

Brighter Futures Academy Trust

Minibus Policy



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INTRODUCTION

The responsibility placed upon us when conveying passengers in a minibus is very great indeed. We become responsible for other people's loved ones, children, parents, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives. They are deserving of our best efforts to ensure that their journey, whether of a hundred miles or just across town, is as safe as possible. The guidance given in the following pages is intended to assist all those with such a responsibility to make the right judgements. It cannot replace good judgement, but does provide some rules to follow and a framework, which encourages good practice and helps the sensible exercise of responsibility.

If you have any doubts about practice you should consult the Head Teacher in the first instance.

Please take whatever measures you can to review your practice in minibus operation, and plan for safety in the short, medium and long term. The investment of time and other resources will be amply repaid through an unblemished safety record.

These guidelines also cover the use of multi purpose vehicles (People Carriers).

1. **WHAT IS A MINIBUS AND WHO MAY DRIVE ONE?**

1.1 Definition

A minibus is defined as a vehicle, which has been constructed or adapted to carry more than 8, but no more than 16 seated passengers in addition to the driver. The gross vehicle weight should not be more than 5000 kg. Although a people carrier is not legally defined as a minibus, these guidelines also include the use of people carriers.

1.2 Licensing and Insurance

The legal requirements are that any person who is aged 21 or over, held a full license for over 2 years, and under the age of 70 may drive a minibus as defined above, provided the vehicle is not being operated for hire or reward (see 2.7). You may not tow a trailer.

Anyone who passed a car driving test after 1 January 1997 will be licensed to drive category B vehicles only, which will cover vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes with not more than 8 passengers. An additional test and medical report will be required to gain a D1 license, which covers minibuses over 3.5 tonnes. Drivers who passed the test before 1 January 1997 will be automatically granted the right to drive Category D1 vehicles and will not need to take the new test. In both instances, all drivers must have successfully completed a MIDAS driver assessment training course to satisfy both the Governors and Trustees that every precaution has been taken to fulfill safety requirements.

See Section 3.12 for further information relating to driving convictions. To drive a minibus in mainland Europe for hire or reward the driver must have a D1 category licence.

Notwithstanding the minimum legal requirements, to drive a minibus insured by Brighter Futures Academy Trust, drivers must be aged 21 or over and under 70 and have held a full driving licence for at least 2 years without a fault claim or conviction. Applications to drive vehicles over the age of 70 can be made, and authorisation will be entirely at the discretion of the Governing Body.

1.3 Competence

The fact that a person conforms with Brighter Futures Academy Trusts requirements does not necessarily make them a safe or competent person to drive a minibus. Head Teachers may propose willing volunteers, whose experience and competency will be discussed by the Trust Senior Leadership Team and a decision will be made about whether they are suitable. All drivers must then undergo minibus MIDAS assessment driver training, organised through the Brighter Futures Academy Trust prior to their authorisation to drive. Minibus drivers must be re-assessed every four years or after any accident deemed their fault. If, at any time, the trainer has any concerns about an individual's competency to drive the minibus, this must be raised with the Trust Business Manager and the decision to train that individual will be re-assessed.

Proforma for record of assessment (Actual Records held by Business Manager)

DATE OF ASSESSEMENT	NAME OF DRIVER

1.4 Standards and Safety

High standards and basic competence are expected as drivers are entrusted with the lives of their passengers. Passengers may be school pupils, or other Brighter Futures Academy Trust employees. The first consideration of the driver and the driver's supervisor or Head Teacher must be passenger safety.

1.5 Guidance for Drivers and Head Teachers

These Guidelines are designed to inform, guide and advise drivers and those responsible for them. Please refer to them regularly.

By following such guidance, the law will be complied with, passengers will be treated properly, and accidents will be avoided.

MINIBUSES ARE IN GENERAL A SAFE AND CONVENIENT FORM OF TRANSPORT, WHICH GIVES USERS THE ABILITY TO EXTEND THEIR ACTIVITIES AND AN EXTRA DEGREE OF FREEDOM. USE THEM WITH CARE.

2 DAY TO DAY MINIBUS OPERATION

2.1 Head Teachers' Responsibilities

There is a responsibility on those who manage drivers of minibuses to ensure that the driver is assessed in their competence to drive, meets appropriate health standards and conforms with Brighter Futures Academy Trust's insurance requirements. The Head Teacher should also check that proper precautions have been taken for the passengers' safety and well-being. Head Teachers are responsible in this way for both regular trips on a set route or one-off trips and visits, such as excursions, educational visits or holidays. Where trips are of a regular, repetitious nature, the Head Teacher should reassess the arrangements regularly. One-off trips must be considered as they arise, taking into account the length and time of the journey, the number of drivers on longer trips, safe driving hours, and regular breaks for passenger and driver comfort. If the trip takes place after the usual working day, special attention must be given to the issue of driver fatigue. Also, escorts may be needed on short or long journeys, depending on the type of passenger carried, and Head Teachers are responsible for ensuring they are available when needed (See 3.7 and 4.1). **Head Teachers must check the original licenses annually and retain a copy of all licenses, and repeat this exercise annually to check for penalty points, disqualification or limitations on current licenses.** Management responsibilities extend to heads of establishments, Head Teachers and school governing bodies, community groups and voluntary organisations, or any Brighter Futures Academy Trust employee who authorises a minibus journey. Head Teachers and governors are advised to refer to the 1994 Safety Guidelines for School Visits for further guidance. The Head Teacher must always consider the need to undertake manual handling risk assessments and training for any loading/unloading operations.

2.2 Drivers' Responsibilities

Drivers are responsible for carrying out safety checks before a minibus is used. If they are not competent to carry out these checks, or if the checks give cause for concern about the vehicles safety, they must not take it on the road and should seek guidance from the Head Teacher / Trust Site Manager. Drivers must be satisfied that their passengers are safe in every respect before embarking on a journey. This includes travelling with proper supervision/escorts where they are needed, the proper fitting of seat belts and restraints, wheelchairs secured to proper points, and

the operation of ancillary equipment such as hoists, which they must be trained to use, or which trained escorts may operate.

Driver Hour Regulations

The Department of Transport has taken the view that for minibus driving in the UK, Driver Hour Regulations do not apply to:

- Volunteer drivers – unpaid people who drive on an occasional basis
- Drivers whose prime function is not minibus driving, such as teachers

When there is no legal limit to the number of hours a driver can be on duty or indeed the amount of time a driver can be at the wheel, MIDAS recommends that rest periods of 15 minutes or more after every 2 hours of driving are adhered to. A minimum of a 45 minute rest period after 4 ½ hours of driving and a 15 minute rest period after 2 hours must be taken. A rest period is defined as removed from all responsibilities and a period of driver isolation. The driver should not be distracted from his/her task, and if the type of passenger carried means this is likely, then an escort should be carried. Where longer journeys are undertaken, drivers must ensure that they are not driving too many hours without proper breaks, and that if necessary a relief driver is available. You must not drive for a significant length of time after a day's work or during normal hours of sleep. Smoking is prohibited in any minibus used for Brighter Futures Academy Trust's business, as is the consumption, use, or transportation of drugs (unless medically authorised) or alcohol.

Drivers must notify DVLA Swansea and the Head Teacher about any medical condition or defect that might affect their driving and restrictions applied by DVLA, including courses of prescribed medicine and eyesight. They should immediately inform their Head Teacher if charged with any motoring offence, even if in their own car, motorcycle, or any other vehicle.

2.3 Passengers' Responsibilities

Drivers should expect responsible behaviour from passengers. For example, passengers are expected to remain in their seat, wear the seat belt, not cause any disturbance or distract the driver, and follow reasonable instructions from the driver to ensure the safety and comfort of themselves and other passengers. Where a passenger's behaviour repeatedly causes problems for drivers and escorts, the driver's Head Teacher must be informed and consideration given to whether the passenger should be conveyed by minibus in the future, or whether special supervision arrangements are needed.

