



Dixons Academies

Policy Documentation

Policy: Minibus

Responsibility for Review: Director of Finance and Operations/Business/Business Managers
Date of Next Review: April 2018

Minibus Policy

Statement of Policy:

This Policy is linked to the Health & Safety Policy.

The use of minibuses owned by Dixons Multi Academy Trust requires to be regulated in order to maintain a high standard of safety for staff, students and other users. The following conditions will apply to the use of these minibuses:

Principles

- To provide guidance on how best to use the academy minibuses.
- To detail safe operating procedures for their use which details the checks that should be carried out before and after use by drivers.
- Provides information about who can drive minibuses and the times that they may do so.
- Includes details about what actions to take in case of breakdown or an accident.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to catalogue the various procedures that must be followed to ensure the safe use of the academy minibuses. This document will be given to all minibus drivers as part of the overall induction package.

Driver Training

It is essential that the academy are satisfied that all persons authorised to drive are competent to drive an academy vehicle containing students safely. The absolute minimum requirements to comply with our insurance are that the drivers:

- the driver must have a current licence and not been involved in any accident for the past five years
- be aged 25 years or over and hold a full licence in Group 'A' or PSV
- drivers of the minibus are required to complete a record form and supply a photocopy of their driving licence
- where the transport of students is involved, drivers are required to have undertaken a driver's assessment programme and receive the resulting accreditation. If the drivers licence is post 1997 he or she will be required to undertake a D1 course
- internal damage to the minibus is not covered by insurance and the responsibility for the repair lies with the individual or organisation using the minibus (the Academy will decide upon the repairer to be used)
- only one person per seat is to be carried
- seat belts must be worn by all passengers and the driver at all times
- a log sheet must be taken on each journey, completed by recording the starting and closing mileage readings, detailing any defects and signing before returning, along with the vehicle keys and permit, to the Academy reception
- a minibus driver handbook and full details of procedures will be distributed to all drivers on passing their assessment

To comply with the above, the academy has gone further in its quest to ensure that students are driven in safety.

Prior to transporting students for the first time, all drivers will be given the opportunity of either a vehicle familiarisation session with a member of the site team or the Academy's driver training company. The session will cover:

- daily vehicle checks
- pre-journey checks
- general driving safety
- road testing
- emergency stop
- use of mirrors and indicators
- reversing using mirrors only
- passenger safety
- passenger comfort

All new drivers will be added to the list of authorised minibus drivers which is held in the Operations/Business Manager's office.

Staff who pass the test to drive a car after 01.01.98 are required to successfully complete a PSV test to drive the academy minibus. Details about the comprehensive training needed can be obtained from the Operations/Business Manager.

Driving Hours

Driving hours as laid down in Transport legislation and must be complied with. Drivers should plan their journey to include plenty of breaks. Think of distance, breaking and stopping points, arrival and departure times.

The MAT recommends that staff members should carry out no more than three hours continuous driving after with the accumulated length of break from driving should be at least 45 minutes.

During a normal working day drivers should not drive for more than six hours in total. Drivers should not be required to supervise students during their breaks, as this would not be a break for the driver. With each additional driving period, the break time should be extended. Drivers should NEVER be expected to do full days' work or be awake for full day and the drive for several hours in the evening. Staff should re-arrange their work schedule if this is the case.

It is the academy's policy that if there is an academy trip which involves a driver being in charge on an extended day, then a second adult should accompany the party and that person should be competent to share the driving to reduce the possibility of driver fatigue. An extended day is anything beyond 7.00 p.m. when the individual started work at 8.45 a.m. This requirement is non-negotiable.

Driver's Responsibilities

Whilst the academy will ensure a weekly check of the condition of the minibus, drivers are responsible for the following checks before embarking on their trips:

The driver will be responsible for the collection and return of the minibus they must sign out the keys and minibus pack and conduct the following tasks before commencement of the journey:

