

DUDLEY ACADEMIESTRUST

Minibus Policy

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The Academy minibus is a valuable resource that helps to provide learners with access to educational Visits, residential and sporting activities. The Board of Trustees promote a strong commitment to safety during all activities carried out both on the Trust and its Academies premises and during trips and outings using Academy minibuses. It is essential that all users of this resource are aware of all legal and procedural responsibilities pertaining to its use.

To this end, the use of Dudley Academies Trust Minibuses is governed by the following policy. The Board of Trustees will make available suitable training for drivers to ensure staff and learners are as safe as reasonably practicable. This policy will be monitored and reviewed bi-annually by the Board of Trustees.

Qualifications and Requirements to Drive

To be able to drive the minibus staff must:

1. Fulfil the following requirements:
 - Be licensed to drive motor vehicle categories either Category B or D1 (for driving tests taken before January 1997) or have taken the additional test for a D1 category (post- Jan 1997).
 - When driving on category B licence you must make sure that [Permit 19](#) is visible and valid.
 - Be 25 years of age and under 75 years and must have held a full driving licence for at least 3 years. Any previous convictions for drink driving or dangerous driving offences must be declared.
 - Complete a [Minibus Driver Application Form](#) and [Occupational Health Medical Form](#) and await approval.
 - Complete the Minibus Driver Assessment by an approved trainer of the local authority on the use of the minibus or the Midas training course. All eligible drivers should complete the Driver Assessment every 3 years to ensure safe and best practice is being followed.
 - Show the Minibus Coordinator their driving licence complete with counterpart if it is a photo card licence on a yearly basis.
 - Drivers should not be paid to drive the minibus other than out of pocket expenses.
 - New staff will not be able to drive the minibus until all checks have taken place and a new assessment completed.
2. Must be fully conversant with the legal issues and Dudley Academies Trust regulations
3. Must comply with the procedures relating to:
 - Fitness to drive
 - Booking the minibus and having an escort on the journey Daily/ Weekly Inspections and Weekly Mileage Forms
 - Driving the minibuses
 - What to do in the event of accident/incident
 - What to do in the event of a breakdown
 - Emergency procedures

- Returning to the academy.
4. Must immediately inform the minibus coordinator of:
- any change to their driving licence (i.e. endorsements &/or court proceedings)
 - any change in health that may affect their ability to drive said minibus (This may also include certain types of medication)

The minibus coordinator undertakes the day-to-day management of the minibus drivers and allocation of duties. The coordinator will also oversee the bookings for bus use and any occasional loans to other users (such as feeder primary schools).

The site manager has overall responsibility for the management and overall cleanliness of the minibuses but it is the responsibility of the driver after every trip that all rubbish left in the bus is disposed of.

Road Traffic Act 1972

The Law

The Law requires the driver to ensure that the vehicle being driven on the public highway complies with the [Road Traffic Act 1972](#), and with [The Road Vehicles \(Construction and Use\) Regulations 1986](#). Staff do this when driving their own cars but extra care is necessary to ensure the safety of learners on the minibus.

Academy Business Manager responsibilities:

- The Academy Business Manager will ensure that the minibus is correctly licensed and that a valid tax certificate has been applied for from the DVLA.
- The Academy Business Manager will ensure that the minibus is adequately insured and part of the blanket insurance policy held by the Academy's Trust.
- The Academy Business Manager will ensure that the minibus has a valid MOT certificate if required.

Speed limits

Motorways 60 mph Dual Carriageways 60 mph. These are maximum limits and when road signs indicate lower speeds these must be obeyed. Drivers must take account of the fact that they are driving vehicles containing young learners and must adjust their speed accordingly.

Seating and Capacity

No more than one person per seat. (Where luggage would obstruct exits some seats may have to be used for storage therefore reducing capacity accordingly). The seating capacity of each minibus must never be exceeded. Learners should be made aware of which entry and exit doors are to be used.

All passengers are required to wear a seatbelt at all times.

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that seatbelts are worn and the minibus driver must not start the minibus until all passengers are wearing their seatbelt. It is the driver who is liable for prosecution if learners are under 14 years of age, if 14 and over the learner will be

prosecuted. Everyone should remain seated and face the front at all times. If at any time learners distract the driver s/he should stop the bus until everyone is settled.