2.4 Vehicle Log Sheet / Fuel Usage

A log must be maintained for each minibus giving details of the driver, journey and mileage. Log sheets are to be kept in the vehicle and handed to the Business Manager at the end of every vehicle use. Fuel receipts to be handed to the Business Manager as soon as possible. Fuel cards can be requested from the Business Manager and should be returned as soon as possible.

2.5 Vehicle Checks and Maintenance

Vehicles must be checked by the first person using the vehicle each day.

If a moving traffic offence is caused, say, by a brake light bulb being broken, it is the driver at the time that has committed the offence! Documentary evidence that a daily check was carried out 'may' save the driver a fine and possible 3 penalty points on their licence.

In order to ensure that vehicles are safely used on the highway it is imperative that they are maintained to the very highest standards. This should be carried out through an approved manufacturer's agent. There should be no compromise on servicing.

Always ensure that the correct class of MOT is obtained. Not all Class IV garages can carry out a Class V test (that prescribed for a minibus). If in doubt, consult the Academy's Site Manager / Business Manager.

2.6 Minibus Permit

What is a minibus permit? – Under the Transport Act 1985 Section 19, Calderdale Council Transport Services can issue a minibus permit and vehicle disc. This Act must be strictly adhered to, the disc displayed and the vehicle equipped with a fire extinguisher, first aid kit and marked as to comply with the Road Vehicles Construction and Use Regulations 1986. The disc only permits use of the vehicle for purposes related to the Academy. If the vehicle is being used for other purposes (e.g. by an organisation such as a local Scout Group), and a payment is being made by or on behalf of passengers, the user organisation must supply its own S.19 permit, which can usually be obtained from the organisations parent body or from the Traffic Commissioner. The Brighter Futures Academy Trust permit must be removed from the vehicle for the duration of use by such external organisations, and the need for them to obtain their own permit should be specifically drawn to their attention.

The permit allows the vehicle operator to levy a charge to recoup running costs provided there is no profit element in the charge.

A charge is made for the permit and an extra charge is made for the vehicle to be inspected to ensure its compliance with all relevant rules. Only one minibus can be used at any one time under a single permit, although the permit is not specific to the vehicle but to the "operating body". Where establishments run more than one minibus, they will need an extra permit or permits. If an extra vehicle is borrowed or hired it will require a permit.

The permit is always a requirement, if there is any question of recouping vehicle running costs from passengers, or from other persons.

An S.19 permit is needed to achieve exemption from the UK requirement for the driver to hold a PSV licence and the operator to hold an 'Operators' licence.

2.7 Defect Reporting

Each vehicle must be equipped with a defect reporting log. This must be completed every day the vehicle is in use and could provide the means to ensure that daily checks are being carried out.

A defect report must be completed even if the report shows a nil return. This is called a "NIL Defect Reporting system". Drivers must complete a log and hand it to the Business Manager at the end of every use.

2.8 Fire Prevention and First Aid Kit

Each vehicle must be equipped with two (one is the minimum requirement) extinguishers with BS Kite mark. The relevant BS numbers for the extinguishers are BS5423 1977, BS5423 1980 or BS 5423 1987. The extinguisher must be in plain view for ease of access in an emergency. The minibus must not be used if an extinguisher is not fitted. Additional extinguishers are required if passengers who use wheelchairs are carried. The Site Manager must ensure that the fire extinguishers are checked 6-monthly along with the standard school extinguishers.

In the event of a vehicle fire (even if it is only a possibility) the passengers must be evacuated as far as possible. 'Under the bonnet' fires should not be tackled, the driver can assist fire and rescue by pulling the bonnet release if it is safe to do so.

Each vehicle must be equipped with an adequate first aid kit. The minimum requirement for the first aid kit contents, according to Regulation 43 of The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, is as follows:

- Ten antiseptic wipes, foil packed;

- One conforming disposable bandage (not less than 7.5 cm wide);
- Two triangular bandages;
- One packet of 24 assorted adhesive dressings;
- Three large sterile unmedicated ambulance dressings (not less than 15.0 cm x 20.0 cm);
- Two sterile eye pads, with attachments;
- Twelve assorted safety pins;
- One pair of rustless blunt-ended scissors.

If in doubt about any further contents, consult the Health & Safety Adviser.

2.9 Vehicle Load and Towing

Passengers

No vehicle must carry more than one passenger per seat, irrespective of the age of the passengers. The stated passenger capacity of the vehicle must not be exceeded, and standing passengers are not permitted. Passenger seats must be forward facing with an appropriate seat belt.

Luggage

There are many recorded cases of passengers being injured by unsecured luggage in the event of sudden braking, an emergency stop or an accident. All luggage and authorised equipment must therefore be stored safely and securely with particular attention paid to heavy items such as jacks and tools. Care must also be taken to ensure that luggage does not block the vehicle gangways, hindering emergency evacuation. If luggage or equipment is to be carried regularly, the following options should be considered.

- Reduce the seating capacity to create a luggage area within the vehicle with appropriate fixings for securing luggage equipment. It is strongly advised that where seating is removed to facilitate dedicated luggage space, seats from the extreme rear of the vehicle are removed, as this is a recognised 'crush area' where body shell intrusion is more likely in the event of a rear end accident.
- Fit a roof rack or luggage box, fitted and loaded in accordance with the manufacturer recommendations. A roof load must be evenly distributed, must not exceed the height of the rack and weigh no more than 200 lbs (91 kgs). Fixings should be regularly checked.

Towing

The use of a trailer is not permitted under any circumstances without notifying the Business Manager in advance who in turn will seek authorisation from the insurance company prior to any journey.

Use of second vehicle for luggage

Where a large amount of luggage is to be carried, it is advisable to run a second vehicle to carry it.

2.10 Gross Vehicle Weight

This is normally stated on a plate affixed to the doorstep riser of the vehicle. This figure, which is the maximum permitted load combination for passengers and luggage, must not be exceeded at any time. If in doubt, you may wish to drive to a recognised weighbridge for a test weighing.

2.11 Excise Licence Fee

In certain cases where only disabled passengers are carried (including one escort and one driver as able bodied) it is possible to obtain a zero rated excise licence. Should this method be adopted, at no time must the vehicle be used to carry able bodied passengers (nor is it even legal for the driver to just drive to the shops with the vehicle unloaded).

Very careful consideration must be given to seeking a nil excise licence. In most circumstances it will not be appropriate and will hinder proper use of the vehicle.

2.12 Seating

Forward facing seats with seat belts are a statutory requirement for children aged 3 to 16.

2.13 Reversing Vehicles

The reversing of vehicles is an important part of driving a vehicle and is potentially the most hazardous. In order to protect the driver from unnecessary accidents and for the protection of any person in the vicinity of the vehicle the following procedures must be adopted:-

- When reversing, ensure that the Passenger Assistant or a member of staff stands outside the vehicle at the rear and in view of the driver.
- The driver should wind down his/her window in order to be able to hear the person outside the vehicle.
- It is good practice to issue the Passenger Assistant or member of staff with a whistle in order to alert the driver of any apparent danger.

2.14 Speed Limits

Minibus drivers must observe the same speed limits as other vehicle drivers, which are:

- Motorway	70 mph
- Unrestricted dual carriageway	70 mph
- Unrestricted single carriageway	60 mph
- Restricted roads	30 mph

Minibus over 3 tons (3050 kg) unladen weight, and minibuses capable of carrying 9 or more passengers:

- Motorway	70 mph
- Unrestricted dual carriageway	60 mph *
- Unrestricted single carriageway	50 mph *

****All Minibuses Towing Trailers (including braked trailers):****

- Motorway	60 mph
- Unrestricted dual carriageway	60 mph*
- Unrestricted single carriageway	50 mph*

*** Provided that lower limits are not in force**

2.15 Conveying Passengers who use Wheelchairs

- (a) All persons required to assist in the transportation of wheelchair passengers **must** be trained in the safe operation relating to the carriage of wheelchair users.
- (b) It is important that only staff who are competent assist wheelchair passengers, whilst boarding, travelling in, or alighting from a vehicle. Drivers should ensure that all wheelchair movement is carried out by themselves, or their Passenger Assistant. This is the only way to be sure of passenger safety.

