



Minibus and People Carrier Policy

Adopted by Governing Body: 12.04.16

Reviewed by Governing Body: 30.04.19

Period of review: 3 years

Date of next review: April 2022

RATIONALE

The Governors recognise the great educational and social development value of off-site and extra-curricular activities and they commend and support all staff that run and organise such activities. This Policy is essential as it defines the responsibilities of Governors, Headteacher and Staff when a minibus or school people carrier is used to transport pupils and staff. The use of the minibus and the people carrier will be strictly controlled to conform to the policy **so that safety is treated as the overriding principle at all times.**

THE VEHICLES

Please note that the VOLKSWAGEN SHARRAN uses DIESEL not petrol. If you put petrol in the vehicle do not start the engine call the AA.

Our insurance cover dictates that the minibus and the people carrier must only be used to transport students and staff to and from places connected with official business of the school (delivery of the curriculum/ education/ training or extra-curricular activity).

Minibuses are licensed for the driver plus a set number of passengers. This limit must not be exceeded. Pupils must not sit in the front passenger seat/s alongside the driver if any other seat in the rear of the bus is free.

A weekly safety check of the people carrier is undertaken by the caretaker. The car is taken to a local garage for routine checks. This will include minor service items and the cleaning of the exterior of the vehicle.

A section 19 permit must always be displayed in the vehicle. (Purple disk) This is not required in the VOLKSWAGEN SHARRAN as it carries less than 8 passengers.

The insurance does not cover:

The transport of goods or materials (other than items such as personal bags, PE kit etc.)

Private use (Personal transport, private party, towing vehicles, staff social outings).

Use by other schools and bodies not part of Worcestershire County Council Children's Services.

Requests for use by any external groups can only be granted by the Headteacher or School Business Leader, companies must hold a valid purple Section 19 permit for these purposes.

THE DRIVER

Only drivers holding a current Worcestershire Minibus Driver Permit are authorised to drive the minibuses (Drivers will hold a licence for Category D1 or full PCV to be eligible for this and will have passed the Worcestershire test). A D1 permit is not required for the Volkswagen Sharran, however a Worcestershire County Council driver permit is still required for insurance purposes.

Approved drivers must report any driving convictions, accidents or changes in circumstances that may affect their status as an approved driver. Failure to do so may invalidate insurance cover. All drivers will be asked to complete a declaration.

Trailers must only be used if the Driver of the minibus holds a current valid Worcestershire Minibus Driver Permit that includes the 'With Trailer' option. Only school owned/maintained trailers or those hired through a reputable commercial organisation can be used. Personally owned trailers or those borrowed from other organisations cannot be used without the written consent of the School Business Leader.

The law dictates that the driver will be responsible for the safety of the party and be in overall charge of any journey, and he/she must satisfy his/herself that the minibus, and trailer if used, is roadworthy, safe and conforms to legal requirements e.g. brakes (that they work), tyres (pressure, tread depth, obvious cuts, bulges or splits) lights (in working order) tax (in date), weight (not overloaded/carrying too many

passengers). All trailers must be loaded safely and within safe design limits.

THE JOURNEY

The Trip Organiser (Trip Leader) must meet with the Driver and fully brief him/her on all pertinent aspects of the trip and journey to be undertaken prior to the trip commencing. Jointly they must plan and agree the route and conduct a risk assessment of the journey. Immediately prior to setting out the Driver must review the risk assessment bearing in mind the weather, driving conditions and their own state of health and degree of tiredness. It is important that risks should be minimal. Drivers will be asked to confirm on the offsite form that they have considered risks before setting out. A generic risk assessment is available to assist in this process.

Drivers must risk assess the group of pupils they are transporting and make a decision about effective and safe control of the group during the journey. One or more additional staff members should always accompany the group in the school vehicles.

Drivers and any accompanying supervising adults must have access to a high visibility jacket or vest at times of hazard e.g. breakdown or accident.

Journeys of more than 1.5 hours driving (each way) or trips returning after 22:30 must be accompanied by a reserve driver.

