

Minibus Policy

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Reviewed by: Mark Hunter

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MINIBUS POLICY

The school has a minibus for the benefit of the children at Annan School. The minibus has two purposes:

- To provide a pick-up and drop-off service
- To provide transport for children during the school day

Legal and safety requirements

The school recognises its duty of care towards those it will be transporting, not least to ensure that the operation of the minibus is safe and legal. The school will ensure that the minibus is insured, taxed and has a valid MOT. The school will ensure that the minibus is serviced at regular intervals and that safety checks are carried out in accordance this policy.

To demonstrate its commitment to this, the school is a member of the **Community Transport Association**. It is registered in the category **Safe and Legal Education Transport** group. This provides the school with advice on regulations and safety and also updates and changes in policy and best practice.

Safety checks

- The driver will carry out a 'walk round visual check' before each use of the vehicle;
- The school will arrange a weekly 'vehicle inspection'. This is a more detailed visual inspection and is recorded on a checklist and will be carried out by a member of school staff;
- The school will arrange a CTA approved safety inspection or MOT during each 12-14 weeks of usage (i.e. once a term). This will be carried out by a service centre competent to carry out such a vehicle inspection. Inspections will be carried out as follows:

November Full MOT

February CTA Safety Inspection

May CTA Safety Inspection

- If any faults or concerns are identified as a result of these checks, or noted when the minibus has been used, the minibus will be taken to a competent repair centre for further inspection or repair;
- The minibus will be serviced annually (or at 10000 miles whichever comes sooner).

Number of passengers

The minibus can carry 16 passengers. The minibus has 14 rear passenger and 2 front passenger seats. Children should be transported in rear seats unless numbers exceed 14 child passengers (see below). Seat belts must be worn at all times.

Children may be transported in the front seats provided that:

- They do not require a booster seat;
- Where mixed ages are being transported, children from years 5 or 6 only use the front seats;
- Where there are insufficient year 5/6 children, younger children may travel in the front of the minibus at the discretion of the driver and providing they do not require a booster seat.

Children should use a booster seat where:

- they would normally be required to use one in a car (ie they're under 12 years old and under 135cm tall);
- their parents have requested that they travel using a booster seat;
- Where possible (regardless of the age of the child) all booster seats should be of a **seat-only style** where the minibus fitted passenger restraints are those used to restrain the child. Larger car seats with their own restraints are not recommended and will only be used when they can be incorporated safely into the existing restraints. The driver's decision over the suitability of a seat will determine if it can be used.

Drivers

- All drivers of the minibus must have D1 use included on their licence;
- The school will require to see both the paper and photocard copy of the drivers licence;
- A copy of the documents will be retained by the school;
- Should there be any penalty/conviction codes on the paper licence the school will confirm with the insurers that this is acceptable to them before permission to drive the minibus is granted;
- No driver will be allowed to use the minibus to carry children until they have been approved by the principal (see approval below);
- Where the driver has sole responsibility for the minibus they must have suitable DBS clearance.

Driver approval

Before transporting children the driver must demonstrate their competence to drive the minibus and safely transport children in the minibus.

The Principal, or another competent person appointed by the Principal, will satisfy themselves that approval can be granted through the following requirements:

- The driver will explain the 'walk round visual checks' that should be carried out before each use of the minibus;
- The driver will explain all the controls of the vehicle;
- The driver will know the location of the fire extinguisher, seat belt cutter, first aid kit and window hammer; also the location and purpose of the children's Hi-Viz jackets (see 'Breakdowns' below);
- The driver will know the location and how to use the emergency exits;
- The driver will know what to do in the case of an accident or emergency;
- The driver will know who to contact in case of breakdown, accident or emergency (glove-box kit);
- The driver will know the requirement for a Hi-Viz jacket to be worn at all times whilst in charge of the vehicle;
- The driver will know the school policy on the use of car booster seats and children travelling in the front passenger seats;
- The driver will demonstrate their competence to drive the vehicle which will include negotiating a roundabout, parking alongside a near-side curb and backing the vehicle to a rear hedge or other obstruction behind the vehicle.