- (c) Drivers must ensure that there is sufficient space to locate wheelchairs behind rear seats. For full size wheelchairs, a minimum space of 1300mm long by 700mm wide is required.
- (d) Wheelchairs must not block exits, as this would contravene the safety regulations laid down in the Minibus Regulations.
- (e) Wheelchairs must not be located in such a way as to block any vehicle exit or gangway. On no account must they be placed in the central aisle.
- (f) All wheelchairs must have their tyres fully inflated, their brakes applied and be securely anchored to floor tracking, preferably by means of an Easilok Seat, 4-point webbing restraints, or by double-button Quicklock clamps. In addition, a second means of securing the wheelchair occupant in the vehicle must be used, either with straps affixed to the side of the vehicle, or by using two or three point harnesses on the floor tracking (the Easilok seat has an occupant restraining system already built-in). Electric wheelchairs must only be anchored by the use of an Easilok seat or 4-point webbing restraints. (Clamps **must not** be used). Please consult transport services regarding the appropriate system to be used for securing different types of wheelchairs.

2.16 The Safe Use of Passenger Lifts

- (a) All persons required to operate passenger lifts **must** be trained in manual handling and in the safe operations of passenger lifts.
- (b) The engine must be switched off when the passenger lift is being operated,
- (c) Wheelchairs placed on the hoist must have their brakes applied and must be facing into the vehicle.
- (d) Care should be taken to ensure that clients do not have their feet at the edge of the platform where it meets with the floor of the vehicle.
- (e) When the platform is returned to the "Parked" position make absolutely sure that it is secure.
- (f) Electric wheelchairs must have engaged neutral and should be wheeled manually on to the lift platform.
- (g) The lift platform must have the safety stop raised.
- (h) This equipment can be dangerous if not operated correctly and must only be used by staff who have been given proper instruction. It is a requirement that one operative stands on the lift platform behind the client whilst the other remains on the ground using the lift controls.
- (i) The carriage of electrically powered mobility scooters is strictly forbidden.
- (j) In order that Brighter Futures Academy Trust can satisfy itself that passengers are assisted on and off vehicles safely, and competent persons correctly use associated equipment, it is an essential requirement that all staff using accessible minibuses undertake the MIDAS assisted passenger module training course. This course covers passenger assistance techniques, disability awareness, the use of passenger lifts, and the safe transportation of passengers.

2.17 Insurance Cover

(a) Insurance Arrangements

Brighter Futures Academy Trust has fully comprehensive insurance arrangements. The use of the vehicle by other organisations (youth organisations, charities etc.) is not permitted under the policy.

(b) Loan of Vehicles to Other Organisations

The Academies insurance arrangement does not allow for other organisations; charitable, voluntary and welfare groups to use the vehicle.

3 DRIVERS, ESCORTS AND PASSENGERS

3.1 Driver Assessment and Training

The Academy's insurance requirements do not currently specify driver assessment or training as a requirement, and there is no legal requirement for drivers to have gone through assessment or training. To provide an extra degree of assurance and safety for passengers, the Academy will ensure all drivers have completed the MIDAS minibus driver assessment, theory and practical assessment, certified by a qualified MIDAS assessor. Records of completion will be held with copies of driving licenses and any disclosures. MIDAS assessments will be renewed every four years. The assessment of minibus drivers by a qualified MIDAS instructor will highlight any driving faults, bad habits or potentially dangerous practices. Head Teachers should monitor the performance and safety record of all staff that drive minibuses. If there is any doubt about a driver's competence, regardless of the type of licence they hold and their previous record, steps must be taken to investigate.

3.2 Authorised Minibus Drivers Records

The Academy should maintain a record of all staff who have undertaken minibus driver training and assessment. The need for such drivers should be regularly reviewed and if extra drivers are needed through increased minibus use or staff turnover, arrangements should be made through the Heads of School for their training. Drivers who are not on the establishment's qualified driver list (or that of another establishment) **must not** be allowed to drive a minibus.

3.3 Health Requirements of Minibus Drivers

The types of medical condition for which DVLA (Swansea) may impose restrictions include neurological disorders like epilepsy, Parkinson's Disease, brain surgery, cardiovascular disorders like angina, heart attack, pacemaker insertion, diabetes, insulin dependant, or diet/tablet controlled, psychiatric disorders like psychosis or severe mental handicap, alcohol misuse and dependency, drug misuse and dependency, visual disorders.

In particular, insulin dependent diabetics **must not** drive minibuses.

All applicants, for whatever category of vehicle, **must** be able to read in good daylight a number plate at 20.5 metres (67 feet), and, if glasses or corrective lenses are required to do so, these **must** be worn while driving. In addition, minibus drivers must have:

- a visual acuity of at least 6/9 in the better eye; and
- a visual acuity of at least 6/12 in the worse eye; and
- if these are achieved by correction the uncorrected visual acuity in each eye **must** be less than 3/60.

Drivers **must not** have uncontrolled diplopia (double vision) or an abnormal binocular field of vision.

In certain circumstances, the Academy Trust may require an employee to refrain from driving a minibus until their standard of medical fitness is formally established.

3.4 Alcohol/Drugs Policy

Alcohol, illegal drugs and certain prescription drugs plus some over the counter drugs, pain killers, hay fever and cold remedies etc, will affect driver ability, putting their safety and that of their passengers and other road users at risk.

Therefore, everyone driving Academy vehicles, or driving on Academy business, will adhere to the following:

- (a) No alcohol to be consumed during the working day.
- (b) No alcohol to be present in your system when driving. Be careful about alcohol consumed during the previous evening. **IF IN DOUBT, DON'T DRIVE. YOU COULD PUT YOURSELF AND OTHERS AT RISK AND LOSE YOUR LICENCE.**

Drugs

- (a) The possession and use of illegal/controlled drugs is a criminal offence. No one should drive if under the influence of drugs or if drugs remain in the system.
- (b) Certain prescribed and over the counter drugs can affect driver performance. Check with your doctor if you are unsure and obtain clearance to drive in writing.

Failure to adhere to this policy will result in disciplinary action being taken.

3.5 Supervision of Passengers and the Use of Passenger Assistants (Escorts)

The Academy owes a duty of care to all passengers conveyed in the minibuses it operates. Some passengers in some (or all) of those categories will require a greater than normal level of supervision to ensure that they do not become a danger to themselves or others when travelling in a minibus. It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher / trip planner to identify whether the nature of the passenger group requires the presence of an escort in addition to the driver. This judgement must be made for all journeys, short or long, regular or one off. Head Teachers must take the following points into account when assessing the need for a Passenger Assistant: -

- Will passengers require assistance in boarding or alighting?

- Is there the possibility of them vacating their seat or releasing their restraint during the journey?
- Are any of the passengers likely to upset or annoy others?
- Are any passengers likely to require assistance with health problems or medication?
- Are any of the passengers prone to over emotional, bizarre or otherwise unpredictable behaviour?
- Do they require someone to collect them from their front door (and return them there)?
- Might the driver be distracted from their task without a Passenger Assistant?
- Is there any reason to believe that an escort is required to ensure passenger comfort and safety?

As part of a risk assessment, Passenger Assistants (Escorts) must be provided if any of the answers to the above questions are “YES” and if any of the criteria below is met:-

- (a) Passengers are likely to fit whilst travelling in the minibus.
- (b) Passengers with mobility problems are travelling on the minibus, either in or out of a wheelchair.
- (c) Passengers who exhibit a degree of challenging behaviour that could be a risk to other travelling on the minibus.
- (d) The minibus is conveying children.

Passenger Assistants should be seated in the rear of the vehicle during transit to provide the best view of all passengers. They must be familiar with passengers who have specific medical needs or challenging behaviour, and must have received appropriate training to respond to passenger's needs and fulfill their duties. Passenger Assistants can be persons specifically appointed for the purpose or any other suitably trained & competent employee.

3.6 Unauthorised Passengers

Only authorised passengers (as determined by the operating Directorate or establishment) should be conveyed on minibuses. If there is any doubt about who may be conveyed, the Head Teacher should be consulted.