All escorts must comply with the minibus drivers requests at all times and instruct learners in accordance with his/her requirements and the conditions of this policy.

Authorisation

All staff must have been authorised to drive the minibus by the Academy Business Manager. Written authorisation from the Principal is required for any private staff use of minibuses however, it must be noted only authorised drivers who satisfy the conditions above can drive the minibus and if necessary will be charged for private use at the discretion of the Principal.

Alcohol, Smoking, Use of Mobile Phones.

Under no circumstances may a driver have consumed any alcohol during a period which would affect his/her driving of the Dudley Academies Trust minibuses. Passengers are not allowed to drink alcohol or smoke on the minibus.

The driver can only use the mobile phone where necessary and then it must be used with the hands free set.

Food and Drink

Food and drink may be consumed on the minibus at the driver's discretion. Staff are to ensure that the minibus is returned clean and tidy.

Load

The total weight of passengers and luggage must not exceed the maximum gross vehicle weight which is indicated in the vehicles manual. Aisles and exits must be kept clear.

Fitness to Drive

Under no circumstances must a member of staff be required to drive the Dudley Academies Trust minibuses when in a state of ill health. This may also include certain types of medication (please consult your GP). Staff must declare to the minibus coordinator if they are taking over the counter or prescription drugs; even if they do not affect their ability to drive.

Health and Safety

At least one portable fire extinguisher must be carried on every minibus. The extinguisher must be maintained in efficient working order and be readily available for use at all times. This requirement is irrespective of seating capacity or vehicle size. It is also recommended to carry a well-stocked first aid kit the contents of which should be checked frequently by a nominated First Aider and restocked as soon as possible after use.

The minibus should have a safety inspection, by an approved Contractor, on six weekly increments.

Booking the Minibus

Booking register

Staff need to complete a Minibus Request Form (Appendix A). The minibus can also be booked electronically via the gateway. The booking must give details of the escort/group leader accompanying the driver on the trips.

It is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure that the appropriate off site paperwork is completed and that their risk assessments relating to the activity/trip cover the use of the minibus.

Where it is, only a short journey a risk assessment has been carried out and is available in the vehicle information file, the driver and escort must make themselves familiar with this and report. Any significant changes that are required to the risk assessment must be taken to their line manager.

Block bookings

Block bookings (i.e. of more than one day or repeatedly on certain days of the week) will be given priority unless circumstances prevent this. In these circumstances the final decision will be made by the Principal or Academy Business Manager.

Budget costs

Any external organisation e.g. local schools may enquire to use the minibus and driver. A voluntary donation will be agreed on a journey by journey basis. Only an approved Dudley Academies Trust minibus driver can drive a Trust minibus.

Pre-driving Procedures

As much notice as possible must be given when booking the minibus, before the offsite activity takes place. The required minibus booking forms and (or electronic booking forms) are to be completed and entered in the appropriate file.

Keys

Keys, mobiles phones and satnavs should be collected from the Site Managers office along with the vehicle information file. Each minibus will have its own mobile phone and satnav.

Daily/ Weekly Inspections

(Appendix B and C for mileage)

Daily Checks

It is the responsibility of the minibus co-ordinator to carry out a daily check of the minibuses. The items must be checked and recorded on the daily/ weekly inspection form and the minibus coordinator sign or initial to say the inspection has been completed.

Weekly Checks

It is the responsibility of the minibus coordinator to carry out the weekly check of the minibuses. This inspection should be done at the beginning of each week. These items on the weekly inspection must be checked and recorded on the daily/ weekly inspection form and the minibus driver must sign or initial to say the inspection has been completed.

This form is available in the vehicle information file and should be submitted to the site manager, at the end of the week for monitoring purposes. Any faults should be reported to the Site Manager, who will determine if need be that the minibus is safe to use and action the repair.

Before Moving Off

The minibus driver must complete the Trip Record Sheet (Appendix C), this form is in the vehicle information file and the mileage should be recorded for each journey not on a daily basis.

Before moving off check:

- Horn
- Mirrors
- Screen Visibility (clear of ice/mist)
- Is the road fund license valid and visible? Is the Permit 19 displayed?
- Instruct the learners to fasten their seatbelts.
- Brief learners on safe and responsible behaviour during journey?

Minibus Escorts

Minibus escorts should take a register of learners before every journey and:

- Seat themselves so they are able to manage learners.
- Ensure the driver is not distracted by poor behaviour
- Help the driver ensure that seatbelts are fastened.

Driving the Minibus

Brakes

Check functioning of brakes at regular intervals, especially after driving through wet conditions.

Driving hours

A break of no less than 15 minutes must be taken after two and half hours of continuous driving and a break of not less than 45 minutes must be taken after 4½ hours driving of continuous driving.

Speed

Observe the Academy regulations regarding speed (See speed limits above). Dudley Academies Trust assumes no responsibility for speeding tickets issued to a member of staff while driving the minibus.

Staff will comply with all regulations appertaining to parking legally. Dudley Academies Trust assumes no responsibility for any parking tickets issued to staff who have parked unlawfully. Where possible park the minibus with the side doors to the kerb to enable learners to leave the bus in a safe manner. If this is not possible learners should be supervised when leaving the minibus.

Fuel

The minibuses take diesel fuel. A VAT receipt must be obtained. All receipts of fuel purchased must be retained and given to the Finance Office on return to the academy.

Long journeys

On longer journeys - especially in excess of 100 miles or over several days - check the minibus regularly (oil, water, tyre pressures, brake and clutch fluid etc.).

Accidents and Breakdowns

(Appendix E)

Information relating what to do in the event of an accident can be found in appendix E of this policy.

Accident/Incident Form (see SLT link Appendix D) must be completed and returned upon return to the academy. Details of assistance for breakdown are kept in the vehicle.

Should an incident occur staff should remove both themselves and the learners to a safe position away from the vehicle and other hazards. The minibus contains both a first aid kit and a fire extinguisher which all drivers should acquaint themselves with.

Emergency Procedures

(Appendix F)

In the event of an accident which has resulted in injuries, the group leader will be responsible for coordinating information to the Emergency Services and to the emergency contact at the Academy. If the group leader is injured then the minibus driver will be expected to take on this role. Training will be provided by Dudley Academies Trust and the minibus driver will be expected to adhere to the procedures in appendix F.

Arrival Times

On return journeys especially at night, ensure that the parents/carers have been informed of the expected location and time of arrival and that learners are met.

Returning to The Academy

Litter

Ensure litter is placed in plastic bags and taken to the bins. All personal belongings must be removed from the minibus which should be left in a clean state.

Garaging

Once learners have left the minibus, it must be parked in the allocated position.

Vehicle File

Complete the vehicle file thoroughly indicating date, mileage, destination, driver and escort for each journey undertaken.

Faults

Report operational faults and damage to body work to the site manager, who will inform SLT link before the end of the working day.

Locks

Lock doors and windows at all times when left unattended. Ensure no belongings are left on view. This applies also when the bus is garaged.

Return of Keys

Complete the Weekly Mileage Sheet and sign to say the information is correct. Return keys and vehicle file to the site office and fuel receipts to the Finance Officer as soon as you return to the academy. If the return time is after the academy has closed, the driver should return the keys by 8.30 a.m. the following morning to the site office.

Driver Competence

The Dudley Academies Trust will on an annual basis provide minibus drivers with training to cover all aspects of the Minibus Policy and associated procedures.

Any question of competence to drive the academy minibuses lies with the Site Manager who may, if the need arises:

- Assess the driving ability of the driver in question, by 5 hours of supervised driving.
- caution a member of staff for dangerous or inappropriate incidents
- Ban a member of staff from driving the minibus. The final right of appeal will be the Principal.

Appendix A – Minibus Request Form

Staff Name		Date	
Drivers Name		Year Group	
Escort Name		Number of Learners	
Destination			
Reason			
Date The Minibus is Required			
Departure Time		Return Time	
Special Requirements			

Note: ALL USERS MUST READ THE MINIBUS POLICY

NO SMOKING IN THE MINIBUS

Office Use Only

Request for Minibus Booking	Accepted/Declined
Staff Name	
Request Date	
Date Required	
Time	
Vehicle Reg	
Destination	
Authorised	

Appendix B – Minibus Daily/Weekly Inspections

Daily Checks – To be completed when minibus is due to be used during the day

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Action Required
Seat Belts						
Lights-Front/Rear						
Brake Functioning						
Window wipers						
Window washers						
Internal Damage						
Fuel Gauge						

	Water	Oil	Tyres	Washer to up	Damage (internal/external)	Oil/Water leak	First Aid Kit
Please tick action required							

Weekly Checks: To be completed one day each week regardless of use

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Action Required
Seat Belts						
Lights Front/Rear						
Brake Functioning						
Window Wipers						
Window Washers						
Internal Damage						
Fuel Gauge						

	Water	Oil	Tyres	Washer Top UP	Damage (internal/external)	Oil/Water leak	First Aid Kit
Please tick action required							

Appendix C – Mileage and Trip Records

Trip

Date		Destination	
Start Mileage		End Mileage	
Total Mileage		Escort Yes/No	
Number of Passengers		Emergency Contact	
Drivers Signature		Date of Inspection	

Managers Signature	
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Weekly Log

Week Commencing	
Start Mileage	
End Mileage	
Total Weekly Mileage	
Signature	
Date of Inspection (Fridays PM)	

Appendix D – Minibus Accident/Incident Form

Date:	
Drivers Name	
Name of Other Driver	
Address of Other Driver	
Registration of Other Vehicle	
Make of Vehicle	
Model	
Name of Numbers Advertised on Vehicle	
Insurance Company	
Telephone Number of Insurance	
Company	
Independent Witnesses (name, address and contact details)	
Details/Sketch of accident (complete on reverse if necessary)	

Appendix E – What to Do in Case of Accident or A Breakdown

Road Traffic Accidents

In the event of an accident involving Dudley Academies Trust Minibuses, causing damage or injury to any person, vehicle or animal the following procedure must be followed:

- Stop – Brake On – Engine off
- Move passengers to safety if in danger.
- If practical move vehicle to a safe position.
- Inform emergency services if necessary via mobile phone and the emergency contact person as soon as possible with brief concise details.

Details required by Emergency Contact Person are:

- Location - brief and accurate
- Damage to vehicle and whether any passenger will need to be transferred if the vehicle cannot be driven.
- Brief details of damage to third party.

Obtain necessary third party details:

- Make, model, colour and registration of third party vehicles.
- Name and address of driver.
- Name and address of owner (not always the same).
- Damage to third party vehicle.
- Obtain third party details including insurance details.

Give details to anyone requiring them i.e. Police or third party:

- Drivers name.
- Name and address of academy.
- Registration number of our vehicle.
- Give telephone number, details of insurance, any other information as may be required.
- Obtain names and addresses of any independent witnesses, excluding passengers on your vehicle or passengers in the third party vehicle, the name, number and station of any police officer in attendance.
- If possible, make a rough sketch of the accident.
- Do not visit, contact or discuss the accident with anyone involved other than the Police and Dudley Academies Trust.

Never admit liability to anyone or offer to pay for damage incurred.

As soon as is practicable, return to the Academy and complete the Minibus Accident and Incident Form (Appendix D) and return to the Minibus Coordinator who will forward details to insurers.

Breakdowns - Motorway

If a problem develops, leave the motorway at the next exit or pull into a service area. If this is not possible then:

- Try to stop the vehicle near an emergency telephone (situated at approximately 1 mile intervals) along the hard shoulder, pull onto the hard shoulder and stop as far to the left as possible with your front wheels turned to the left. If considered safe to do so pull onto the grass verge to give an extended safety zone between the vehicle and moving traffic. Leave the vehicle by the left-hand door. Hazard warning lights should be switched on to warn other traffic.
- Keep the sidelights on if it is dark or visibility is poor.
- Use the emergency telephone (the telephone is free of charge) as this will enable the Police to identify the vehicle's exact location.

Walk to the nearest emergency telephone which is indicated by arrows on marker posts (on the hard shoulder) pointing in the direction of the telephone, the number on the marker post nearest to the vehicle must also be given to the emergency services as well as other important information such as, learners on board, then return to your vehicle and wait nearby, well away from the carriageway and hard shoulder.