- each driver is not only responsible for the safe driving of the vehicle, but also for ensuring that its operation is legal in all respects. The vehicle should be checked in order that it complies with being roadworthy, taxed, insured, and hold a current MOT certificate.
- the driver must check over the vehicle as per checklist **Appendix 1** and, should any listed mechanical defects be found the vehicle **MUST NOT BE DRIVEN**
- the site team will inspect the vehicle on a weekly basis as per **Appendix 2**
- a check of the vehicle to make sure it is not overload
- ensure that all doors are securely fastened
- ensure that the vehicle is carrying a fully stocked first aid kit, fire extinguisher and current instructions in the event of a breakdown, Breakdown recovery card and a mobile phone for emergencies. **NB please follow the code of practice for the use of mobile phones (issued with the phone)**
- **drivers must also refer to the guidance notes on appendix 3**

The following task will be completed by the driver at the end of the journey

- lock the vehicle to ensure it is secure
- completion of the logbook
- the reporting of any defects which occurred during the journey (if applicable)
- return of keys and minibus pack to the reception desk

Passenger Responsibilities

- drivers cannot safely drive and supervise students at the same time. It is neither predictable nor safe. Additional staff are required on the bus to appropriately supervise students.
- consideration should always be given to the safety of the passengers waiting for the minibus to arrive and during the time they are boarding and leaving the minibus at pick-up and drop-off points. Always identify a safe pick-up point.
- Passenger comfort is important. The minibus must not be too hot, cold or stuffy. The driver must be aware that driving too fast, especially when this may involve vehicle swing and sway, is likely to induce travel sickness. There must also be regular and appropriate rest stops.

Passengers must be made aware of what type of behaviour is expected of them.

Accident Procedures

If an accident occurs and any personal injury or damage to third party property is involved, then the driver must stop. He/she must be prepared to give his/her name and address and

details of the owner of the vehicle to a Police Officer or any other person having reasonable grounds to ask. If for any reason the driver is not able to give these details then he/she must report in person to a Police Station as soon as practically possible, otherwise an offence is committed, and in any event not later than twenty-four hours afterwards.

Report your accident immediately to the Operations/Business Manager who will let you have the appropriate forms to complete for submission to our insurers.

Breakdown and Recovery

The academy minibus is covered for breakdown and recovery. Details of how to contact them and our membership numbers are located in the minibus pack. Any issues must be reported to the Site Manger.

First Aid

The minibus contains a first aid box which is checked at the end of each term by the Site Team. The contents of the box includes:

- antiseptic wipes
- bandages
- assorted adhesive dressings
- plasters
- eye pads
- scissors

Any use of the first aid kit must be reported to the Site Manager as soon as possible, thereby maintaining a full kit at all times.

Purchase of Fuel

The academy holds a fuel genie card. Should you require fuel for your journey, please ask the Operations/Business Manager or the Site Manager for the fuel card. The card must be returned with the fuel receipt.

Please remember the fact that the mini bus operates on diesel (black hose). When filling with fuel ensure that the ignition is turned off and that there are no naked lights in the vicinity.

Care and the Cleaning of Minibuses

Minibuses involve a great expense when purchasing. Please help to ensure that their working lives are extended for the maximum possible period. One of the main problems with academy minibuses has been that the inside wears out before the body and mechanics. You **must** check the condition of the interior at the end of each journey.

Students should not be allowed to wear muddy boots in the minibus and should be encouraged to get changed at the end of matches in order to stop them sitting on the seats with damp and dirty clothing.

Booking of the Minibus

If you need to book a minibus, please email the Operations/Business/Site Manager at the relevant academy who will pass this onto the Planning Department to update the minibus calendar booking system and confirm your requirement has been booked.

The academy has access to other minibuses across the Multi Academy Trust should the minibus already been booked. Please contact the Operations/Business Manager who may be able to organise the use of an alternative minibus.

Minibuses must not be used for private use.

Weekly Checks

The Site Team are responsible for conducting weekly checks of the minibus and passing on findings to the Site Manager (or in his/her absence the Operations/Business Manager).

Any defects in the minibus noted by staff must be notified immediately to the Site Manager who will then determine whether or not the vehicle should be taken off the road and repairs carried out.

The minibus is inspected every 12 weeks and service in line with the manufacturers recommendations. The service schedule is monitored by the Site Team.

Incorrect Use of the Minibus

A driver who breaks the speed limit will be responsible for paying his/her own fines. Similarly fines imposed for incorrect parking or negligent driving will be the responsibility of the driver. Any damage caused to the minibus through incorrect use, may result in the driver being asked to contribute fully or partially to any excess payable by the academy.

