



Transport Policy

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Policy holders:	Trust Health and Safety	

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for staff or pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

By shading this box green, we, the policy holders, are confirming that we have read the CMAT Equality Policy and the Equality Act 2010.

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1 Scope

This policy applies to all transport arranged, provided or authorised by CMAT, including Trust-owned, leased, borrowed and self-drive hired vehicles; vehicles hired with a driver; staff-owned vehicles used on Trust business; taxis and private-hire vehicles; contracted pupil transport; educational visits; sports fixtures; home-to-school services arranged by CMAT; and vehicle movements on Trust premises.

This policy applies to employees, agency staff, volunteers, governors, contractors and any other person authorised to organise, supervise or provide transport on behalf of CMAT.

2 Objectives

CMAT will manage transport and work-related road risks so far as reasonably practicable.

CMAT will ensure that:

- every journey is appropriately planned and risk assessed;
- every driver is legally entitled, competent, fit, insured and authorised to drive;
- every vehicle is suitable, roadworthy, insured and maintained;
- pupils are appropriately supervised and restrained;
- safeguarding, medical, accessibility and reasonable-adjustment needs are addressed;
- vehicle and pedestrian movements on Trust premises are safely managed; and
- defects, collisions, incidents and near misses are reported, investigated and used to improve arrangements.

CMAT will manage transport using the principles of a safe journey, a safe driver and a safe vehicle.

3 Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees approves this policy and receives assurance concerning serious incidents and significant transport risks.

The Executive Policy Owner is responsible for maintaining CMAT's transport and minibuss standards, determining or obtaining advice on the lawful operating basis of transport services, monitoring compliance and reporting material non-compliance to the Board.

Each Headteacher must appoint a competent Transport Coordinator.

The Transport Coordinator is responsible for:

- maintaining the vehicle and authorised-driver registers;
- checking driving licences and driver authorisations;
- maintaining Section 19 permit records;
- confirming insurance cover;
- arranging servicing, safety inspections and repairs;
- ensuring that defects are properly managed;
- maintaining MiDAS or equivalent training and reassessment records;
- ensuring that current emergency information is available; and
- preventing the use of a vehicle or driver where the required conditions have not been met.

The visit leader is responsible for journey planning, passenger supervision, safeguarding, passenger manifests, headcounts, passenger-assistant arrangements and emergency planning.

The passenger assistant is responsible for supervising passengers so that the driver can concentrate on driving.

The driver is responsible for completing the pre-use check, complying with road traffic law and this policy, reporting defects and refusing to drive where the driver, vehicle or journey is unsafe.

4 Deliveries

Wherever possible, deliveries are organised to take place at times when pupils are not on site, such as before the start of the school day. Deliveries should be arranged in advance wherever possible. Where it is essential that a delivery takes place during the normal working day, drivers will be required to seek permission via the access control system to drive onto the school premises.

Drivers must proceed only to the delivery location designated by the site team. Catering delivery vehicles may proceed to the kitchen delivery area where authorised.

Their arrival and departure will be supervised by the site manager or a member of administration or catering staff, as appropriate, and parking will be permitted only in designated areas.

5 Refuse and Recycling Collections

Wherever possible, collections are organised to take place at times when pupils are not on site, such as before the start of the school day. Where collections are scheduled to take place during the normal working day, drivers will be required to seek permission to drive onto the school premises.

Their arrival and departure will be supervised by the site manager or a member of administration or catering staff, as appropriate, and parking will be permitted only in designated areas.

6 Hired and contracted transport

Before booking transport, CMAT must verify the provider's lawful operator or permit status, insurance, driver competence, vehicle roadworthiness, seat belts, passenger restraints, accessibility, safeguarding arrangements, emergency procedures and subcontracting controls.

The booking must specify passenger numbers, ages, additional needs, luggage, restraint requirements, accessible equipment, route and collection points.

Hired vehicles must use the lawful, designated and risk-assessed collection point identified in the school site traffic plan.

A visit leader must supervise pupils and confirm that the supplied vehicle and arrangements are suitable.

Outsourcing transport does not remove CMAT's responsibility to manage foreseeable risk.

7 Parents and visitors bringing vehicles onto the site

Parents' and visitors' vehicles are permitted on the main school site only in exceptional circumstances, for example when collecting an unwell pupil or delivering or collecting heavy or bulky items.

In such circumstances, permission must be obtained from the school office/site manager.

