVLA licence check. When the number of live points no longer exceeds 6 and/or the offence is considered spent.
- b. We may, at our discretion, request a DLVA certified PCV medical before the member of staff drives the minibuses again. Additionally, a MiDAS refresher or assessment drive with a MiDAS assessor is completed. In all cases, the DLVA/Health Service guidance will be followed and Trust Insurers informed as necessary.
- c. At a minimum drivers should undertake an assessment drive with a qualified MiDAS assessor with the same criteria being used but may, at the school's discretion, not be required to undertake the full MiDAS course.
- d. HR advice will be sought; these issues will be handled on a case by case basis.
- e. The driver will be allowed to resume driving once a successful & clear check of their licence has been completed. A record of copies of driving licences are held for those members of staff who are authorised to drive the minibuses and this is kept up to date by the Administrative Assistant who oversees fixtures/trips. In preparation for the start of each academic year, or before a driver undertakes a MiDAS course, drivers should provide the Administrative Assistant with a 'DVLA check code'. A record will be maintained centrally by the Administrative Assistant which will record details of drivers licence, MiDAS accreditation, any points or driver licence/DVLA issues as well as the dates for re-assessment of MiDAS.

2.4 DVLA Checks

To enable the school to check the DVLA database [here](#), the driver is required to provide the following:

- Driving licence number
- National insurance number
- The postcode on the driving licence

This information will enable the school to:

- View the driver's driving record, for example the category of vehicles they can drive;
- Check for penalty points or disqualifications;
- Create a licence 'check code' to share the driving licence with a third party, for example a car hire company or insurance company.

Any SAT member of staff driving another school's minibus shall be subject to the same licence check requirements stated above - and the Administrative Assistant should seek assurance that the driver is suitably trained (eg MiDAS).

2.5 Loan and Sharing Restrictions

The minibus may be shared with other schools within Swale Academies Trust, as the Trust's insurance policy supports this. However, caution should be exercised when loaning out; in the event of an accident or damage while on loan, the home school may be left without transport for a significant period of time.

The loaning of the minibus to schools or organisations outside of Swale Academies Trust is strictly prohibited.

2.6 Authorised/Prohibited Uses

The minibus may be used outside of standard school hours provided the journey is for school/Trust-related business (e.g., transporting staff to moderation meetings, sporting fixtures, or training events).

The use of the minibus for social events, staff 'outings' unrelated to school/Trust business, or any form of personal use is strictly prohibited.

3. Procedure

3.1 Safety

- Ensure the Pre-Drive Checklist (Appendix A) is completed before starting the journey.
- Maximum load and passenger capacity must not be exceeded.
- The Highway Code must be adhered to at all times.
- Seatbelts must be worn at all times by the driver and all passengers. Staff must check seatbelts are worn at all times throughout any given journey.
- Pupils must remain seated at all times. If pupils distract the driver, the driver must stop the minibus as soon as safely possible until they are settled.
- Hi-Viz jackets must be worn by all occupants if they are required to disembark due to breakdown or accident.
- Ensure the keys to the minibus are kept secure at all times when the minibus is not in use.

When a member of staff is driving a minibus on a long-distance journey, it is not acceptable to expect them to exercise general supervisory responsibilities during the journey. There is a requirement, therefore, for an adequate number of adults to drive and supervise the pupils.

In accordance with the requirements of Section 19 Permits, drivers should have a 15-minute rest break after every 2 hours of driving. Rest breaks should only be taken when safe to do so and in a safe place, e.g., a service station.

3.2 Accidents/Incidents

3.2.1 - Minor

The minibus is still legal, roadworthy and drivable.

If an accident occurs, the minibus driver or additional member of staff should ensure that the pupils are safe and uninjured. The driver should ensure that the details of other vehicles at the scene are taken and recorded on a motor accident report form.

Where possible, photographs should be taken of the accident/incident to assist with any insurance claim. The driver should notify the Administrative Assistant of the accident as soon as practicable. Upon returning to school, the driver should submit the motor accident report form (at Appendix B). If applicable, accident forms should be completed via Medical Tracker for all injured passengers, and /or driver regardless of severity.

3.2.2 Major

The minibus is not drivable or injuries sustained to staff or pupils.

The driver must telephone the emergency services and ensure pupils are safe as a priority. They must then telephone the Administrative Assistant to advise them of the incident. The Administrative Assistant will contact the Headteacher (or School Improvement Executive in the case of Head of School) for further advice.

The staff and pupils must go to an area of safety away from traffic and staff must stay with the pupils at all times. There must be sufficient hi-vis jackets available on each vehicle for the driver and passengers, which must be worn in this situation. The driver or additional staff member should keep the Administrative Assistant up to date on events at all times.

Upon returning to the school, the driver should submit a motor accident report form (at Appendix B). If applicable, accident forms should be completed via Medical Tracker for all injured passengers and/or drivers regardless of severity.

