

Honiton Community College  
Academy Trust



This policy was adopted by the Governing Body of  
Honiton Community College Academy Trust  
on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and will be reviewed every 3 years.

# MINIBUS POLICY

## **Minibus policy**

This policy has been written in conjunction with best practice and guidance taken from the HM Government publication 'Driving school minibuses, Advice for schools and local authorities, September 2013'.

### **Principles**

- To provide guidance on how best to use the College 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 a breakdown or an accident.

### **Purpose**

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

### **What is a mini-bus and driver training?**

It is essential that the College is satisfied that all persons authorised to drive are competent to drive a College vehicle containing students safely. The absolute minimum requirements to comply with the College policy are that the drivers:

1. A minibus is a motor vehicle with between 9 and 16 passenger seats. It is described as a category D1 vehicle by the Driving Vehicle Licencing Authority.
2. It is College policy that all drivers must have undertaken a relevant test from a suitable driver training company which must be refreshed every 6 years. The College must hold a copy of this certificate.
3. Drivers who hold a full D1 (or D) PCV entitlement can drive minibuses for hire or reward.
  - a) There are, however, circumstances when a driver can drive a minibus within the UK when they hold a car (category B) licence. These circumstances vary depending on when the driver passed their car driving test. These arrangements only apply when driving the minibus in the UK not if driving abroad.
  - b) If you passed your category B (car) driving test before 1 January 1997, you can drive a minibus that is not being used for hire or reward as these licences automatically include category D1 (101) (not for hire or reward) entitlement<sup>3</sup>. This means school staff with such a licence can drive a minibus carrying up to 16 passengers with no maximum weight restriction on the vehicle. Drivers with a D1 + E (101) (not for hire or reward) entitlement can tow a trailer over 750kg.
4. If you passed your category B driving test on or after 1 January 1997, you may drive a minibus that is not being used for hire and reward if the following conditions are met:

- a) You are over 21 and have held a category B licence for at least 2 years;
- b) The minibus is used by a non-commercial body for social purposes;
- c) You receive no payment other than the recovery of your out of pocket expenses (e.g. fuel and parking costs);
- d) You provide the service on a voluntary basis;
- e) The gross vehicle weight of the minibus is not more than 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes if including any specialist equipment to carry disabled passengers); and
- f) You do not tow a trailer.

**For definition of the terms stated in section b, c, and d above please see the relevant section in the HM Government publication ‘Driving school minibuses, Advice for schools and local authorities, September 2013’.**

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 Premises Team or a more formal training session with the College’s driver training company. Familiarisation sessions are available at any stage with a member of the Premises Team on request.

All new drivers will be added to the list of authorised minibus drivers which is held in the Director of Finance and Resources office.

### **Types of College mini-buses**

The College operates two types of minibus; each requiring a different level of qualification or licence to drive. **All drivers must comply with the absolute minimum requirements below:**

<b>Silver Mini Bus</b>	<b>White Mini Bus*</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertaken a relevant test from the College’s driver training company which must be refreshed every 6 years.</li> <li>• Drivers who hold a full D1 (or D) PCV entitlement on their driving licence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertaken a relevant test from the College’s driver training company which must be refreshed every 6 years.</li> <li>• 21 and have held a category B licence for at least 2 years.</li> <li>• Meet the ‘Group 2’ medical standards if over 70.</li> <li>• Driving on a voluntary basis and there is no payment from or on behalf of the passengers.</li> <li>• Not towing a trailer.</li> </ul>

\* Weight of the minibus is not more than 4.25 tonnes including specialist equipment for disabled passengers.

### **Drivers Hours**

It is the College’s policy that if there is a College trip which involves a driver having to drive more than a total of 5 continual hours, then a second adult should accompany the party and that person should

meet the criteria above to share the driving. Drivers must have a 30-minute break after driving for 2 ½ hours.

### **Driver's Responsibilities**

Drivers are responsible for the following checks before embarking on their trips:

- Carry out a visual inspection of the minibuses which includes tyres and ensure the windscreen and glass is clean and can be seen through.
- Check brakes to see that they are functioning correctly.
- Ensure that mirrors and seat are in the correct driving position.
- Check that all lights are functioning correctly.
- Ensure that all seat belts are being worn. This includes all passengers.
- Ensure that the windscreen washer system works and that wipers are functioning correctly.
- Ensure that the vehicle is correctly loaded and that no more than sixteen passengers are being carried.
- Ensure that emergency exits must not be blocked.
- Ensure that all doors are correctly closed.
- Check that there is enough fuel for their journey.
- As soon as possible after moving off, the driver should carry out a running brake test.
- At intervals throughout the journey, all instruments and warning lights should be checked and necessary action taken if a fault is indicated.
- Make sure that no rubbish is left on the vehicle and ensure that no malicious damage has occurred to the interior of the vehicle.
- Ensure there is a charged mobile phone with the emergency contact numbers.

At the end of the journey the driver must lock and make the vehicle secure. Keys should only be taken from the Finance Office (along with the corresponding minibus folder) just prior to making use of the minibuses (where ever possible). The keys should be returned to the Finance Office immediately after use.

### **Passenger Responsibilities**

- Should wear seat belts and always remain in their seats until instructed otherwise.
- Should never distract the driver by shouting, etc.
- Must make sure that escape routes are not blocked by bags, etc.
- Students are ambassadors of the College and must never bring its name into disrepute by gesturing, etc.
- Passengers found to have vandalised the minibuses may face a ban from using it again and be required to pay for damages.

### **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 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.

Follow the procedures as per your Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) within your risk assessment and Evolve process. Please remember to report your accident immediately to the Principal/Director of Finance and Resources or any member of the ELT who will let you have the appropriate forms to complete for onward transmission to our insurers.

### **Breakdown and Recovery**

The College minibuses are covered for breakdown and recovery. Details of how to contact them and our membership numbers are enclosed in the minibus folder that is given out with the keys for each journey. Any issues should be reported to the Finance Office.

### **First Aid**

All minibuses contain first aid boxes which are checked on a termly basis.

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

### **Purchase of Fuel**

The College holds a fuel card for each minibus which enables fuel to be purchased directly on account. Should you need fuel for your journey, please ask a member of the Finance Team for the fuel card. The card must be returned with the fuel receipt.

When taking a College mini-bus out please remember to fill the fuel tank back up ready for the next user. Please remember that **all minibuses operate on diesel (black hose)**. When filling with fuel ensure that the ignition is turned off and that you follow the rules and regulations of the service station.

### **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 College minibuses has been that the inside wears out before the body and mechanics. You must check on the condition of the interior at the end of each journey.

Students should not be allowed to wear muddy boots in the minibuses 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 Minibuses**

If you need to book a minibus, please contact the Finance Office with your request. Finance will update the minibus calendar booking system and confirm your requirement has been booked.

Should the minibuses already be booked, you will be advised and if requested an external minibus can be booked (at a cost to the trip/activity or departmental cost centre).

### **Weekly Checks**

The Premises Team has responsibility for conducting weekly checks of the minibuses and passing on findings to the Finance Assistant and or Director of Finance and Resources.

Any defects in the minibuses noted by staff should be notified immediately to the Finance Assistant who, in conjunction with the Director of Finance and Resources, will then determine whether or not the vehicle should be taken off the road and repairs carried out.

The minibuses are serviced in line with the manufacturer's recommendations.

### **Incorrect use of the minibuses**

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

### **Keys**

Keys are kept in the Finance office. They can be picked up at any time between 8.00am and 4.30pm. 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.

### **Professionalism**

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 Finance Assistant will keep a list of drivers who have been authorised to drive the minibuses.

Authorisation may be withdrawn at any time by the College. Any member of staff who has been advised not to drive their own vehicle for medical reasons must not drive the minibus and should inform the Director of Finance and Resources immediately.