During school hours, non-essential vehicle movement beyond the main building is prohibited. Where movement is essential and vehicle and pedestrian routes cannot be segregated, a trained banksman wearing high-visibility clothing must supervise the movement from a safe position visible to the driver.

Non-essential vehicle movement must not take place during pupil arrival, departure, break, lesson-change or any other period of significant pedestrian movement.

8 Staff vehicles on site.

At times when pupils are on site, including holiday club, staff must act with care and caution in following these guidelines.

Non-essential vehicle movement is prohibited during pupil arrival, departure, break, lesson-change and other high-pedestrian periods.

Each school's site traffic plan must specify its authorised vehicle-movement windows.

Vehicle and pedestrian movements must be segregated wherever reasonably practicable.

Where vehicle movement through a pedestrian area is unavoidable and residual risk remains, a trained banksman wearing high-visibility clothing must be used.

The banksman must remain visible to the driver, stand in a safe position and must never stand in the vehicle's path or between the vehicle and a fixed object.

Hazard warning lights may be used only where lawful and appropriate. They do not give the vehicle priority or make an unsafe movement acceptable.

Staff may park only in the designated areas.

9 Ride-on grass-cutting machinery

Ride-on mowing and other mobile grounds-maintenance machinery must not be operated in an area occupied by pupils unless a suitable and sufficient risk assessment and safe system of work are in place.

Machinery must, wherever reasonably practicable, be operated outside pupil arrival, departure, break, lesson-change, sports-use and other high-pedestrian periods.

The work area must be physically separated from pupils and other pedestrians.

The operator must stop the machinery if an unauthorised person enters the controlled area.

10 Legal operating basis and Section 19 permits

Before any minibus service begins, the Executive Policy Owner must determine and record its lawful operating basis.

Each service must be recorded as:

- not operated for hire or reward;

- operated under a valid Section 19 permit; or
- requiring a PSV operator's licence or another appropriately licensed professional transport arrangement.

No journey may proceed where its lawful operating basis is uncertain.

Where CMAT relies on a Section 19 permit:

- the permit must be issued to the correct CMAT legal entity;
- the service must satisfy the permit conditions and an applicable exemption;
- the correct permit disc must be displayed so that it is visible from outside the vehicle and does not obstruct the driver's view;
- the vehicle may carry only members of the organisation or persons whom the organisation exists to help;
- members of the general public must not be carried;
- the service must not be operated with a view to profit or incidentally to an activity carried on with a view to profit; and
- the permit must not be used by a separate legal entity unless that entity is lawfully entitled to use it.
- All fares, parental contributions, trip charges, subscriptions and indirect payments connected with transport must be reviewed before collection.
- A payment described as a voluntary contribution may constitute hire or reward where there is a sufficiently close link between the payment and the right or opportunity to travel.
- Where the legal position is uncertain, CMAT must obtain competent transport-law advice before operating the service.

11 Driver definition and authorisation

An authorised driver is a person entered on CMAT's authorised-driver register for the relevant vehicle after all licensing, insurance, competence, fitness, employment-status and operating-basis checks have been completed.

Only a driver with current, written and vehicle-specific CMAT authorisation may drive a Trust minibus.

Every driver must hold the licence entitlement required for the vehicle and operating arrangement. As an internal CMAT standard, an authorised driver must normally be at least 21 years old and have held a full driving licence for at least three years. This internal standard does not replace the separate legal conditions applying to category B, D1, D1(101) or D entitlement.

Driver authorisation is non-transferable and may be suspended or withdrawn where there is a concern about licensing, insurance, competence, fitness, conduct or safety.

Where CMAT relies on the category B voluntary-driver concession, driving must be genuinely voluntary, extra-contractual and unpaid, except for reimbursement of actual out-of-pocket expenses.

A person whose contract requires minibus driving, or who receives additional payment specifically for driving, must not drive under the category B voluntary-driver concession.

Before that person drives, CMAT must confirm the appropriate category D1 or D entitlement and determine whether Driver CPC, operator licensing, tachograph or statutory drivers' hours requirements apply.

Before first authorisation and at the start of each academic year, every driver must complete CMAT's driver declaration. The driver must declare any penalty points, fixed penalties, pending prosecutions, disqualifications, licence restrictions, relevant collisions, medical changes, eyesight changes and medication that may affect driving. Completion of the declaration does not replace the required DVLA driving-licence check.

Drivers must immediately report vehicle defects, warning lights, mechanical concerns, missing safety equipment or other safety concerns to the Transport Coordinator.

Any damage, collision, significant incident or near miss involving a Trust vehicle must be reported immediately to the Transport Coordinator and Headteacher. Where immediate reporting is not possible, the report must be made as soon as the driver and passengers are safe.

The driver must ensure that the vehicle has sufficient fuel or charge for the planned journey, foreseeable delays and safe access to an appropriate refuelling or charging location. After use, the vehicle must be returned with at least the minimum fuel or charge level specified in the vehicle register.

Approved fuel, charging, parking, toll and other journey expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with the current CMAT expenses procedure. Reimbursement must be limited to properly evidenced actual expenses and must not constitute payment for driving where CMAT relies on voluntary-driver provisions.

The Transport Coordinator must maintain an up-to-date authorised-driver register recording each driver's licence entitlement, restriction codes, DVLA check date, insurance acceptance, training status, reassessment date and vehicle-specific authorisation.

12 Drivers holding full category D1 or D entitlement

A driver holding full category D1 or D entitlement may drive only within the scope and restrictions of that entitlement.

CMAT must verify that the entitlement appears on the driver's current licence and remains valid.

Holding D1 or D entitlement does not remove the need for CMAT authorisation, insurance acceptance, competence assessment, medical fitness or compliance with the applicable operator-licensing, Driver CPC, tachograph and drivers' hours requirements.

13 Drivers who passed a category B test before 1 January 1997

A person who passed a category B driving test before 1 January 1997 may have category D1(101) entitlement.

CMAT must verify that category D1 and restriction code 101 appear on the driver's current licence before relying on that entitlement.

Restriction code 101 means "not for hire or reward" and must not be treated as unrestricted vocational D1 entitlement.

Where a Section 19 permit is used, the Transport Coordinator must confirm that the driver, vehicle and service satisfy the applicable permit and licensing conditions.

Drivers approaching or over 70 years of age must have their current entitlement and any applicable medical-renewal requirements checked before authorisation.

14 Drivers who passed a category B test on or after 1 January 1997

A person who passed a category B driving test on or after 1 January 1997 may drive a minibus within the UK only where CMAT has verified and recorded that all applicable legal conditions are satisfied.

The driver must:

- be at least 21 years old;
- have held a full category B licence for at least two years;
- drive for a non-commercial body for social purposes;
- drive on a genuinely voluntary and extra-contractual basis;
- receive no payment for driving other than reimbursement of actual out-of-pocket expenses;
- not tow a trailer; and
- drive a minibus with a maximum authorised mass not exceeding 3.5 tonnes, with an additional allowance of up to 750 kg where that additional weight is attributable to equipment required for the carriage of disabled passengers. CMAT may impose a higher minimum driving-experience requirement as an internal safety or insurance standard.

The age of the vehicle does not determine whether a category B driver may drive it.

These category B arrangements must not be assumed to apply outside the UK.

15 Driver training, competence and reassessment

CMAT requires every minibus driver to hold current MiDAS certification or an equivalent practical minibus assessment approved by CMAT and its insurer. This is a CMAT safety standard and must not be described as a universal statutory driving-licence requirement.

Training must include vehicle familiarisation, pre-use checks, manoeuvring, reversing, route risks, passenger care, disability awareness, seat belts, child and wheelchair restraints, loading, breakdowns and emergency procedures.

Routine reassessment must take place at least every four years, or earlier where required by CMAT or the insurer.

Driver authorisation must be reviewed following a collision, significant near miss, driving offence, complaint, competence concern, relevant medical change, prolonged gap in minibus driving or introduction of a materially different vehicle.

The driver must not resume minibus driving until the review has been completed and any required reassessment, further training, insurer notification or medical check has been satisfactorily completed. The Transport Coordinator must maintain the driver training and reassessment register, monitor expiry dates and prevent a driver whose required training or assessment has expired from driving a Trust minibus.

16 Fitness to drive

A driver must be appropriately rested, medically fit, able to meet the applicable eyesight standard and free from any impairment that could affect safe driving.

A driver must not drive:

- after consuming alcohol during the relevant duty period;
- where residual alcohol may affect driving;
- after using illegal drugs;
- while adversely affected by prescribed or non-prescription medication;
- while unwell or injured where this may affect driving;
- while excessively tired; or
- where stress, concentration or another condition makes driving unsafe.

Drivers must check warnings supplied with medicines and seek advice from a doctor or pharmacist where necessary.

Drivers must report relevant medical, eyesight and medication changes and must comply with any duty to notify DVLA.

The driver has authority to delay, alter, stop or cancel a journey without detriment where the driver considers it unsafe to continue.

17 Mobile Phones and driver distraction

Drivers must not hold or use a handheld mobile telephone, tablet or other interactive communication device while driving, including while stationary in traffic.

Any necessary communication must wait until the vehicle is safely parked.

Hands-free communication must be avoided while driving. Where hands-free communication is essential, lawful and brief, the driver must end the communication if it causes distraction or affects safe control of the vehicle.

The use of a hands-free device does not remove the driver's responsibility to maintain proper control and attention.

18 Trust vehicle register

CMAT must maintain a vehicle register recording, for every vehicle:

- registration number;
- make and model;
- passenger-seat capacity;
- plated maximum authorised mass;
- height, width and length;
- fuel or energy type;
- accessibility equipment;
- MOT status;
- insurance status;
- Section 19 permit details or other legal operating basis applicable to the vehicle and services for which it is used;
- required driving-licence entitlement;
- servicing and safety-inspection dates; and
- breakdown-cover details.

A minibus described as having 17 seats means no more than 16 passenger seats plus the driver's seat.

19 School-bus signs

The Transport Coordinator must determine whether prescribed school-bus signs are required for each service.

Where legally required, approved signs must be displayed at the front and rear of the vehicle.

The signs must not obstruct the driver's view and must be removed or covered when the vehicle is not being used for the relevant purpose.

20 Insurance

CMAT must obtain written confirmation that its motor insurance covers every vehicle, authorised driver and intended use.

Insurance must cover, where applicable:

- educational visits and sports fixtures;
- Section 19 permit operations;
- passenger charges or contributions;
- wheelchair lifts, ramps and other adaptations;
- trailers;
- replacement or hired vehicles; and
- overseas travel.

A vehicle or driver must not be used where the proposed activity falls outside the confirmed insurance cover.

Drivers must immediately report any change that could affect insurance acceptance.

21 Passenger numbers and weight

Every passenger must occupy an approved passenger seat. Standing and seat sharing are prohibited.

The passenger-seat capacity, plated maximum authorised mass, individual axle limits and towing limits must never be exceeded.

The weight calculation must include the driver, passengers, fuel, luggage, mobility equipment, sports equipment and all other loads.

Where there is reasonable doubt about the vehicle's loaded weight, the vehicle must be weighed or an alternative vehicle used.

22 Speed and vehicle dimensions

Drivers must comply with the speed limit applicable to the minibus and road. A speed limit applicable to a minibus may be lower than the corresponding limit for a car.

Drivers must not rely solely on a satellite-navigation display or assume that the car speed limit applies.

The driver must use a lower speed where required by weather, visibility, road conditions, passenger safety, proximity to pedestrians or manoeuvring risk.

Before departure, the driver must know the vehicle's height, width, length and plated MAM and must comply with all applicable restrictions.

23 Passenger seats, seat belts and restraints

Every passenger must occupy an approved passenger seat and wear the fitted seat belt throughout the journey.

The vehicle must not move until all passengers are seated and their restraints are fastened.

A passenger must not be carried in a seat with a defective seat belt or restraint.

The driver is responsible for ensuring that passengers under 14 wear the appropriate seat belt or restraint where that responsibility is imposed on the driver by law.

The visit leader and passenger assistant must check restraint use before departure and monitor continued use during the journey so that the driver is not distracted. The visit leader and passenger assistant must monitor continued seat-belt use so that the driver is not distracted.

Before travel, the visit leader must determine whether any pupil requires a child restraint or specialist harness. Any restraint used must be legally compliant, suitable for the pupil, compatible with the vehicle seat and seat-belt system, in good condition and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Where a suitable restraint is required by law, individual assessment or CMAT's safer operating standard, the journey must not proceed until it has been correctly provided and fitted.

Seat-belt notices must be displayed inside the vehicle where legally required. Passengers must be informed that seat belts must be worn throughout the journey.

24 Wheelchair passengers and accessible equipment

A wheelchair passenger may be carried only where the minibus, wheelchair space and restraint equipment are suitable for the passenger and wheelchair.

The wheelchair must be secured using an approved wheelchair tie-down system.

The passenger must be secured using an approved occupant-restraint system.

The occupant restraint must be separate from the wheelchair restraint unless the approved system expressly provides otherwise.

Passenger lifts, ramps, tie-downs and occupant restraints must be inspected, maintained and used only by trained and authorised staff in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Unoccupied wheelchairs and mobility equipment must be securely stowed.

25 Pre-use checks

The authorised driver must complete and record the mandatory pre-use check immediately before every duty or journey, regardless of distance.