3.7 Transport of Children in Minibuses

The following guidelines are designed to ensure that no child is placed in a vulnerable situation whilst travelling in minibuses:

- (a) When pupils are entering or alighting the minibuses this must be done from the pavement not the road, unless using a ramp or lift at the rear.
- (b) All children under 4 must travel in a child seat appropriate to their age and weight.
- (c) Any child, who refuses to remain in their appropriate child seat/restraint, must travel with an escort, who must ensure that the child remains in the restraint for their own safety. Any further problems must be referred to the appropriate Head Teacher, with an option to refuse transport in future.

- (d) Seat belt adjusters must be used where fitted (e.g. 'Generation' belts).
- (e) Training in the correct use of child safety restraints is covered during MIDAS training.
- (f) Where possible, all children under 5 should travel with a driver and/or escort known to them. If this is not possible, or when being introduced to a new driver/escort, care should be taken to ensure that the child is not distressed.
- (g) No child under 12 is allowed to travel in the front seats of a minibus, unless permission is given from the Head Teacher prior to the journey and only when a rear seat is not available. Front seat belts are not adjustable therefore an appropriate additional child restraint must be used. Children over 1.35meters tall are not required to use an additional restraint but must wear the seat belt.
- (h) All Academy staff trained to transport children **must** also have completed a DBS check. Similar checks must be made on drivers who are not Academy employees e.g. agency staff, volunteers etc.
- (i) On no account must children share a seat under the old "3 for 2" rule when travelling on a minibus. Each child must sit in their own seat, using the appropriate restraints.

3.8 Oxygen

Where a passenger requires access to oxygen, it is permissible for oxygen cylinders to be carried provided they are securely clamped in an upright position and that any valves or feedlines are closed off and cannot be damaged. A Transport Emergency (TREM) card must be carried on the vehicle at all times to inform the driver, escort and the emergency services.

3.9 Driving Convictions

Drivers must inform their Head Teacher immediately if charged with any motoring offence, regardless of whether the offence was committed in their own vehicle, an Academy vehicle or any other vehicle. Similarly, any previous convictions should be made known to the Head Teacher before a new/prospective minibus driver is allowed to drive a minibus.

If a driver is convicted, with the licence endorsed and penalty points imposed, the Head Teacher must consider whether the nature and severity of the offence pose any risk to minibus passengers. It may be appropriate to reconsider that individual's position, and at the very least arrange for their minibus driving skills to be reassessed.

If, on conviction, a minibus driver is disqualified from driving then clearly they must desist from all driving with immediate effect.

Before a disqualified driver is allowed to drive a minibus again, take care to ensure that there are not restrictions on the category of vehicle they are allowed to drive subsequent to the offence.

The imposition of these bans over and above the disqualification period is not arbitrary, but conforms to the potential pattern of re-offending for serious driving offences. Given the enormous responsibility of conveying passengers in a minibus, the Academy's prime concern must be passenger safety. Conviction for a serious driving offence must give cause to doubt an individual's judgement and driving ability. Such doubt can only be dispelled after a reasonable period of time has elapsed in which the driver has demonstrated that they are not likely to re-offend.

If any driver accumulates 6 or more penalty points on their license they should be immediately referred to the Head Teacher / Business Manager. They have the right to ask

an employee to undertake the Academy driving assessment and any relevant training. Where, in the opinion of the Head Teacher / Business Manager, there poses a significant risk to allow an employee to continue driving an Academy vehicle, a driving permit may be revoked. This will be communicated in writing to the employee.

4 PLANNING FOR REGULAR JOURNEYS AND SPECIAL TRIPS

4.1 Approval

Approval of minibus use, whether for regular journeys or for “one-off” use, such as a school visit, must be given by the Head Teacher. Points that must be considered in approving and reviewing minibus use are shown in the following checklist:

- Is the driver suitably authorised/trained/experienced/qualified/responsible to drive the vehicle?
- Is an escort required?
- Is a safer/cheaper/more appropriate alternative to the minibus available?
- Does the driver conform to Academy insurance requirements?
- Is the driver’s health sufficiently good to drive a vehicle with passengers?
- Has the driver’s license been checked recently (for penalty points)?
- Is the vehicle in good order, appropriately licensed with the proper class of MOT and is it insured?
- Is the vehicle suitable to carry the type of passenger to be conveyed? e.g. able bodied, people with disabilities, wheelchairs, special restraints, passenger lifts fitted, stretcher facilities etc. ?
- How will luggage/equipment be carried?
- Have driver’s hours and rest periods been taken into account?
- Is a tachograph required (continental trips)?
- Will the gross vehicle mass be exceeded?
- Is there a valid minibus permit in the vehicle?
- Is approval required from any other source, e.g. appropriate Head Teacher, school governors, parents?

4.2 Regular Short Journeys

The shortest safe route should be taken which takes in all necessary stopping points e.g. collecting pupils from other schools. Consideration should be given to short term hazards such as road works which may justify a route change or detour. If possible (and necessary) take note of useful facilities en route such as public toilets, doctor’s surgery, public telephones for use in emergency. It would be advisable for the driver to drive the route without passengers first, both to become familiar with it and identify landmarks, facilities and potential hazards and to time the journey.

4.3 Longer Journeys and “One Off” Trips

In planning for longer journeys a preliminary visit and proper route planning are vital. The length of the journey (and thus the need for breaks/second drivers) can be assessed, stopping points with toilets identified for comfort breaks, parking locations found and alternatives listed. Potential problems or dangers can also be identified. For short or long journeys, regular or otherwise, a list of passengers with the name of the driver/escorts should be made and retained off the vehicle, with a copy for the driver. For both short and long journeys sufficient time should be allowed so the driver is not tempted to rush.

4.4 Driver’s Hours

Head Teachers and drivers of minibuses should pay close attention to driver’s hours and rest periods. The departure time of journeys, particular longer ones is also an important consideration. For example, it may be better to leave early on Saturday morning on a long journey than depart Friday night after a full day’s work.

4.5 Passenger Assistants (Escorts) and Passenger Supervision

As described above, it is a Head Teacher’s responsibility to ensure that suitably trained Passenger Assistants (Escorts) are provided where necessary, to ensure that passengers needs are met, that drivers are not distracted from their task, and assistance in embarking and disembarking is available. In certain circumstances, the person acting as the Passenger Assistant (Escort) may also be a second driver. The use of Passenger Assistants should be considered in all circumstances to prevent the drivers from distractions.

4.6 Expect the Unexpected

It is worthwhile to anticipate the worst and plan your procedures for dealing with problems large and small. The risk management approach will help you with this; whether your journey is short or long, regular or a “one off” (see Section 11). Some suggested scenarios you may wish to plan are listed below.

- **Ensure your mobile phone is fully charged or you have a spare battery**.
- Have your coins or a telephone card so that you can call in if a problem occurs.
- What will you do if the driver is unwell? (longer journeys)
- Have you sufficient funds to pay for an alternative means of transport or accommodation in the event of breakdown or driver illness? (longer journeys)
- Do you know where the nearest hospital/medical facilities are located?
- In the event of problems, whom should you contact at home? (longer journeys)
- What if a passenger’s medication is lost?
- A passenger cannot be found when it is time to depart.
- The keys of the vehicle are lost.
- A passenger suffers a major asthma attack.
- A passenger suffers an epileptic fit.
- Do you know how to obtain emergency help for the vehicle?
- Do you carry spare vehicle light bulbs and a warning triangle?

4.7 Comfort Kit

The following items may be useful on longer journeys, particularly where children are being conveyed. (In addition to a first aid kit)

- Disinfectant

- Packet of peppermints
- Sick bags
- Cloth & towel
- Tissues
- Rug/Thermal wrap
- Plastic gloves and apron
- Container/bottle of fresh water
- Pen and paper
- Torch
- Reflective waistcoat
- Plastic bucket
- Mobile phone, phonecard or change
- Spare packed lunch
- Spare clothing

GUIDELINES IN THE EVENT OF A BREAKDOWN

In the event of breakdown or accident a mobile telephone may save a great deal of difficulty. You may wish to consider acquiring one or making use of an existing telephone when embarking upon minibuss journeys.

