



SCHOOL MINIBUS POLICY

Rationale:

The School Minibus is a valuable school resource, which helps to provide Students with transport to school as well as access to school visits, residentials and numerous other extra-curricular activities. It is essential that all users of this resource are aware of all legal and procedural responsibilities pertaining to its use.

Aims:

- I. To provide clear procedures relating to use of the School Minibus.
- II. To ensure that all users of the School Minibus are aware of their legal responsibilities.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this document the Education Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) will be a member of the teaching staff with overall responsibility for School Journeys and Residential Visits. The Teacher in Charge (TIC) will be a named member of the teaching staff to whom this responsibility is devolved.

Also, "Residential" visit is defined as a visit or trip by staff and Students organised under the auspices of the School and lasting for 24 hours or more in duration. Further, any visit or trip lasting less than 24 hours will be defined as a "School Journey".

Further, WILTSHIRE MINIBUS tests refer to tests arranged under the County Minibus Drivers Awareness Scheme.

Those eligible to drive the School Minibus:

- I. Those permitted to drive the School Minibus must be at least 21 years of age with a full (preferably clean) driving license that has category D showing. Any endorsements incurred should be disclosed as these may effect eligibility to drive the vehicle.
- II. Only drivers who have passed an independently assessed WILTSHIRE MINIBUS test will be eligible to drive the minibus. These tests can be arranged through the school business manager and will be booked where possible in blocks to make training and testing cost effective.
- III. All eligible drivers should be re-tested every 3 years to ensure high levels of competence and skill.
- IV. However, drivers who passed their driving test after January 1997 (without group D) are now required to hold a vocational driving license too. The School is investigating ensuring that this new requirement is met.

NB - Driving the School Minibus is NOT the same as driving a car, it requires different levels of knowledge, skill and awareness. It also carries different legal responsibilities, which WILTSHIRE MINIBUS tested drivers will have been made aware of.

Procedures:

- I. The School Minibus should not be used unless the named driver meets the eligibility requirements above.

- II. The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the School Minibus and final powers of authorisation over its use. This responsibility may be devolved to the EVC or TIC.
- III. Drivers of the School Minibus must complete a Vehicle Check/Log Sheet before every journey. These can be found aboard the minibus. This is to allow careful monitoring of the minibus, its condition and its general use.
- IV. The School Minibus should be collected from and returned to the parking area located on the school grounds and keys should be returned to the reception at the end of the Journey, or as soon as is possible thereafter.
- V. Any defects noted should be reported to the School Business Manager and Premises Manager as soon as possible, they must also be logged in the minibus log. More serious defects **MUST** be reported **IMMEDIATELY**. Minor defects can be reported after the journey has taken place. However, if the driver is in any doubt the vehicle **MUST NOT** be taken onto the road.
- VI. The staff using the minibus should ensure that the vehicle is left sufficiently fueled using the account card that school has for this vehicle. Staff finding that the vehicle has insufficient fuel should collect the card from the Finance Office. Staff should ensure where possible that the vehicle is fueled using this card. If this is not possible the TIC should fuel the vehicle and retain a VAT receipt so that their expense can be reimbursed.

Financing of minibus trips

- I. All school visits must be self financing unless other arrangements have been made with the education visits coordinator or another member of the SLT.
- II. Where visits are a central to the extended curriculum that the school is seeking to offer, alternative sources of funding trips may be possible eg Aim Higher - TIC's should see their line manager first when planning for a visit to see what help with funding might be available
- III. If other funding streams are not available the school PTA may be approached to secure help for a trip that might otherwise not be possible
- IV. No student should be prevented from accompanying an essential trip for financial reasons alone. In the case of genuine hardship an application should be made to the EVC or the School Business Manager.

Maintenance/Licensing of the School Minibus:

- I. Overall responsibility for ensuring that the School Minibus is properly maintained and licensed lies with the Headteacher. However, this responsibility may be devolved to either the School Business Manager.
- II. The School Minibus should be regularly serviced at least every 3 months, with a recommendation that servicing is completed quarterly. The SBM is responsible for arranging this servicing with a reputable and suitable qualified organisation.
- III. Minor checks of the vehicle (oil, water, tyres etc) will be completed at least every 21 days by the designated minibus driver
- IV. Prior to any journey, the named driver must complete a visual check of the vehicle. This must be completed using a Vehicle Check Sheet kept in a Log Book on board the Vehicle. Drivers **MUST NOT** assume that point (III) above has been completed. They should remember that as driver, they will be held legally responsible for driving with any defect.
- V. Licensing of the School Minibus is the responsibility of the school business manager, who must ensure that all Road Tax, Insurance and MOT certificates are up to date.

In the event of an accident:

- I.** The driver should inform the SBM HT EVC and TIC as soon as is reasonably possible.
- II.** Insurance details should be swapped with a third party as soon as is possible. However, **NO LIABILITY** should be admitted.
- III.** Where it is safe and necessary to do so Students should be removed from the Vehicle and taken to a safe area away from the accident site, where they should be fully supervised.
- IV.** A visual check of the Vehicle should be undertaken before the journey resumes.

NB - These guidelines should be read in conjunction with those laid down in the SCHOOL JOURNEYS policy and with any advice provided by the Minibus insurers.

Health and Safety of Drivers and Passengers:

The Driver should state the following to Students:

- I. Seatbelts must be worn at all times.** This is a legal requirement. (It is the driver's responsibility to check this)
- II. Everyone should remain seated at all times.**
- III.** Which entry and exit doors are to be used (it is recommended that side doors be used except in emergencies)

Other considerations:

- IV.** If at any time the Students distract the driver, s/he should stop the bus until the Students are settled. Do not try to continue. Remember that they may also be distracting other drivers.
- V.** Where possible park the bus with the side doors to the kerb. Where this is not possible, Students should remain seated until you are able to supervise them from the road.
- VI.** Drivers **MUST NOT** drive for longer than 2 hours without taking a break for at least 15 minutes. Remember tiredness kills.
- VII.** It is essential that all journeys in the School Minibus be staffed by the driver and at least one escort. Under no circumstances should Students be taken on a journey on the minibus accompanied by only one adult.

This Minibus Policy was adopted by the Governing Body at its meeting April 2011. It will be reviewed by the Premises sub-committee every 3 years.

CHILD PROTECTION STATEMENT

At Wilton and Barford Primary School, we believe that every child has the right to be safe and therefore to be cared for in a way that ensures her/his safety and meets her/his individual needs. We recognise that all children need protection at all times from anything or anyone that may cause them harm and work together following the Child Protection Policy to ensure this. We respect all members of the school's community and treat information with confidentiality.

Signed..... Chair of Governors (Head)

Date..... Review.....