Supervision

Pick-up/drop-off service (not trips and outings)

The driver will ensure they have a charged and working mobile phone with them. The driver is responsible for the supervision of the children when it is being used for the pick-up and drop-off service. If necessary children who cannot be responsible for their behaviour will not be allowed future use of the service. In extreme circumstances the minibus will be parked safely and the parent of the child concerned contacted to come and collect their child before the minibus continues its journey.

- Children arriving at school by minibus will be supervised by the minibus driver from the car park to the playground. On arrival in the playground, children in KS1/KS2 should join the other children in the playground supervised by the teachers/TAs ready to take their classes inside.
- Kindergarten children will be taken by the minibus driver to the kindergarten gate where a member of the kindergarten staff will take on responsibility for their supervision.
- At home-time, the minibus driver will supervise children going home on the minibus, in the playground, and be responsible for their safety and good conduct along the drive and in the car park.

Trips and outings

When the minibus is being used for outings, ideally there should be at least one other member of staff/adult in the minibus to accompany the driver and provide supervision. One member of staff must have a charged and working mobile phone. Adults must wear Hi-Viz jackets in the minibus.

If it is not possible for an additional member of staff to be allocated to the minibus, the driver can take sole responsibility for the minibus where other members of staff are travelling in close convoy in another vehicle.

All children using the minibus for an outing should be reminded of the safety rules before the vehicle starts off:

- Seat belts must remain fastened and worn correctly until an adults tells you they can be undone;
- no turning around on your seat to talk to the person behind or leaning across the aisle;
- no shouting or otherwise distracting the driver;
- no hands and arms (or belongings) to be held out of the window;
- Children should remain in their seats until an adult has opened the sliding side door.

Breakdowns, accidents and other emergencies

The driver and any other accompanying adults (both in the minibus and any accompanying vehicles) must wear Hi-Viz jackets at all times whilst in charge of a vehicle.

If the vehicle breaks down or is involved in an accident whilst children are being carried, if possible the driver should try to ensure the vehicle is brought to a halt in a location where it is unlikely to get hit by another vehicle, i.e. at the kerbside where a stationary vehicle would be likely to be safe or off the carriageway. Children should remain in the vehicle unless the circumstances of the breakdown make this an unsafe option (i.e. engine fire, breakdown on motorway hard-shoulder).

If the vehicle breaks down or is involved in an accident on the carriageway and it cannot be moved to a safe location, then the driver (and any other adults accompanying the children) should safely escort the children to the nearest verge, pavement or other location away from moving traffic as quickly as possible.

Children's emergency Hi-Viz jackets are available in the minibus and the children should wear these once they are out of immediate danger and awaiting emergency/recovery services. Once the children are in a safe location a member of staff should contact the relevant emergency service/recovery service. The school office must also be contacted to let the school know the situation and to discuss arrangements for the children to continue their journey/return to school.

Accompanying vehicles (and staff) should remain in close proximity (safely parked) until all arrangements have been confirmed. In the case of breakdown on a motorway, children in accompanying vehicles should also be escorted (nearside door only) away from the vehicle to a place of safety. This decision should be taken by the driver and accompanying staff taking account the individual circumstances and location of the vehicles. The safety of the children in the vehicles should always be paramount. If Hi-Viz jackets are available these should be given to the children once they are out of immediate danger.

In the case of other emergencies, i.e. a child being taken ill, the driver should stop the vehicle at the nearest place of safety (at the kerbside where a stationary vehicle would be likely to be safe or off the carriageway) to assess the situation. Any accompanying vehicles should park safely and give assistance/telephone etc as required.

Emergency and other Equipment kept on the minibus

- first aid kit (door storage compartment)
- fire extinguisher
- seat belt cutter
- window hammer
- spare adult Hi-Viz jacket (passenger door cubbie)
- glove box information sheet (contact numbers etc) (glovebox)
- window scraper/wiper (driver door cubbie)
- children's Hi-Viz jackets (see 'Breakdowns' section) (stored in overhead locker)
- sick bags (stored in overhead locker)

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Proprietors and staff of the school and will be reviewed for changes in procedures and statutory guidelines in accordance with the school's policy review guidelines.