5.1 Breakdown on Ordinary Carriageways

- (a) Move the vehicle as far to the left as possible. Switch on the hazard lights.
- (b) If you attempt to find a telephone, do not leave passengers alone in the vehicle. If you are transporting clients that cannot go with you, i.e. due to their physical or behavioural problems, you **must** be travelling with an escort.
- (c) If you break down, contact the Recovery Service, number is kept in each vehicle with the D1 permit.
- (d) If you are nowhere near a telephone, display a PLEASE CALL POLICE sign in the back window. Wait in the vehicle with the windows and doors locked until help arrives.
- (e) If someone stops to offer help, stay inside the vehicle with the doors locked. Open the window sufficiently to ask them to go to the nearest telephone and notify the police or rescue service for you. Do not get into the car with a stranger or attempt to hitch a lift.
- (f) If a mechanic or the police arrive and are not in uniform or are in an unmarked vehicle, ask to see some form of identification before getting out of the vehicle.
- (g) Deploy warning triangles or cones if it is safe to do so.

5.2 Breakdown on the Motorways

The general procedures are the same as the guidelines for ordinary carriageways. However, extra hazards exist on the motorway.

If the vehicle breaks down on the motorway, or a serious fault develops, put your hazard warning lights on and pull over to the hard shoulder as quickly and as far off the carriageway as possible. If possible angle the front of your vehicle slightly inwards, which helps to indicate you have broken down. Once on the hard shoulder, try to coast to a telephone box. These are one mile apart along all stretches of motorway. Never reverse on the hard shoulder or attempt to cross the central reservation. This is illegal, highly dangerous and pointless, as the telephones on motorways should be in the same position of either side.

Make it clear to the person you are calling whether you are alone or with passengers when making a call for help. If alone stand behind the telephone facing oncoming traffic. You will see anyone approaching and it will be less obvious if you are a woman on your own.

Afterwards, return to the vehicle, lock all doors except for the front passenger door and wait by the side of your vehicle on the embankment. If an unidentified vehicle draws up, quickly get into the passenger seat and lock the door. This is safer and gives the illusion of having company. If not alone, all people should wait by the side of the vehicle on the embankment, well away from the roadway. **If you are carrying potentially vulnerable passengers, school children e.g. wheelchair users or elderly people, inform the emergency services immediately.**

5.3 Guidelines in the Event of an Accident

If you are involved in an accident and you are not injured, see whether anybody is badly injured. If medical attention is required, ensure help is summoned immediately. Do not remove injured people from the vehicle unless they are in danger. Loosen tight clothing, especially around the neck and make sure they are warm. Do not give them anything to eat or drink.

Try to reduce the risk of further collisions if possible by moving the vehicle/s off the road or warning on coming traffic of a hazard. Do not put yourself at risk by standing on the carriageway.

Any requirement to view insurance documents should be channeled through the Business Manager. If the police are in attendance you must obtain the police incident number and the police officer's number.

You are legally obliged to stop after a collision with a person, vehicle, dog, livestock or property. Please take all necessary details if another driver is involved, i.e. make and registration of the vehicle, name and address of the driver, name of insurers and certificate number if known. You must, if required to do so by a person having reasonable grounds, provide the same information. If, having stopped, the exchange of information is not completed for any reason, the driver should report the accident to the police as soon as possible. If possible, obtain names and addresses of witnesses, sketch plans or take photographs. Do not admit liability. If you are involved in an accident with an unoccupied car, leave a note on the car with your work telephone number. If you are in any doubt as to whether any incident should be reported to the police, please contact the Business Manager.

Drivers must not continue to drive a vehicle after an accident resulting in damage to the construction of the vehicle until the vehicle has been inspected.

Immediate inspection is required if the damage is thought to have affected the steering, suspension, brake components, lights or passenger/driver safety. An inspection as soon as is operationally feasible must be arranged for any other damage, no matter how slight the problems may appear. If in doubt, do not drive.

If the vehicle cannot be driven, follow the guidelines – In the event of a breakdown.

All accidents, however minor, must be reported to the Business Manager / Head Teacher immediately. An accident report form should be completed as soon as possible, including police incident numbers and police officers' details. Failure to report an accident may prejudice the position of the Academy and affect its right to claim under its motor insurance policy. Accident report forms can be found in the vehicle or Business Manager.

5.4 Notification of Delays

If as a result of any unforeseen circumstances, such as accident or breakdown, there will be a significant delay before passengers reach their destination, then arrangements must be made to inform those awaiting their arrival. The driver or escort should contact the Head Teacher or any pre-arranged emergency number with as much information as possible including the new projected arrival time. It is always advisable to have arranged an emergency contact for any trips taking place outside working hours (see Section 4, Planning Trips).

5.5 Accident, Injury and Illness

It is possible that in the course of a minibus journey that a passenger, escort or driver might become ill, be injured or killed. Plans should be in place to manage these eventualities at establishment and Directorate level. The plans should allow for: -

- Next of kin informed in a caring and sensitive manner.
- Necessary support available to ensure the best interests of the sick or injured.

- Support for next of kin if traumatised.
- Careful handling of media enquiries.
- Involvement of senior staff as required.
- Provision of information for all interested parties. This may require the use of special telephone/fax numbers.
- Provision of support for accident victims/next of kin after the event.
- Debriefing of employees or volunteers involved
- Consultation between Directorates & Services (e.g. School & Children's Services, Social Services, Engineering Services, Leisure Services, etc.

5.6 First Aid and First Aid Equipment

All drivers and escorts must be trained in emergency first aid as a minimum, although this would not preclude such persons being trained as qualified first aiders if this was deemed appropriate.

6 **AVOIDING DANGEROUS SITUATIONS**

Individuals at risk when in sole charge of a vehicle.

The following list of 'dos and don'ts' is intended to assist you, not so much in your role as a driver, but as an individual who may be at risk of assault or theft, particularly when driving a minibus without passengers or a second person.

- Always carry an up to date map and know where you are going before setting off. This avoids the need to ask for directions from strangers.
- Never give lifts to strangers; even a lone woman may have a male partner hiding nearby.
- Beware of other drivers signaling faults on the vehicle to you. This may be a ploy to get you to pull over. Drive on slowly until it is safe to stop and check yourself.
- If you think you are being followed, do not make eye contact. Slow down, lock your door and shut your windows. Drive to a police station or a busy area with lots of people.
- Keep the driver and passenger doors locked in town, especially when travelling alone. When on open roads, unlock these doors so that in the event of an accident, it would be easier for helpers to get into the vehicle if you were unable to open the door.
- Where possible, travel on main or well-used roads and by day. If you have to make a journey after dark, try to tell someone of the destination and estimated time of arrival.
- Try not to park in poorly lit streets, and always as close to your destination as possible. In a multi-storey car park, find a space close to the exit, near to the ground level and away from pillars. When returning, have your keys ready so that you can get in quickly.
- Never put a bag, handbag or valuable goods on the passenger seat when travelling in town. You could have it snatched at traffic lights.
- If you are a woman driver, try not to advertise this. Place all personal effects out of sight before vacating the vehicle.

- (j) Always lock the vehicle before leaving it and when returning, look around the vehicle from a suitable distance to ensure that no one is hiding behind it.
- (k) If the vehicle does start to play up, stop in a busy, well-lit area, near a telephone box. Never try to make it home if it involves travelling on a motorway or major road or in the country.
- (l) If you see another driver in difficulty, do not stop. Drive to the nearest telephone and report what you have seen to the police.
- (m) Road rage has become an increasingly common phenomenon in recent years. If another road user acts in an intimidatory fashion, continue the journey as calmly as possible and only pull over if there is a danger of loss of control of the vehicle. If one has to pull over try to do so only when there are plenty of people around. Mobile phones are a useful ally to road users in such circumstances and the Police should be notified as soon as possible when they occur.

7 MINIBUS CONSTRUCTION AND SPECIFICATION – ACQUIRING NEW OR REPLACEMENT VEHICLES

7.1 Vehicle Type, Fittings and Equipment

As a result of the Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations 1996 and The Public Service Vehicles (Carrying Capacity) (Amendment) Regulations 1996, minibuses carrying three or more children had to be fitted with seat belts from February 1997. The minimum requirement is for a lap belt to be fitted to each seat used by a child age 3 to 16. The regulations require a forward facing seat with a seat belt for each child when minibuses and coaches are used to take children on organised trips, including journeys to and from school.