Alternatively:

- If there is a motorway exit or service area very close to your vehicle and the vehicle is driveable, drive slowly along the hard shoulder (with hazard warning lights switched on) to the place of safety, providing there is no danger to the vehicle, the occupants or other road users. The driver must ensure in such circumstances that the breakdown/recovery service which is contacted is aware of the vehicle's exact location as well as other important information such as, learners are on board.
- Otherwise, the driver should telephone the Police (999/111) using a mobile phone, stating which motorway the vehicle is on, as well as the direction of travel, ensure that you have identified your exact location from the marker post number on the side of the hard shoulder, other important information must also be given such as, learners on board,
- Able-bodied passengers should be moved out of the vehicle (using the left-hand door) and as far away from the vehicle as possible. Passengers should be taken onto the embankment and as far away from the traffic as is practicable. Learners should be kept together, kept calm and be strictly supervised.
- In some circumstances it may be safer to leave the passengers in the vehicle with the escort, if available, for example, if there is not a safe waiting area close by.
- If leaving the vehicle to summon assistance it is advisable that the driver should go for help and wear a suitable fluorescent/reflective jacket, leaving the escort with the vehicle and any other passengers.
- A mobile phone should be used to pass relevant information to the academy or contact person, to tell them what has happened and to ask them to relay messages to parents/carers and others.
- When help arrives, passengers who are outside the vehicle must not board the vehicle again until repairs have been carried out and the fault rectified.

- Should a replacement vehicle be required and passengers need to be transferred from one vehicle to another then the driver of the replacement vehicle must inform the Police of this requirement so that they can provide a backup motorway patrol vehicle to facilitate this procedure, and provide safety cover from other passing traffic.
- On no account attempt to carry out repairs or change any wheel for whatever reason whilst travelling on a motorway, always telephone the emergency services and wait for assistance to arrive.

Breakdowns – Other Roads

- If the driver has a vehicle breakdown, they must think first of other traffic and road users, get the vehicle off the road to a safe position, lay by etc. not on the footpath, as this will endanger other road users or pedestrians.
- If the vehicle is causing an obstruction, warn other traffic by using your hazard warning lights. If the vehicle carries a red warning triangle, put it on the road at least 50 metres before the obstruction and on the same side of the road.
- At night or in poor visibility, do not stand behind the vehicle or let anyone else do so (you could prevent other drivers seeing your rear lights).
- In some circumstances, it may be safer to leave the passengers in the vehicle. For example, if it seems too dangerous to unload passengers if there is not a safe waiting area. The police must be informed immediately as to the situation.
- Call the nominated breakdown service.
- A mobile phone should be used to pass relevant information to the academy or nominated contact person, to tell them what has happened and to ask them to relay messages to parents/carers and others.
- When help arrives, passengers who are outside the vehicle must not board the vehicle again until repairs have been carried out and the fault rectified.

Appendix F – Offsite Education Emergency Plan

The aim of this guidance is to provide the minibus driver with information following a serious accident or emergency to either a learner(s) or member(s) of staff whilst on an offsite education visit.

It will be the group leader's responsibility to liaise with the nominated emergency contact, but if the group leader has been seriously injured or is incapable, the minibus driver will be responsible for liaising with the academy.

The aim is to ensure that:-

- Rapid and appropriate action is taken.
- Accurate information is provided.
- Formalise the Emergency Management Team.

Immediate Actions

The following action should be taken:

- I. The group leader/minibus driver to call the Emergency Services if required.

2. Ensure the safety and welfare of uninjured or unaffected learners and members of staff. (Seek advice if required from emergency services).
3. The group leader/minibus driver to contact the Academy during the day or the out of hour's contacts number if outside working hours.
4. To provide the Academy with as much information as possible including:
 - What has happened
 - Who has been injured and the severity, if known
 - Which emergency services have been contacted
 - Which hospitals the injured have gone to
 - Names of adults who have gone to hospital with the injured learners or staff
 - What arrangements have been put into place for the uninjured
 - Notify the British Consulate/Embassy if an emergency occurs on a trip abroad.
 - No-one should speak to the media. Any media enquiries must be referred to the Chief Executive Officer or the Principals of the appropriate academy.
 - No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties nor sign anything relating to the accident liability.
 - Any enquiries should be referred to the Emergency Management Team.
 - Keep receipts of any expense accrued as insurers will require these.
5. A copy of the Emergency Plan will be made available for minibus users to follow in the event of an emergency.