3.3 Breakdown

Details of the breakdown services (provided as part of the lease agreement) can be found here: <https://www.theaa.com/help-support/contact-us-breakdown> - please quote the vehicle registration number WD73 XCA. If the driver cannot make contact with the breakdown company, they should seek further advice from the Administrative Assistant.

If the minibus breaks down, the driver must call the breakdown services who will attempt to repair the vehicle and if unable to, will arrange for the minibus to be towed back to the school. The staff and pupils must go to an area of safety away from traffic and stay with the pupils at all times. There must be sufficient hi vis jackets available on each vehicle for the driver and passengers, which must be worn in this situation.

If the minibus cannot be repaired at the roadside then the driver must call the Administrative Assistant on call who will arrange transport to return the staff and pupils to the school.

3.4 Maintenance and Insurance

As a Section 19 permit holder, we have a responsibility to make sure that our services are operated within the law, with vehicles properly maintained and using drivers with the appropriate qualifications.

The minibus must be serviced at the regular recommended intervals and have a valid MOT certificate. Insurance is arranged centrally by Swale Academies Trust and a copy of the motor fleet certificate of insurance is provided to the school. The designated driver and the person responsible for the minibuses must be fully conversant with the insurance cover details and all associated terms and conditions. Each minibus will have a 10 week safety inspection carried out by an independent party to ensure that each minibus remains roadworthy and compliant with the school's Section 19 Permit obligations.

Checks of the minibus must be carried out by the driver (Appendix A) and be recorded, along with journey information, in a central school log.

Defects or damage should be noted on the checklist and reported to the Administrative Assistant. The Administrative Assistant should ensure that the issue is rectified or made safe before the minibus is used again, and actions should be recorded centrally within the school. Records of maintenance jobs and booked repairs are kept by the Administrative Assistant. This is also to include upcoming safety inspections, repairs, MOT and service in accordance with Permit requirements.

If the minibus is unavailable, the insurance allows drivers to use any available Swale Academies Trust (SAT) minibus with the school's permission.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be regularly monitored by the Administrative Assistant and Office and Media Manager.

5. Implementation & Review

This policy will be circulated to all school staff staff and published on the school website for information. The policy will be reviewed two-yearly.

Appendix A - Minibus Pre-Drive Checklist

Each time the minibus is used the driver should conduct a pre-drive safety check. This should be repeated whenever another driver takes over the vehicle, or each new day. 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 the journey)			
Coolant Level (once only at start of the journey)			
Windscreen washer fluid level (once only at the start of the journey)			
Brake fluid level (once only at start of the journey)			
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			
Any cuts and/or bulges on tyres?			
Doors open and close properly			
Ramp works safely and is securely stowed (if installed)			
Damage to bodywork (include location)			
Fluid leaks			

Interior Checks	OK	Not OK	Defect Reported To
Start Mileage _____ miles			
Mirrors are correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed			
Position and function/purpose of all the dashboard controls			
Position of driving seat so that all controls can be operated comfortably			
Resistance from brake pedal			
Wipers and Washers are working properly			

Fuel level (and type of fuel: diesel, petrol, electric or hybrid) sufficient for journey			
Heating and ventilation systems working			
All seats are fixed and secure, and all seatbelts are undamaged and working properly			
Location and contents of first aid kit and fire extinguisher			
Luggage is securely stowed, and aisles and exits are clear			
Emergency equipment is onboard (torch, warning triangle, webbing cutter, fire extinguishers, fist aid kit)			
Number of hi-viz jackets on board for all staff and pupils			
All doors lock and unlock, open and close			
Interior lights are working			
No warning lights lit on dashboard			
Equipment for wheelchair users (wheelchair tie-downs, passenger safety belts and harnesses) is available if wheelchair passenger is present			
End Mileage _____ miles			

I am fully conversant with the insurance cover details and all associated terms and conditions.

[Peacehaven Community School's insurance certificates can be found here \(they must be updated each year\)](#)

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Reason for Journey: _____

Appendix B - Minibus Motor Accident Report Form

To be completed in the event of damage to or an accident involving a school owned/leased vehicle and handed to the Administrative Assistant.

A copy of this form must also be shared with Finance at Ashdown House on the day of the incident so that they may support with reporting it to the insurance provider.

School, Driver and Vehicle Details

Name of School	
Name of Driver	
Driver Job Title	
Vehicle Registration Number	
Vehicle Make and Model	
Vehicle Leased or Owned?	

Accident Details

Date	
Time	
Location	
Road and Weather Conditions	
Speed of Own Vehicle	
Speed of Third Party Vehicle	
Pedestrians Involved	
How Accident Occured	
Injuries to Driver/Passengers	

Third Party Details

Name of Driver	
Address of Driver	
Telephone Number of Driver	
Registration Number of Vehicle	
Make and Model of Vehicle	
Was the Vehicle Parked / Stationary / Unattended?	
Number of Passengers	
Any Injuries to Driver or Passengers	
Insurance Company Policy Number, Name, Address and Telephone Number	

Witness Details

Name of Witness	
Address of Witness	
Telephone Number of Witness	
Is Witness Independent?	