Speed Limits

The speed limit for minibuses is as follows:

- 30 mph not 40 mph on urban carriageways
- 50 mph not 60 mph on single carriageways
- 60 mph not 70 mph on dual carriageways
- 70 mph on motorways

Keys

Keys are kept at the Reception desk. They can be collected at any time between 8.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. When you have finished using the minibus, please return the keys immediately. Do not collect the keys too far in advance of using the vehicle, as this prevents use in the intervening period.

Final Comment

Driving a minibus safely and in a professional manner is not difficult, but it does demand greater responsibility. Preparation is essential and you must always present the highest standards to your passengers and other road users.

List of Authorised Drivers

The Operations/Business Manager will keep a list of drivers who have been authorised to drive the minibus.

Authorisation may be withdrawn at any time by the Principal. Any member of staff who has been advised not to drive their own vehicle for medical reasons must advise the Principal or Operations/Business Manager immediately.

Appendix 1

Minibus Vehicle Safety (Drivers Checklist before every journey)

EXTERIOR CHECK

- Check bodywork for visible defects
- Oil level (this to be done before you start your engine)
- Coolant level
- Windscreen washer fluid level
- Brake fluid level
- Windscreen, windows and mirrors clean and undamaged
- Lights including brake lights and indicators are clean and working
- Tyre pressures, cuts and bulges
- Tyre tread depth (1 millimetre of tread across $\frac{3}{4}$ of the width of the tyre)
- Doors unlock, open and close properly

INTERIOR CHECK

- Mirrors are correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed
- Position and function of all dashboard controls
- Position of driving seat so that 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 and contents of first aid kit and fire extinguisher(s)
- Possession of drivers pack (mobile phone, insurance, logbook, defects sheet, Permit 19 displayed)
- Complete the mileage logbook (and defects sheet if necessary)
- Trailer lights and indicators are working (as required)
- Check that students are using seatbelts
- Ensure all exits are clear of bags and equipment i.e. luggage securely stored
- Ensure that the minibus is clean when returned

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.

Additional Notes

Date:

Print Name: Signature:

This form must be returned when signing in the keys and minibus pack.

Appendix 2

Minibus Vehicle Weekly Maintenance Checklist

- Check windscreen (front and rear) washer fluid level and top up and wiper blades
- Check windscreen and windows are clean and undamaged
- Check horn
- Check the operation of all lights and lenses for damage:
 - side lights
 - headlamps
 - indicators
 - hazard lights
 - brake lights
 - tail lights
 - interior lights
 - reversing lights
 - fog lights
 - Check rear number plate light
- Check reversing bleeper
- Check the tyre pressure and reset as necessary
- Visually examine the tyres and treat, wear and damage
- Check that all doors open and close properly
- Clean the mirrors
- Check that wheel brace and jack are in the minibus
- Check location and contents of the first aid kit and fire extinguisher
- Check body exterior – general condition, fuel filler cap
- Check body interior – seat mountings, seat belts, interior mirrors
- Check oil level and top up if required
- Check coolant level and top up if required
- Check brake fluid and top up if required
- Check power steering fluid and top up if required
- Check controls for unusual play/wear
- Check general tidiness of the minibus

Additional Notes

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Date:

Print Name:

Signature:

This form must be returned when signing in the keys and minibus pack.

Appendix 3

Advice for Minibus Drivers

The points below should be divided between the driver and the supervising member(s) of staff, with the driver concentrating on those tasks which directly relate to driving the vehicle.

Before Setting Off

- allow sufficient time for the journey, avoid long spells of driving and plan breaks
- 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
- plan which passengers will be in the front seats and next to doors
- DO NOT overload the capacity of the minibus and ensure that all passengers are wearing seatbelts
- Always ensure that the ambulant disabled passengers are seated safely and comfortable and that passengers traveling in their wheelchairs are safely restrained. Wheelchairs not in use must also be securely stored.
- Make sure there is a complete list of the passengers being carried with a note of any special medical or other needs
- Take care when using passenger lifts and other specialist equipment. Always comply with the manufacturer's instructions

During the Journey

- DO NOT allow any inappropriate or dangerous behaviour
- DO NOT allow passengers to operate the doors
- DO NOT leave students unaccompanied in the minibus
- If you have to stop for an emergency or breakdown whilst on a motorway, only stop on the hard shoulder and as far away from moving traffic as possible

At the End of the Journey

- Never allow passengers to disembark until the vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked
- Always park so that passengers step onto the footway and not onto the road
- Report any problems or incidents that occurred during the trip to the academy
- Return the mini bus keys and minibus pack to the reception desk

Appendix 4

Driver Guidance on Emergencies

1. Accident/Incident – If a breakdown/accident or incident occurs:

Care of the Group

- Ensure the safety of the group from further danger.
- Arrange search, rescue and medical care or hospitalisation as necessary.
- Ensure welfare of all concerned.

