

## 8.0 Transport

### 8.1 Minibus Policy



This section provides a summary of the guidance contained in Liverpool City Council's Occupational Road Risk Policy and the Corporate Drivers' Handbook and as such can be used as a checklist during the planning of an educational visit after reading the full document.

#### Vehicles must: -

##### Be regularly and suitably maintained & inspected.

A designated member of staff should hold the responsibility for overseeing maintenance and care of the minibus. Any defects should be reported immediately and appropriate remedial action taken. All necessary repairs must be carried out before use. Maintenance and other records should be kept for at least 3 years. Containers of fuel must NOT be carried.

##### Carry a suitable fire extinguisher.

E.g. foam/carbon dioxide, and should be readily available for use.

##### Have clearly indicated emergency exits.

Passengers should be made aware of them.

##### Have suitable first aid provision.

At least two first aid boxes should be readily available for use.

Have passenger and driver seat belts fitted and available for every person on the

minibus, the driver is to ensure they are used.

Ideally have high back seats to protect against whiplash. Vehicles with side facing seats should not be used.

Have adequate wheelchair & passenger restraints provided where wheelchair users are to use the minibus.

Have a register of all adults authorised to drive the minibus and their competencies e.g. undertaken MIDAS assessment.

A record of the use (Vehicle Mileage/Log) of the minibus should also be maintained.

##### Have an Operating Permit.

A minibus that is used to carry passengers for "Hire or Reward" is normally classed as a Public Service Vehicle (PSV). It must therefore comply with PSV Operator Licensing and Passenger Carrying Vehicle Driver Licensing requirements. Some schools and voluntary organisations may be exempted from these requirements if they are eligible for a 'Minibus Permit' granted under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. For further information see Liverpool City Council Occupational Road Risk Policy and Corporate Driver's Handbook.

Have an approved towing bracket if it is necessary to connect a trailer to the vehicle. Drivers unfamiliar with towing trailers should take a practice drive to master manoeuvring and reversing. Trailers should be suitably maintained and inspected. A second adult should assist the driver in confirming that trailer lights work properly before commencing a journey. A maximum speed limit of 50 m.p.h. should be observed when towing.

#### Drivers must:

- > Be at least 21 years of age.
- >v Hold a suitable full driving license.
- > Have successfully completed suitable training and assessment.

- > Have appropriate health and driver training records.
- > Notify the Head Teacher/IYPS Area Youth Coordinator if there is any change in their circumstances that may affect their suitability to drive.
- > Carry out a vehicle check prior to using the vehicle.
- > Be familiar with the vehicle and highway codes before carrying passengers.

#### Minibus Driver Entitlement

Voluntary drivers who hold Category B (post 1997 car entitlement) can drive a minibus if all the following are met:

- The driver has held a Category B licence for at least 2 years.
- A non-commercial body is using the minibus. (Whether a school is a non-commercial body will depend on its status. The majority of schools are considered as being non-commercial organisations. However some independent schools may lack charitable status and be classified as commercial).
- The driver can not be compelled by his employer to drive.
- Driver is only paid out of pocket expenses and not specifically for the driving.

The minibus can be operated for "hire or reward" if a (Section 19) Minibus Permit is held and the following additional conditions are met:

- The minibus has a capacity of up to 16 passengers.
- The driver is aged 21 or over.
- The maximum weight of the minibus is not more than 3.5 tonnes. This excludes any specialist equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers were a maximum weight of 4.25 tonnes will be permitted in certain circumstances.
- The driver cannot tow a trailer.

For more information regarding D1(PCV) and pre-1997 car licence entitlement read "Minibus Driver Entitlement" within Liverpool City Council's Occupational Road Risk (Driving at Work) Guidance Note GN28.

#### Driver Responsibilities



- Prior to using the minibus the driver must check the essential elements of the vehicle (see "General driver pre-journey checks", below) and report any defects in writing.
- If a major defect occurs en-route, the journey must stop until the defect has been repaired by a competent person. It is recommended that drivers have access to a mobile phone for use in case of emergency but must not be used by the driver whilst driving.
- Luggage should be stowed safely and neatly so it does not obstruct gangways or exits. Roof racks when used, should have goods evenly distributed on them and suitably secured.
- Drivers are legally responsible for the vehicle they are driving and should observe current legislation for driving, (speeding, parking restrictions etc).
- It is the driver's responsibility to ensure the vehicle is not overloaded with passengers or goods and that seatbelts are worn.
- Drivers must never drink or be under the influence of any other substance and drive. Alcohol can remain in the blood for up to 24 hours, therefore it is

considered good practice that alcohol is not consumed 12 to 24 hours before driving.

- If drivers become tired or unwell they must stop at a suitable place until they recover.
- Drivers are responsible for returning the bus in a suitably clean and tidy condition.
- In case of fire or other emergency, a driver's primary responsibility is the health and safety of his passengers by ensuring they leave the vehicle quickly to an area of safety. They must be protected from other vehicles as far as possible.
- The fighting of engine or other fires is best left to the emergency services.
- Drivers should ensure that passengers are suitably supervised. An additional adult should act in a supervisory capacity for journeys with young children, disruptive children or those with educational needs.

#### Drivers Hours

- Before starting out on a journey due consideration must be given to the time to be spent 'at work' (not simply behind the wheel) and the distance to be covered. Wherever possible a relief driver must be carried to cater for a long journey or in case of illness. In addition:-
- Drivers must take a break of at least 15 minutes after driving for 2 hours.
- Drivers must not be behind the wheel for more than 6 hours during a working day (for 'professional' drivers this limit may be increased to 8 hours).
- The length of a driver's working day must not exceed 10 hours i.e. between starting work (not just starting driving) and finishing.

#### General driver pre-journey checks

- The vehicle handbook that lists the manufacturer's details; covering the design and operational standards should be available to the driver.
- Brakes and steering operate correctly.
- All lights, instruments and horn operate correctly.
- Windscreen wipers and wash operate correctly. Adequate supply of windscreen wash fluid.
- Correct fluid levels – fuel, oil, brakes, coolant etc.
- First aid kits are in place.
- Fire extinguisher, is in place.
- Windows clean and there is good visibility.
- Tyres should be free of cuts and cracks, correctly inflated and have a minimum of 2.0mm of tread.
- All luggage and other objects should be suitably and safely stored.
- Spare tyre carried, in good condition, satisfactorily inflated. Wheel changing equipment present.
- Internal (and external mirrors where fitted) are in good condition and correctly aligned.
- Seat belts are working correctly.

#### No smoking

- It is illegal to smoke in a public vehicle neither drivers or passengers in may smoke

### 8.2 The Use of Private cars

It is possible for the Group Leader, supervisors, other staff and adult volunteers to use their own cars, for transporting group members providing that:

- The Head Teacher / IYPS Area Manager has agreed the use of private cars as part of their overall transport policy.

- Any money paid for its use is not more than the vehicle's running costs (no hire or reward) and arrangements for any payments are made or agreed before the journey.
- Evidence is provided that the vehicle is insured fully comprehensively and for business use.
- The driver recognises they have a duty of care to passengers, road users and others and are known to be responsible adults.
- Simple checks should be made to confirm the vehicle's road-worthy condition.
- Evidence of driving ability should be drawn on and if necessary simple checks made.
- Cars must not be overloaded.
- Each passenger should have their own seat and suitable seatbelt.
- If private cars are to be used for long journeys there should be arrangements made (RAC, AA etc.) for breakdown assistance and recovery.
- The names of the children/young people being transported in each car should be kept by the school/youth centre organisation so that in the event of an accident the school/youth organisation is aware of the children who are involved.
- Parent/adults are never alone with any child/young person.
- Driver's licences should be checked.
- Seat belts are working and if applicable correctly fitted child seats are used.

This section should be read in conjunction with child protection procedures. Some parents may not want their child/children to travel with other parents, or with particular parents. They should be given the opportunity to make their views known.

### 8.3 Hiring of Coaches

The primary consideration in the carriage of children is safety, where numbers make the use of minibuses impractical coaches should be used. Legislation requires that coaches have seat belts.

Staff supervising on coaches should check that all group members are all wearing their seat belts. There is no requirement for younger children travelling on a coach to be held in a child car seat or booster seat. They should use the existing seat belt system.



### 8.4 The Use of Public Service Vehicles

Some groups may wish to use a public service bus as a means of transport or as a learning experience for children, this is a useful exercise.

If used choose times to travel where buses are empty and will have sufficient space for the whole group to be seated.

Risk assess the journey, take sufficient staff to ensure the children are suitably supervised.

The group should remain seated until the stop is imminent. Supervisors should indicate to the children when to stand to leave the bus, a member of the supervisory team should be the last member of the group to leave the vehicle.

This means of transport is not appropriate for large groups of children.