



## Highfields Independent School and Day Nursery

### Mini Bus Policy

Last Reviewed:	Nov 2015	Approved on:	
Committee Responsible:	Pupil and Personnel	Next Review:	Nov 2017
Approved by:	Full Govs		

Highfields School is committed to taking all reasonable precautions to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that those employees who drive the minibus as part of their job are protected from any foreseeable risks to their health and safety.

### **Purpose and Objectives**

Driving a minibus requires additional skills to be able to handle the vehicle safely as the weight and the size of the vehicle are considerably greater than a family car. In addition, the driver takes on the responsibility for the safety of the passengers. Although rare, serious, sometimes fatal accidents have occurred when educational establishments use minibuses. It is to minimize the risk of such accidents occurring that this policy has been produced.

The policy will enable staff to appreciate the risks associated with driving a minibus and to ensure that they are aware of, and understand the safety precautions necessary to reduce those risks to an acceptable level. It will also provide details of the emergency procedures required should something go wrong.

This policy applies to:

- Any minibus owned by Highfields School
- Any minibus hired for teaching, research or other school activities.
- Minibuses which are defined as vehicles constructed or adapted to carry more than eight, but not more than sixteen passengers, in addition to the driver.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with any other school policies that relate to the use of vehicles and the Child Protection Policy.

### **Responsibilities:**

The Headmaster is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy and code of practice is communicated to and fully understood by all staff, governors, parents and students.
- Checking that all procedures are adhered to
- Ensuring that the policy is implemented
- Formally agreeing which employees are allowed to drive the minibus
- Reporting any accidents to the Governing Body.

The Headmaster is responsible for:

- Drafting appropriate policies and procedures as required.
- Setting up and maintaining appropriate vehicle management and booking systems including:
  - The checking of licences
  - Maintenance of vehicle logs
  - Liaising with persons booking the transport
  - Ensuring the relevant Journey Report Forms are completed and kept.
- Ensuring that the servicing and maintenance schedules are completed satisfactorily as per the manufacturer's guidance and legal requirements, and on time
- Ensuring that vehicle licence, tax and insurance is in place at the right time

- Ensuring all drivers hold an appropriate 'clean' driving licence for the type of vehicle they will be driving subject to the Headmaster's discretion, and that all drivers have held a full and appropriate driving licence for at least three years
- Ensuring that all drivers are appropriately trained to drive the specific school vehicle and know the school policy on:
  - Pre-use checks
  - Vehicle and driver's logs
  - Load carrying for the particular vehicle
  - Driving limits

It is the responsibility of the drivers to:

- Ensure they are qualified to do so  
Will be expected to complete a familiarisation training course and as soon as practicable reasonable complete the MIDDAS training course
- Have a valid driving licence
- Hold an 'authorisation to drive' certificate issued by the school.
- Comply with the safe procedures and control measures identified in the minibus policy and code of practice.
- Liaise with the person who has booked the minibus and the Headmaster as appropriate
- Maintain the Vehicle and Driver Log as required
- Make the necessary pre-use checks and initialing the check list
- Ensure that the load capacity and passenger numbers are not exceeded
- Know and follow the school policy on driving times and limits
- Ensure all passengers know the safety requirements (e.g. seat belts) and required behaviour en route.
- Ensure that the Headmaster, or person in charge in his absence, knows the destination and if possible the route and the timings
- Ensuring the person booking the vehicle signs the Journey Report Form at the end of the journey.
- Report any problems immediately to the Site Manager
- Not knowingly place themselves or their passengers in a position of unnecessary risk.

Persons booking the minibus are responsible for:

- Following the school policy
- Liaising as appropriate with the Headmaster and driver
- Ensuring that the driver knows and implements the policy
- Making a Journey Report on the school form at the end of the journey
- Reporting any incidents or any other useful information to the Headmaster.

### **Servicing and Maintenance**

The minibus must be serviced and maintained strictly according to the manufacturer's service maintenance schedule. The servicing and maintenance must be carried out by garages approved by the Governing Body.

Daily and weekly maintenance checks will be carried out by the Site Manager. The Site Manager must pay particular attention to the legal requirement that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition. The following must be checked at regular times:  
Fuel system; seatbelts; steering; mirrors; brakes; tyres; lights; indicators; exhaust emissions and other functions determined by the Site Manager.

The Site Manager will keep an up- to-date maintenance log.

Pre-use checks must be made before each journey under arrangements made by the Headmaster. A list of pre-journey checks will be kept in the vehicle or with the School Office.

The driver must initial the checklist on completion of each pre-use check

All drivers must be aware that the driver is responsible in law for ensuring that the vehicle is roadworthy before starting the journey.

### **Who may drive the school minibus**

All drivers of school vehicles must be school employees or others approved by the Governing Body, and:

- Hold a full and appropriate driving licence for three years or more
- Hold a clean driving licence appropriate for the type of vehicle they are driving
- Have satisfied the Headmaster that he/she is competent on the School's own vehicle
- Have satisfied the Headmaster that he/she has full knowledge of the school's policy and procedures for vehicle management, booking and driving.

### **Fitness to Drive**

All drivers of the minibus must be aware of the legal requirements demanded in respect of driving and the use of alcohol or drugs.

On all journeys drivers, must take a break of at least 15 minutes after every two and a half hours of driving.

Where the journey is more than 24 hours school drivers must take a daily continuous rest periods of not less than 12 hours in addition to the 15 minutes after every two and a half hours.

For longer journeys (e.g. When the vehicle is used on field trips, residential or visits abroad) the Headmaster will ensure that the driver(s) know the current regulations. [www.minibuswebsite.com](http://www.minibuswebsite.com)

There must be two adults on each journey.

Vehicle and Driver Logs must be kept up-to-date and will be checked by the Site Manager who has the authority to stop a driver from driving for any reason until the Headmaster has made a decision on his/her fitness to continue driving.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The school will have regard to the need to ensure reasonable access to the school curriculum and facilities for students and employees with disabilities.

The school will take account of other needs of disabled passengers.

Reasonable adjustments will be made by authority of the Headmaster to ensure that disabled passengers are able, as far as reasonably practicable to have the benefits of using the transport provided.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Headmaster with the aid of the Site Manager will monitor and review the policy and arrangements annually and submit and changes/amendments to the Pupils and Personnel Committee for re-approval.

**To be read in conjunction with the Minibus Code of Practice policy.**

Headmaster's signature: