

# Lucton School



## MINIBUS POLICY

It is School Policy that minibuses will be operated in a manner, which meets or exceeds the statutory minimum requirements for vehicles of this type.

**1. The School will:-**

- 1.1 ensure that minibuses are maintained in a roadworthy condition, and are regularly serviced; (see Appendix B)
- 1.2 ensure that minibuses will not be used until defects, which have safety implications, are rectified;
- 1.3 ensure that the proper insurance, licences and permits are held and kept up to date;
- 1.4 ensure that minibuses are equipped with seat belts and conform to the relevant legislation;
- 1.5 maintain a list of authorised drivers approved by the School's insurers;
- 1.6 ensure that a sign, indicating maximum permissible passenger capacity is displayed in each vehicle.

**2. The School will not:-**

- 2.1 pay fines for parking, speeding or other motoring offences
- 2.2 provide legal support for staff charged with the above.

**3. School Personnel will:-**

- 3.1 operate minibuses in accordance with the Operating Procedures document;
- 3.2 use minibuses (where appropriate) in preference to hiring buses;
- 3.3 not drive minibuses unless they are on the list of authorised drivers approved by the School's insurers;
- 3.4 when organising the use of the minibus, ensure that only authorised drivers are selected;
- 3.5 inform the School of any change in their health which affects their ability to drive;
- 3.6 refrain from consuming alcohol, for the twelve hours preceding and throughout the period of time in charge of the vehicle;
- 3.7 refrain from driving while taking medication which carries warnings to this effect;
- 3.8 refrain from smoking while in the vehicle;
- 3.9 ensure that minibuses are cleared of litter at the end of each use and that any damage to interior fittings is reported in writing

**Operating Procedures:**

**1 Authorisation to Drive**

- 1.1 Before any person can be authorised to drive a School vehicle, a relevant insurance declaration form (including sight of the driver's driving licence) must be completed and submitted to the School.
- 1.2 The applicant cannot drive a minibus until the School has confirmed that insurance arrangements are in place.

- 1.3 Once on the list, drivers are obliged to advise the School of any change in circumstances, which might have a bearing on their insurability. This will include notification of motoring offences occurring between annual declarations.
- 1.4 Use of the minibus will not be considered to be 'Authorised' unless checked with the Head Teacher
- 1.5 Keys are to be collected immediately before use and returned immediately after use to the office. If however, the vehicle is thought to have a potentially hazardous defect (see Appendix A), keys should be handed into the School office and the log book so marked.
- 1.6 Personal use of the minibuses is not permitted.
- 1.7 Drivers must be in possession of a valid driving licence allowing them to drive Category D1 vehicles. The vehicles must not, under any circumstances, be driven in the Irish Republic unless the designated drivers have qualified, by test, for category D1 vehicles or hold a PSV licence.

## **2. Safety**

- 2.1 When taking charge of a minibus, drivers must satisfy themselves that the vehicle is in a fit condition for use (check tyres, lights etc. and Log Book) and that there is an adequate supply of fuel.
- 2.2 When in charge of a party and/or when driving a minibus, staff must ensure that:-
  - (i) the maximum permitted number of passengers is not exceeded,
  - (ii) seat belts are worn correctly at all times,
  - (iii) children under 135cms in height or under the age of 12 travelling in the front seats of a minibus must use an appropriate child seat, booster seat or booster cushion
  - (iv) all luggage or other material is loaded securely in a safe manner and that it presents no danger to occupants of the minibus or to other road users,
  - (v) all current road traffic legislation is observed.
- 2.3 Drivers must ensure that they are properly rested before starting a journey, plan appropriate rest stops and/or carry a relief driver.
- 2.4 A minibus must not be driven with a Category A Defect (see Appendix A)
- 2.5 Hazard warning flashers are for emergency use only
- 2.6 It is the responsibility of the driver to check with the School Designated First Aid Officer any particular medical needs or medication of the pupils on the minibus.
- 2.7 Every care must be taken when the pupils alight on and from the minibus by ensuring a guiding hand and, where necessary, appropriate step. Pupils must only leave the minibus where there is complete safety from other vehicles etc.
- 2.8 The Need for an Escort

The ROSPA Code of Practice on Minibus Safety recommends that an escort should be present on a minibus under the following conditions:

  - (a) Where passengers' needs require an escort to be present
  - (b) Where the children are of pre-school age
  - (c) Where the travel time to and from the destination is likely to be more than two hours each way
  - (d) Where the distance to and from the destination is more than 100 miles each way.
  - (e) Where driving is likely to be involved after 9.00p.m. in the evening.