7.2 Seat belts must conform to the requirements of the Construction and Use Regulations 1986. They should be of the lap and diagonal type, and preferably with height adjusters, particularly where children are to be conveyed. (Such as the ‘Generation’ belt.) Belts should be fitted to proper anchorage points, usually on the vehicle floor or chassis. Where belts are an integral part of special seating you must ensure that the seating is properly anchored (see below). All new and replacement vehicles acquired must have seat belts fitted.

7.3 Seating should be anchored to the floor by at least four (maximum 6) 10mm bolts. Where integral belts are fitted to seats stronger mountings will be required. Spacing may need to be varied for passengers who exhibit challenging behaviour. The size of passengers may also influence seat size and spacing. **Sideways facing seating must not be fitted.**

7.4 Conveying Wheelchairs requires sufficient space to locate them behind fitted passenger seats. Full size wheelchairs require a minimum space of 1300mm long by 700mm wide. They must not be located in the aisle or block exits. Floor tracking should be fitted so wheelchairs can be secured by double button Quicklock clamps. Side of vehicle tracking should only be used as a secondary means of securing wheelchairs to prevent lateral movement. (These straps must not be used to secure passengers to the wheelchair). Passengers should be secured to wheelchairs by integral straps if fitted or by special belts and harnesses acquired for the purpose.

7.5 Passenger Lifts are required if passengers using wheelchairs or other wise incapable of gaining access to the vehicle are carried. Care should be taken over the size of the tail lift, as it may need to accommodate wheelchairs or varying sizes. Passenger lifts should also receive a specialised annual inspection. Calderdale Transport Services can advise on the inspection services available.

7.6 Driver’s Seat should be height adjustable with screening between the driver and the passenger_area. **A seat belt MUST be worn at all times by a Driver.**

- 7.7 Steering – power assisted steering is strongly recommended.
- 7.8 Wheels/Tyres – twin rear wheels assist safety (blow-outs) and stability. High specification tyres are a worthwhile safety investment. Remoulds must never be used.
- 7.9 Engine Type – diesel is strongly recommended because of reduced risk as well as being more economical.
- 7.10 Braking System – ABS is strongly recommended.
- 7.11 Luggage Storage – where luggage is to be carried more than occasionally a dedicated luggage area should be designed in at the rear of the vehicle with a cage or other means of securing luggage.
- 7.12 Security Features should be included in the specification. As a minimum an engine immobiliser, but consideration should also be given to steering wheel and gearstick locks, an alarm system and specially specified door locks.
- 7.13 Opening Windows must not be fitted immediately behind sliding doors.

Other Features worthy of consideration are listed below.

Additional side and rear impact protection
 Anti-burst door catches
 Audible reverse warning signal and flashing lights
 Automatic fuel cut-off device
 Battery isolator
 Distinctive vehicle markings
 Hand rails
 Reinforced window pillars
 Roll over protection
 Tachograph (A requirement for continental driving)
 Top speed limiter
 Trailer
 Twin tone horn
 Under bonnet fire extinguisher system
 Wide angle rear view mirror, kerbside mirror

8 **USEFUL CONTACTS**

Brighter Futures Academy Trust

Executive Head Teacher	N/A	
Head Teacher Field Lane Primary	Vanessa Dear	07786 080806
Head Teacher Luddendenfoot Academy	Rebecca Denham	07714 171170
Head Teacher Siddal Primary School	Caroline Howarth (Acting)	07786 378519
Business Operations Manager	Jane Burton	01422 354976
Deputy Head Luddendenfoot	Cheryl Webb	07818 083601

Other Organisations

Minibus Insurance - AJGallagher	01924 433141
RAC	0330 159 0783
PHVC – GAP Insurance	01489 580333
MIDAS	01577 428324
ARVAL – Breakdowns / repairs	0870 600 4499
Allstar fuel	0870 4195165

9 **MINIBUS RISK MANAGEMENT**

9.1 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this guide is to suggest practical ways in which you can identify high risk situations involving the use of minibuses and take practical steps to eliminate or reduce the risk and potential cost of your organisation (cost in monetary terms, or more important in terms of injury or death).

Some of the following points may be repeated elsewhere in this publication but they are brought together in this introduction to assist in the construction of a risk control programme for your establishment.

(Risk Assessment Model as prescribed by the Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999)

9.2 Proactive Measures

Driver Skill and Screening

The Department of Transport driving test lasting 30 minutes and taken up to 40 years previously, is no test or guarantee of a driver's ability to cope with modern vehicles and present road conditions. This should be considered as the minimum standard on which to build a group of safe and competent minibus drivers. Those wishing to drive minibuses should be screened for the following: eyesight, medical fitness, correct driving licence, motoring offences, accident record and driving ability. All drivers to pass a MIDAS driving test and retake the test every 4 years.

Driving Licenses

Ensure that drivers have a current driving licence for cars, minibuses or other types of vehicle which they are authorised to drive. Check the original licence annually. Never rely on the driver's honesty to notify convictions or bans. Keep a photocopy of the license and update each year.

Loading and Unloading Luggage

Where drivers assist in loading and unloading, they should be properly trained and supervised until competent. Securing and sheeting of loads on roof racks is important to prevent load shift, shedding or damage. Loading roof racks is not a one person job, and a roof rack ladder must be used. Luggage being transported within the vehicle can be dangerous. Therefore only small hand luggage should be carried beneath seats, leaving exit routes clear. Alternatively luggage can be transported in another van / car. No heavy luggage should be carried amongst the passengers because, in the event of a collision, severe injuries or death could be the result.

Passenger Safety and Restraints

Ensure that all seat belts and passenger restraints have been securely fastened. Young children should also be fitted in appropriate restraints.

Vehicle Inspection

Drivers must complete a vehicle safety checklist prior to every journey. Completed checklists must be returned to the Business Manager. Checklists are kept in a folder in the minibus.

Maintenance

All maintenance should be carried out by qualified mechanics. All spare parts should be of high quality and up to the manufacturer's original specification.

Tyres should be checked at regular intervals for excessive wear. Attention should be given not only to the general condition of the tyre, but to excessive wear in any part. This may be a danger in itself, or indicate another defect such as incorrect tracking.

Fire Precautions

Vehicles rarely catch fire but when this does occur, damage is usually severe. One or more fire extinguishers must be carried (see 2.9). Spare fuel must not be carried. Automatic fuel cut-off devices, battery isolators and automatic under bonnet extinguisher systems reduce the risk from fire. Diesel vehicles have a lesser risk of igniting fuel.

Smoking in vehicles is often a cause of accident or fire damage and is not permitted. Where there is an accumulation of vehicles, for example in a school or office car park, the likelihood of fire spreading to other vehicles could lead to considerable loss. Consider installing sprinklers in covered car parks or ensuring there is adequate equipment available for extinguishing fire. If possible, avoid parking vehicles close together.

Safety Equipment and Accident Instructions

Safety equipment such as first aid kits and fire extinguishers must be carried on all minibuses. Ensure that all drivers know what to do in the event of an accident. There can be no excuse for not following established procedures.

Sleep Related Accidents

Research (Horne 1992) into sleep related accidents, identified that the greatest incident of sleep related accidents occurred when the driver was driving beyond their normal bedtime and had been awake for more than eighteen hours.

The high risk periods for falling asleep at the wheel are: -

Midnight to 2.00 am
4.00 am to 6.00 am (most dangerous)
2.00 pm to 4.00 pm

To counter stress and tiredness the combination of working, teaching, supervision and/or driving hours should not exceed 13 with a minimum of 11 hours rest. Please refer to section 2.2.

Long Journeys

Long journeys at the end of the working day should be avoided. The M40 accident inquest identified fatigue as the most likely cause of this tragedy. The main danger facing drivers is not that they may drive for too many hours, but that they may drive too many hours after a working day.

