

Belfast Model School for Girls

Achievement for All



Use of School Minibus

Agreed by Board of Governors: Jan 2007

To be reviewed: Jun 2010

Charges

Please refer to school's Charges and Remissions Policy.

1 Booking the buses

- (a) All bookings to be given in writing to TIC of school minibus (HT)
- (b) Bookings should be made as far in advance as possible.

2 Seatbelts

The buses are fitted with seatbelts which **must** be used at all times. The driver must ensure that all pupils are belted in before moving off. If you have not driven the buses for a time, you should familiarise yourself again, before taking a group out.

3 Accident/Breakdown Procedure

- 1) In the event of an accident a driver must act as if driving his/her own vehicle under insurance, i.e. **NO ADMISSION OR ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY MUST BE MADE.**
- 2) Full details of the accident, injuries to pupils or others, damage to vehicles and action taken should be recorded, where possible, on the spot and these details must be given immediately on return to the Principal, or to either of the Vice-Principals. If there is going to be a delay before returning to school please contact school as soon as possible.
- 3) The school is a member of the Automobile Association and the membership number is displayed on bus windscreen. If the minibus breaks down the AA should be contacted. Please also contact school, if possible immediately, and again after an assessment of delay involved has been made by the AA.

4 Maintenance

- 1) The buses will be checked **weekly** for normal routine checks, such as tyres, diesel, water etc
- 2) It is imperative that each driver also does a check to ensure everything is safe on the vehicle. Any faults should be reported to Mr Hamilton.

DRIVERS MUST REMEMBER THAT THEY HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE VEHICLE THEY ARE DRIVING AND IF THEY FEEL THERE IS THE SLIGHTEST PROBLEM, THEY SHOULD NOT TAKE THE VEHICLE OUT UNTIL IT HAS BEEN CHECKED.

5 Fuel - DIESEL ONLY

Normally there will be diesel in the Minibus. If, however, you need diesel when away from school, e.g. on a fieldtrip, please pay and get a receipt for the diesel and this can be claimed on return to school.

Please do not leave bus back empty - it causes problems for next person using it.

Put in £5 of Diesel and claim back from office.

6 General

- Before setting out pupils must be clearly instructed that any misbehaviour will result in them being sent or brought back to school immediately and that they will be banned from future use of the bus.
- The back door chain and lock **MUST** be in operation at all times during use.

NB: THE STAFF DRIVER SHOULD ENSURE THAT AS FAR AS POSSIBLE THE MINIBUS IS LEFT IN A CLEAN CONDITION AT THE END OF THE JOURNEY, e.g. NO LITTER SHOULD BE LEFT IN THE BUS.

7 Weekend Use

It is the responsibility of the driver using the Minibus at the weekend to ensure that the bus is returned to the car park. A set of keys with **CAR PARK AND GARAGE** keys is available and the driver should make sure on leaving school that she/he has the appropriate set of keys.

ADVICE TO ALL MINIBUS DRIVERS

(taken from ROSPA Guide to Minibus Safety)

Pre-Drive Safety Check

Do this before every journey. Walk around the vehicle, including the trailer, if applicable, to check for visible defects, and then check the items listed below.

Exterior check (check OK or NOT OK)

- Oil level
- Coolant level
- Windscreen washer fluid level
- Brake fluid level
- Windscreen and windows clean and undamaged
- Lights including brake lights and indicators are clean and working
- Tyre pressures including spares (and inner tyres and tyres on trailer if applicable)
- Tyre treads, including spares (and inner tyres as above). At least 2.5 mm across centre $\frac{3}{4}$ are recommended. Any cuts and bulges?
- Doors open and close properly
- Trailer brake lights and indicators work, if applicable
- Roof rack or trailer is properly fitted, and all luggage securely held.

Interior check (check OK or NOT OK)

- Mirrors correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed
- Position and function of all dashboard controls
- Position of driving seat so all pedals can be operated comfortably
- Pressure on brake pedal
- Lights and indicators are working
- Wipers and washers working properly
- Fuel level (and type of fuel)
- Seat belts are undamaged and working properly
- Location of wheel brace and jack
- Location and contents of first aid kit and fire extinguisher(s)

- Location of relevant paperwork (permit, MOT etc)
- Change for parking or telephone (mobile/phone card)
- Luggage securely stowed; aisles and exits clear

Brake Checks

- Check brakes before loading passengers. With engine running, check handbrake is working properly and brake pedal is firm when pushed.
- Conduct a moving brake test, off the road, if possible. Reach a speed of not more than 15 mph check mirrors and, if safe, apply brakes fairly firmly. Brakes should work efficiently; vehicle should not pull to one side; luggage should remain secure.

If faults that might affect the vehicle's or passengers' safety are found, the vehicle must not be used until they are all remedied.

On journeys where an escort is present, the items below should be divided between the escort and the driver, with the driver concentrating on those tasks which directly relate to driving the vehicle.

Before setting off

- Allow sufficient time for the journey.
- Plan breaks. Avoid long spells of driving when children might get bored and restless.
- Conduct a pre-drive safety check before every journey.
- Never allow passengers to board until the vehicle is at a complete standstill, and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or other traffic-free area.
- Ensure children are supervised when boarding vehicle, especially if using rear door. Plan which passengers will sit in the front seats and by the doors.
- Do not exceed the carrying capacity of the minibus.
- **Make sure everyone is sitting, one to a seat and are using seat belts.**
- When school bus signs are used, make sure they are in position only while children are being transported, and that they do not obstruct your vision.
- Ensure ambulant disabled passengers are seated safely and comfortably and passengers travelling in wheelchairs are safely restrained. Securely store wheelchairs not in use.
- Carry a complete list of passengers with notes of special needs. Keep list with other relevant documents in place where can be readily found in event of an accident.
- Comply with manufacturers instructions when using passenger lifts and other specialist equipment.
- Check that no bags or clothing are caught in doors, that all luggage is secure and gangways and exits are clear.
- Check all mirrors every time before moving off in case latecomers are approaching the vehicle.

During the journey

- Do not allow boisterous play of any kind.
- Try to keep children occupied (if escort on board) give something to do beforehand.
- Enforce 'No Smoking' and 'No alcohol' rules.
- Do not allow passengers to operate doors.
- Approach each stop slowly and with care.
- Use Hazard Warning Lights on school trips where children are boarding or leaving vehicle.
- If serious delay during journey, inform school so that information can be passed to parents. A mobile telephone is useful for this purpose (although it should not be used whilst driving the vehicle).
- Children must not be left unaccompanied on the minibus.
- If there is a risk of fire, evacuate vehicle and move occupants to a safe place.
- If you have to stop in an emergency or break down while on a motorway, only stop on the hard shoulder and as far away from the carriageway and passing traffic as possible.

Journey's end

- Supervise children when leaving vehicle, especially if using rear exit.
- Never allow passengers to leave until vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked.
- Always park so that passengers step onto the footway and not the road.
- Take care when reversing if children are nearby. If you have to reverse, get adult help in directing you.
- Do not leave children alone if no one has come to collect them
- Report problems or incidents that occurred during the trip to the operator.