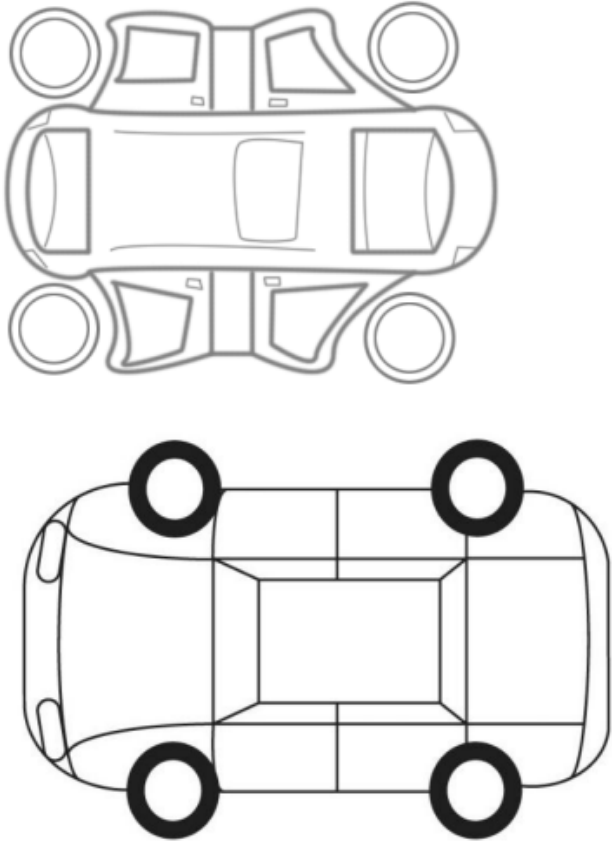
Witness Details

Name of Witness	
Address of Witness	
Telephone Number of Witness	
Is Witness Independent?	

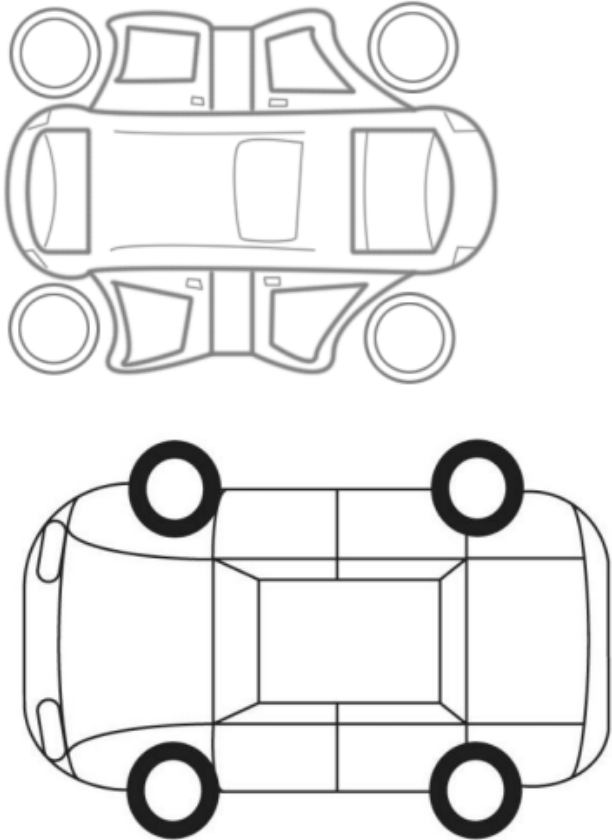
Police Details

Did the Police attend and take details of the accident?	
If Yes, state Name of Officer, Division, and Incident/Crime Reference Number	

Damage to School Vehicle Details

<p>Describe Damage to the School Vehicle</p>	
<p>Mark Areas of Damage to the School Vehicle</p>	

Damage to Third Party Vehicle Details

<p>Describe Damage to the Third Party Vehicle</p>	
<p>Mark Areas of Damage to the Third Party Vehicle</p>	

Sketched Position of Vehicles Involved at Point of Impact

Please use the space below to sketch the position of the vehicles involved at the point of impact:

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Additional Information

Do you feel anything could have been done by either yourself or the other driver(s) to prevent the accident?	
If yes, please give details	
Please give details of how a similar accident can be prevented in the future	
Photographs of vehicles, scene of accident	

Declaration

I declare that the information given in this form is a true reflection of the incident.	
Driver Signature: _____	Date: _____

WARNING: In order not to prejudice the school's conduct of any litigation which may ensue as a consequence of an accident, it is imperative that the contents of this form are not divulged to third parties involved. No admission of responsibility or liability should be admitted.