Journey Planning

Long journeys in the evening, for example trips to distant sports fixtures present a greater potential danger of sleep related accidents (i.e. M40 incident). They should be well planned with an awareness of the potential risks. The combination of working hours and minibus driving hours must be taken into consideration by both the driver and their Head Teacher. The driver should take an appropriate rest period at the end of their working day before commencing a minibus journey. It is far better to start journeys during the day wherever possible.

Routes and further rest breaks should be planned and approved well before the journey takes place.

There should be two drivers for long journeys, particularly if they take place after the normal working day, in order to give drivers a rest or break, as necessary. This would reduce the risk of falling asleep at the wheel and also provide relief cover for a driver falling ill.

A risk assessment can be conducted for each journey. A suggested format for journey risk assessment is shown on page 27.

This guidance is of special importance to schools where many out of school activities (concert, sports fixtures and others) start as the school day finishes.

Where any journey involving pupils due to return to school later than 8.30 pm is concerned, schools would be well advised to carry two competent minibus drivers (whether teachers, non-teaching staff or volunteers).

Mobile Phone

The mobile phone is an essential piece of equipment for use on minibus journeys, particularly for long journeys and those in the evening. The advantage is that in the event of a breakdown or an accident the driver can phone for help immediately without having to leave the passengers alone unsupervised, in or near the minibus. Clearly there are personal risks involved for both driver and passengers when breaking down in the dark on all types of road. A mobile phone reduces those risks. The vehicle must be safely parked with the engine turned off before the driver can use a mobile phone.

9.3 Theft

Unfortunately the rate of theft from or of vehicles has risen in recent years, despite the vehicle manufacturers' efforts to improve security.

(a) Secure Parking

Where possible the minibus should be stored in a secure place whilst not in use.

(b) Vehicle Theft

Most stolen vehicles are recovered but often damaged or missing parts. Etching windows with the registration number may discourage a thief, but there is no substitute for a good quality alarm and/or vehicle immobilizer.

(c) Break-In

The most common form of theft relates to break-in and removal of contents. Access is usually through a side window, the target being radios/cassette players, and clothing. All

loose goods and materials should be stored out of sight. Common sense should be applied to parking and locking the vehicle.

(d) Clothing and Personal Effects

Drivers and passengers should be encouraged not to carry expensive personal effects in the minibus. Exceptions can be made for equipment or clothing needed on special trips provided special insurance arrangements are made.

(e) Vehicle Security

All drivers must ensure they lock the minibuses when not in use and activate the manufacturer's alarm. When leaving vehicles with the motor trade out of hours, do not leave keys in the vehicle or on the tyre. Keys should be sealed in an envelope and posted through the motor trader's letter box.

9.4 Post Accident Measures

Accepting that, despite all efforts, accidents may still occur, efficient treatment of the loss will keep costs to a minimum and prevent repetition.

(a) Accidents

Drivers should check vehicles for damage prior to acceptance. If the vehicle is damaged on return, the normal claim form should be completed.

(b) Accident Checklist and Report Form

An accident report form should be carried in the vehicle to record details of the accident, third party and any witness who can help claim negotiations. Details must be handed to the third party providing details of insurers. This provides the driver with a positive course of action which may help prevent heated exchanges.

(c) Admissions of Liability

Drivers must not admit liability verbally nor in writing, neither should they seek admission by the third party.

(d) Accident Investigation, Driver Blame and Remedial Action

Road traffic crashes or loss of control incidents should be investigated in order to establish cause and effect factors. The question that should always be asked is how this crash could have been avoided. This may involve sitting the driver down and talking through the details or circumstances as near to the time of the incident as is possible. Valuable lessons can be learnt both for the driver and management in order to reduce future risk of similar events occurring.

If the driver is found to have made an error or taken unreasonable risks, they should be reassessed and remedial training considered. If necessary disciplinary measures should be taken. If drivers are consistently 'accident prone' in spite of training and re-training, then their line Head Teacher must consider whether they should continue to drive a minibus.

(e) Cash Offers

Drivers must not make cash offers to third parties. This invalidates the insurance. Third parties may offer to settle claims directly without involving their insurers. Please consult the Business Manager before discussing the direct entitlement of claims.

(f) Vehicle Defects

Claims that mechanical defect caused the accident should be verified by a qualified motor engineer. This may affect liability for the accident or enable a warranty claim to be made. Alternatively it might identify a breakdown in maintenance procedures.

(g) Authorised and Approved Repairers

All repairs should be carried out by qualified motor engineers.

9.5 Accident Recording, Investigation and Analysis

Any risk control programme should be supported by statistical evidence which identifies specific areas of high risk and accident trends, and cost summaries. Without this it is difficult to monitor the effectiveness of measures taken.

Please ensure that your establishment/organisation maintains full and accurate records of accidents and other vehicle related losses such as theft, theft of vehicle contents, vandalism or personal accident involving the use of a vehicle. This will allow you to identify local trends or problem areas, and will, on a wider basis, allow the Brighter Futures Academy Trust to accumulate risk management data. This can, if properly used, lead to cost savings on both vehicle use and insurance.

Ensure drivers complete claim forms quickly and accurately. Ensure all repair accounts, hire costs etc., are recorded against each loss whether the risk is insured or not.

Brighter Futures Academy Trust
Minibus Driver Checklist and Form

Driver(s):	Date:	
Mileage (start of journey):	Journey start time:	
Mileage (end of journey):	Fuel (start):	Fuel (end):
Journey Destination:	Registration Number:	

Vehicle Check

FEATURE	CHECKED
Brake Lights	
Headlights (side lights/ dipped/ full beam lights)	
Indicator Lights	
Hazard Warning Lights	
Tyres and depth	
Wiper Blades/ Windscreen Wash	
Horn	
Body Work/ Mirrors	
Seat Belts	
First Aid Kit	
Fire Extinguisher	
Risk Assessment	

Number on Board:	Journey end time:
------------------	-------------------

Vehicle Return (only to be completed upon return)

Please confirm whether the vehicle is left in a satisfactory condition to be used by the next person.

Yes No (if no, provide details of when it will be made suitable)

.....

Please sign to confirm that the keys have been returned to the office and the time they were signed in:

Signed: _____ Time: _____

NB: Please remember to return each form to the office and leave the master copies/ folder in the bus. This form needs to be filled in for every SINGLE journey, be it to or from school.

Brighter Futures Academy Trust
Accident Reporting Log

Driver(s):	Date:
Time of accident:	Location of Accident:
Minibus Registration Number:	Photographs taken:
Police Informed:	Police Incident Number:

Accident Details:

DETAILS OF PARTIES INVOLVED	
NAME OF DRIVER	
CONTACT NUMBER	
ADDRESS OF DRIVER	
INSURANCE COMPANY / POLICY NUMBER (IF KNOWN)	
MAKE / REGISTRATION NUMBER OF VEHICLE:	
WITNESS NAMES / ADDRESS / CONTACT NUMBER	
ACCIDENT DETAILS:	

You are legally obliged to stop after a collision with a person, vehicle, dog, livestock or property. Please take all necessary details if another driver is involved. You must, if required to do so by a person having reasonable grounds, provide the same information. If, having stopped, the exchange of information is not completed for any reason; the driver should report the accident to the police as soon as possible. Do not admit liability. If you are involved in an accident with an unoccupied car,

leave a note on the car with your work telephone number. If you are in any doubt as to whether any incident should be reported to the police, please contact the Business Manager.