## **3. Reporting and Recording**

- 3.1 Drivers make any necessary entries in the Log Book, which is kept in the minibus, at the start and end of each journey.
- 3.2 Drivers will report all accidents, however minor, to the office, as soon as possible.
- 3.3 Drivers must report all Category A Defects (see Appendix A) to the office immediately, retaining the keys, to prevent the use of the minibus and make an appropriate entry in the Log Book.
- 3.4 Drivers must report all Category B Defects (see Appendix A) to the office as soon as possible and make an appropriate entry in the Log Book.
- 3.5 In the event of a minibus becoming unserviceable while away from School, the following action must be taken:
  - Report to School by telephone as soon as possible, giving details of the location and the problem. Remember to give the school office the number from which you are calling. For those journeys where an escort is not required, the school's policy is that the driver **MUST** carry a mobile phone so that contact can be made in an emergency without leaving the children unsupervised.

#### **4. Fuel**

In the event that it is necessary to purchase fuel, the receipt must be handed to the Bursar for reimbursement.

| Policy  | Date Approved | Date of next review |
|---------|---------------|---------------------|
| Minibus | 24/11/2021    | Nov 2023            |

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Defects**

#### **Category A**

- Defect to steering, brakes, clutch, tyres
- Damage to swept portion of the windscreen
- Damage to doors which prevents their secure closure or which prevents them being opened easily as intended by the manufacturer.
- Damage to the bodywork which results in loose panels or jagged projections
- Damage to bodywork which results in restriction to steering lock or which otherwise results in contact with a tyre
- Insecure seat(s)
- Engine oil light failing to extinguish within 5 seconds
- Abnormal noise from engine, gearbox or rear axle
- Difficulty in changing gear or clutch slip
- Failure of lights or indicators
- Defect to windscreen wipers which impairs their ability to clear the windscreen
- Inoperable seat belts

#### **Category B**

All items of cosmetic or minor nature, which do not impair security and safety of driver and/or passenger, vehicle handling, driver's view of the road or the welfare of the engine and transmission.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Maintenance Procedures**

#### **Daily**

The School Maintenance Department will conduct a daily visual inspection of all vehicles, according to the following check-list:-

- General condition of vehicle
- Fuel level
- Tyres
- Lights
- Wipers and glass, with particular attention being paid to windscreen and rear windows

#### **Weekly**

The School Maintenance Department will conduct a weekly inspection of both vehicles, according to the following check-list and will note, in the Maintenance Log Book for the vehicle that this has been done.

- Tyres- pressure, condition of sidewalls and tread
- Engine-oil level, coolant level, brake fluid level, air and fuel filters.
- Body (exterior)-general condition, door mirrors, fuel filler cap
- Body (interior) –seat mountings, seat belts, interior rear-view mirror, general tidiness and condition
- Windscreen – condition
- Wipers –condition-inspect and replace as necessary
- Controls checked for unusual play/wear

#### **Routine Servicing and Repairs**

Minibus to be serviced, by approved contractor, in accordance with manufacturer's specifications

#### **Defect report**

On receipt of a defect report the Maintenance Supervisor will examine the vehicle to determine, as far as possible, the nature of the defect and will decide whether to affect a repair or to refer the matter to an approved workshop facility. If the defect renders the vehicle un-roadworthy, the keys will be withdrawn, the Log Book and Minibus Booking Book marked accordingly.

Before any return to service, the vehicle must receive a 'weekly' check and have an appropriate entry made in its Log Book.