Journeys following a school day must not involve a member of staff driving for more than 2 hours in total and no more than 1 hour before taking at least a 30 minute break away from driving.

Fuel costs will normally apply to a journey and should be included within parent/carer contributions when such fees are levied. If the Trip Organiser is charging for an entry fee/ticket etc. then this will include fuel costs. A general exemption applies to sporting activities, compulsory curriculum related trips and when pupils are representing the school at an event. The School Business Leader should be consulted if there is any doubt.

All passengers must wear the lap/diagonal seat belts as fitted to the school vehicles throughout the journey. The driver must satisfy his/herself that all belts are being worn before driving off. No-one must be allowed to unbuckle their belt or leave their seat whilst the minibus is moving. The law states that persons under 12 years of age who are less than 1.35 meters tall must be suitably restrained with specialist seating. This will be either a booster seat or child seat (baby). School policy to comply with this is:

- All pupils under 1.35 meters tall must use a booster seat

Pupils should not be allowed off the bus when re-fuelling at a petrol station. If pupils require the use of a toilet the bus must be parked in a position of safety away from the pumps and pupils must be allowed out in a controlled and calm fashion under the strict guidance of the driver or other member of staff.

When returning from a trip pupils may only be dropped off at the pre-arranged drop off point (normally the School). If pupils are dropped off at any other point this must only be done with the express written permission of a parent or guardian. A pupil may go home with a parent from a venue (e.g. a sporting fixture) with written consent from the parent/carer only.

Drivers must ensure (unless an alternative has been agreed when booking) that the minibus is returned to its parking bay and all doors and windows are locked and the keys are returned to the admin corridor key cupboard, and the completed 'Daily Record/ Vehicle Check/ Defect notification' form filed below in the plastic trays on the wall.

A BREAKDOWN OR ACCIDENT

In the event of breakdown the driver's first priority is the safety of all passengers. Passengers should not

(unless it is more dangerous to leave the bus) be allowed to sit in a vehicle that is broken down. They should first be moved to a position of relative safety e.g. off the hard shoulder on a motorway and beyond any crash barrier. The driver should inform the AA using the number displayed in the bus and then inform the School.

ACCIDENTS - In the event of an accident, liability should not be admitted. Names and addresses of vehicle owners, of insurance companies, and of witnesses should be obtained. A full accident report must be completed as soon as possible after the accident and submitted to the Headteacher.

For major incidents first contact the emergency services and then contact the school on the emergency number.

BOOKING A MINIBUS

All bookings should be made through the office and will be published on the school calendar. Bookings will be made in writing, in advance using the enrichment or inclusion form which is presented to SLT on a fortnightly basis. All bookings will be confirmed on this form and returned to the trip organiser.

Drivers must complete in full a risk assessment for each journey off-site, a copy of which is left with the school office when children and staff are signed out. The daily record form will record that appropriate checks have been completed, any defects or issues, minor accidents and incidents, mileage start/finish etc. Any concerns about the safety or serviceability of a bus **must** be reported in person by the driver to the School Business Leader **immediately upon return**. If the return is after school hours/late a warning note must be left attached to the steering wheel to prevent any further use before checks can be made.

LEAVING A MINIBUS AS YOU WOULD WISH TO FIND IT

It is the responsibility of the trip organiser to ensure that the minibus is left in a clean condition (internally) at the end of the journey (e.g. clear of bottles, litter, spills etc.) and is available for further use at least half an hour before the commencement of the next/following trip.

The caretaker refuels the people carrier using the Fuel Genie card and obtains a VAT receipt which is attached to the daily record sheet. No cash purchases of fuel should be made from personal funds as these will not be reimbursed.

USE OF MINIBUSES NOT OWNED OR MAINTAINED BY THE SCHOOL

For any hired in vehicles, all safety related requirements of this policy apply with equal force. If a driver is supplied it is the trip organiser who is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is safe to use and that all appropriate elements of this policy are applied to ensure the protection of all participants.