ACCIDENT FORMS TO BE RETURNED TO THE BUSINESS MANAGER IMMEDIATELY

Brighter Futures Academy Trust

Risk Assessment – Transport (Minibus)

Hazard	People Harmed	Risk Control	Further Action
People			
1. Type of group Ratios, numbers of available seats, Special educational and medical needs, behaviour management	All	Appropriate safety briefing given to pupils which includes awareness of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the hazards of the steps and door heights on entering and exiting the vehicle, • safe storage of bags/equipment • standards of behaviour • briefings for stops on route. 	2 Adults per journey is recommended. Staff to be of mixed gender where appropriate and if possible.
2. Passenger behaviour	All	Pupils briefed beforehand about required behaviour with reasons and consequences A second adult will normally accompany the main driver, especially on long journeys, or with pupils who might be disruptive It is the trip organiser's legal responsibility to ensure that seat belts are fitted correctly on all young people aged under 14 years The second adult will sit with the pupils in the main passenger section in order to maintain good order, ensure pupils keep seat belts on, and attend to any needs Wheelchairs to be appropriately secured. If user remains in wheelchair, appropriate seat belts, and wheel restraints, if required, will be fitted Loose objects, such as drinks containers or other litter, are collected in rubbish bags and not allowed to roll (or be thrown) around the minibus	If all rear seats taken by children then second adult should sit in front of bus

Hazard	People Harmed	Risk Control	Further Action
3. Pupil becomes ill or is injured	Pupils	<p>Young people informed what to do in the case of emergency. If appropriate drive to the nearest hospital with the casualty if not call emergency services. Member of staff identified to accompany the injured or ill young person to hospital if necessary.</p> <p>Staff will remain there until parents/guardians arrive or the patient is released.</p>	<p>Supervision reorganised to take into account the member of staff now off-site if minibus is able to continue its journey. Arrangements to return the member of staff and young person if necessary either to school or the intended venue if minibus is able to continue its journey.</p>
4. Pupil gets lost	Pupils	Head count taken on a regular basis especially when pupils leave and re-board transport.	List of all pupils on each mini bus must be taken with the trip organiser
5. Child Protection	Pupils	Supervision of young people at public toilets if used during the visit. The age and maturity of the pupils will have to be taken onto account.	If there is not same sex supervision for this use the unisex disabled toilet for the sex without direct supervision.
6. Staffing Suitability of staff		<p>Driver/s must have a current, clean driving licence, MIDAS trained and approved, PCV Licence if travelling abroad Drivers must inform DVLA of any medical condition that affects their ability to drive Drivers' driving licences checked annually by responsible member of staff with delegated authority. Drivers/accompanying adult will hold a current first aid certificate Drivers must not use a mobile 'phone or radio in the minibus unless the vehicle is parked safely with the engine turned off. Appropriate written records kept e.g. list of authorised drivers training records</p>	

Hazard	People Harmed	Risk Control	Further Action
7. Drivers responsibility	Driver	<p>Drivers must be made aware of their overall personal responsibility for providing a safe service by ensuring:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The road worthiness of the vehicle • Their own fitness to drive, e.g. effected by medicines, alcohol, drugs, too tired? • Weight within the minibus is evenly distributed • The maximum weight limit and capacity of the vehicle is not exceeded. • Luggage is securely stowed and clear of aisles. 	<p>All drivers to be made aware before journey commences. Driver to ensure regular checks have been made and are documented. Driver must declare before commencing journey if unfit to drive.</p> <p>Driver to check before beginning journey Maximum weight is</p>
7. Driver tiredness	Driver	<p>The driver will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share the driving with an accompanying adult on longer journeys (essential for journeys more than 2 hours duration) • adhere to strict working/driving hours and rest periods according to guidelines • not drive if feeling too tired or unwell to drive safely • not drive if under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication <p>If abroad, minibus and drivers' hours will follow EC requirements and tachograph used.</p>	<p>There must be no alcohol consumed on any transport involved in activities or visits. There should be no alcohol stored or carried on any vehicle. Drivers must not have consumed alcohol immediately prior to driving or drive having consumed more than the legal limit. within twelve hours of consuming three units of alcohol (a unit being a glass of wine, a measure of spirits or half a pint of beer or similar) and 24 hours after consuming more than three units. These restrictions also apply to restricted drugs</p>

Hazard	People Harmed	Risk Control	Further Action
8. Member of staff becomes ill or is injured	Staff	Supervision reorganised to take into account the member of staff now missing. Contact made with establishment so that next of kin can be informed as soon as possible. Plan B brought into play if supervision levels now prevent the original activities from taking place. Additional / replacement member of staff to join the venture to maintain supervision levels. Group return home early if supervision levels fall below the required standard for safety to be maintained.	Plan B prepared and fully risk assessed. Ratios are as follows:- 1:6 years 1 to 3 1:10-15 years 4 to 6
Equipment			
9. Mini bus equipment	All	Check that vehicle equipment includes:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aid kit • Fire extinguisher • Hazard triangle • Fluorescent jacket • Mobile phone – not to be used when driving • Change for parking • Torch (in working order)? 	Driver to ensure all equipment is present in mini bus.
10. Suitability of the Minibus	All	A driver check is completed on a 'minibus check form' before departure and upon return Any faults are reported on check form and to a responsible adult on return. MOT's and services are carried out at regular intervals.	All drivers to complete before commencement of journey. All faults reported on completion of trip.
Organisation			
11. Travel	All	The front passenger seats will not be used by young people unless all other seats are taken	
12. Road and weather conditions	All	All passengers will wear seatbelts all the time the vehicle is in motion. Trip organiser to prepare route/map information and get an up to date weather forecast. When appropriate seek road information reports from national motoring organisations	Driver preparation to be complete 1 day or more before commencement of journey

13. Emergency procedures	All	At least one member of staff will have access to a mobile phone. Emergency procedures to be agreed and adhered to by all adults involved in journey.	Phone to be collected from Head's office before departure. Copies of contact numbers for all members of the trip to be taken on each minibus Copies of all emergency contacts to be taken on each minibus. Responsible adult to inform:- Head Teachers – V Dear - 07786 080806 R Denham 07714 171170 C Howarth 07786 378519 Exec Head Teacher – N/A Calderdale H&S
Accidents			
14. Road Accident - driver	All	Current best practice is followed in respect of driving and rest hours. Drivers pay attention to relevant speed restrictions for the vehicle and roads travelled.	Driver to record details of accident and inform Business Manager immediately.
15. Road Accident - vehicle	All	Ensure roadworthiness of the vehicle, drivers must check the vehicle prior to use.	The driver is totally responsible for the vehicle once it is taken onto the public highway. Do not proceed if the items identified are defective or missing.
16. Road Accident – injuries to passengers	All	All pupils sitting in seats with seat belts fastened at all times when the vehicle is in motion. Exits must not be blocked with luggage or equipment. Pupils must not be allowed to move around the vehicle when it is in motion. Pupils must not distract the driver when the vehicle is in motion. Appropriate insurance is arranged for young people during the journey,	Staff supervision to ensure that this is complied with throughout the journey.

<p>17. Road Accident</p>	<p>All</p>	<p><i>If the accident is not serious.</i> On normal roads keep pupils safe by remaining on the transport if it is safe to do so. If not safe to do so, move the young people to a safe location protected from oncoming traffic. When moving follow the highway code and use staff to supervise the young people to avoid danger.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If the accident is serious</p> <p>Move those able to walk away from the scene of the accident keeping them safe throughout. This will have to be assessed at the time. Deal with casualties as best as you can until emergency help arrives.</p>	<p>Control communications with parents. Contact school as soon as possible.</p> <p>Head Teachers – V Dear - 07786 080806 R Denham 07714 171170 C Howarth 07786 378519</p> <p>Exec Head Teacher</p> <p>Control communications with parents. Contact school as soon as possible. Co-operate with the emergency services and at least one member of staff accompanies an injured young person to hospital. They remain there until parents or guardians arrive.</p>
<p>18. Mechanical breakdown - motorway</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>Get the party behind the side crash barrier as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Keep the pupils in a safe position until either the problem is fixed or replacement transport arrives. Contact RAC to arrange forward travel of pupils if breakdown is delayed / cannot be fixed. RAC contact number on windscreen in minibus.</p>
<p>19. Mechanical breakdown - normal roads</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>On normal road keep pupils safe by remaining on the transport if it is safe to do so. If not move the pupils to a safe location protected from oncoming traffic. When moving follow the highway code and use staff to supervise the young people to avoid danger.</p>	<p>Keep the pupils in a safe position until either the problem is fixed or replacement transport arrives. Contact RAC to arrange forward travel of pupils if breakdown is delayed / cannot be fixed. RAC contact number on windscreen in minibus.</p>