Next Steps

- Inform the contact person at the academy as soon as possible.
- Inform the **Breakdown Service Provider** as soon as possible (a **Breakdown Recovery card** listing all numbers to be used in the event of a breakdown is in the minibus pack).
- **All academy minibuses are covered by Breakdown Recovery Service for roadside assistance and relay.**
- The person you will contact will need to know what has happened and the current situation.
- Try to give a telephone number/destination where you can be contacted.
- In case of a serious incident, notify the police.
- Do not interfere with any equipment etc., which could be relevant to the subsequent investigation.

A **Serious Accident or Incident** is described as:

- An accident leading to a fatality, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious injury.
- Serious illness.
- Circumstances in which one or more party members might be at serious risk.
- Any situation in which the presence or possible involvement of the press or media could have significant implications.

Warnings and Advice

- Without the approval of the academy principal or appointed authority, politely decline to comment to the media.
- Avoid making any statement admitting liability.
- Those involved in an accident need not communicate with anyone other than those in an official capacity.
- Be compassionate with anyone involved.
- Keep a written record of all relevant facts and preserve any vital evidence.

2. Breakdowns – if the minibus breaks down:

- Get the vehicle off the carriageway, if possible.
- Use hazard warning lights and other lights as necessary.
- Do not spend very long trying to find the problem.
- Call for assistance, without leaving the vehicle, if possible. Use a mobile phone if you have one, or ask a passenger to do so on your behalf. If you have to leave passengers

in the vehicle in order to summon assistance, always instruct them to stay in or with the vehicle until you return.

3. Minibus Breakdown on a Motorway

- If practicable leave the motorway at the next exit and seek assistance.
- Otherwise pull safely off the carriageway onto the hard shoulder. Park as far to the near side of the hard shoulder as possible.
- Try to stop near an emergency phone, which is a mile apart, or use your mobile phone when stationary. Red and white posts positioned every 100 meters have an arrow indicating the direction of the nearest telephone. The emergency phones are free and connect directly with the Motorway Police Control Room. They will arrange any help you need. The emergency phones are coded so your exact location is known.
- Switch on the vehicles hazard warning lights and at night switch on all other lights except headlights including saloon lights.
- If possible get all the passengers out of the vehicle using near side exits. Then keep passengers well away from the carriageway, preferably on the embankment. In the case of passengers in wheelchairs, it may not be practicable or safe to do so.
- **NEVER CROSS THE CARRAIGEWAY**
- If your vehicle carries an emergency triangle, position it on the hard shoulder 150 meters behind the vehicle.

4. Fire

- Stop and switch off the engine.
- Leave the gear lever in neutral in case the engine re-starts due to an electrical short circuit.
- **GET THE PASSENGERS OUT OF THE VEHICLE** and away from it. Always evacuate the vehicle if possible **BEFORE** tackling the fire.
- **CALL THE EMERGENCY SERVICES**
- Tackle the fire, **ONLY IF IT IS SAFE** to do so. If you suspect an engine fire, release the bonnet catch from the inside of the minibus if possible. **DO NOT OPEN THE BONNET.**
- Use the fire extinguisher through the aperture between the bonnet and grill.
- When the emergency services arrive, inform them if all passengers are out of the vehicle, and if there are any hazardous containers on board i.e. gas cylinders.

5. If a Passenger is Taken Ill

- Stop in a safe place.
- Administer first aid if you feel able to do so.
- Call for an ambulance if required, either by mobile phone or by stopping passing traffic, to get them to call for help. If near a hospital or Health Centre it may be appropriate to drive there directly.
- Contact the academy with details of the circumstances.
- Offer reassurance to the other passengers.