A check completed on a previous day does not replace the day-of-use check.

The record must include the date, time, driver, vehicle registration, starting mileage, journey, items checked, defects identified, action taken, driver signature and release authorisation where applicable.

A vehicle must not be used where a defect could affect its legal compliance or safe operation.

26 Exits and luggage

All doors, emergency exits, gangways and access routes to exits must remain unobstructed whenever passengers are carried.

Luggage, sports equipment, wheelchairs and mobility equipment must be secured so that they cannot move during normal driving, sudden braking or a collision.

27 Fire extinguisher

Any vehicle fire extinguisher must be suitable for vehicle use, in date, securely mounted and readily accessible without obstructing a door, gangway or emergency exit.

Evacuation, passenger safety and calling 999 take priority over attempting to extinguish a vehicle fire.

Only a trained adult should consider using an extinguisher, and only where the fire is very small and a safe escape route remains available.

28 Vehicle roadworthiness, maintenance and defects

CMAT must operate a documented planned preventive-maintenance programme for every Trust vehicle.

The programme must include correct registration and taxation, a valid MOT in the appropriate class where required, manufacturer servicing, periodic safety inspections, tyres, safety recalls, seats, seat belts, lifts, ramps, wheelchair restraints, first-aid kits, fire extinguishers, defect reporting, repairs and maintenance records.

An MOT certificate does not guarantee that a vehicle will remain safe until its next MOT. Planned maintenance and prompt repairs must continue throughout the year.

Any safety-critical defect must result in the vehicle being immediately withdrawn from service, clearly identified as unavailable and its keys secured.

The vehicle may return to service only after repair and documented release by an authorised competent person.

Vehicle keys must be signed out only to an authorised driver and returned immediately after use.

Keys must be stored in the approved secure key cabinet or secure deposit facility.

Vehicle keys must not be left in an open or generally accessible pigeonhole, staffroom or unattended location.

Lost or unreturned keys must be reported immediately to the Transport Coordinator.

The vehicle booking record must identify the vehicle, authorised driver, date, intended journey, collection time and return time.

The authorised driver must complete every item in the mandatory pre-use checklist before the vehicle is used. Fluid levels must be checked only where the driver has been trained to complete the check safely and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

29 Journey planning and risk assessment

Every minibus journey must be covered by a proportionate journey risk assessment.

- The assessment must consider:
- whether the journey is necessary;
- the safest suitable route;
- vehicle height, width, length and weight;
- low bridges and height, width or weight restrictions;

- road, traffic and weather conditions;
- journey duration and total duty time;
- driver competence and vehicle familiarity;
- rest breaks and welfare facilities;
- passenger age, behaviour, medical and additional needs;
- passenger-assistant requirements;
- luggage, loading and maximum authorised mass;
- safe collection, boarding and drop-off locations;
- breakdown and emergency arrangements;
- safeguarding and reasonable adjustments; and
- whether a second driver is required.

The driver may change the route, delay the journey, stop in a safe place or cancel the journey where conditions are unsafe.

Timetable pressure, cost or inconvenience must never override a safety decision.

30 Drivers' hours, working time and fatigue

Different statutory drivers' hours, tachograph and Driver CPC requirements may apply depending on the vehicle, driver, operating basis and journey.

The Transport Coordinator must determine and document the applicable legal regime before travel.

Drivers and visit leaders must not assume that the 4.5-hour driving rule applies to every school-minibus journey.

Irrespective of the applicable statutory regime, CMAT requires journey planning to provide a break of at least 15 minutes after no more than approximately two hours of driving, and sooner where fatigue, weather, traffic, visibility, passenger needs or driving conditions require it.

Any stricter legal requirement must be followed.

Teaching, supervision, meetings and all other work undertaken before or after driving must be considered when assessing fatigue.

A driver's rest break must be a genuine period of recuperation. The driver must not supervise pupils, undertake other work or remain responsible for managing the group during the break.

A second authorised driver must be provided where the journey risk assessment identifies the need.

The assessment must consider total duty time, anticipated driving time, time of day, previous work, overnight or early-morning travel, weather, congestion, road type, journey complexity and passenger needs.

Distance alone must not be used as the sole measure of whether a second driver is required.

31 Transporting pupils in staff-owned vehicles

Transporting pupils in a staff-owned vehicle is exceptional and requires prior written approval from the Headteacher or delegated senior leader, unless an immediate emergency makes prior approval impossible.

- Before authorisation, CMAT must verify:
- a valid driving licence;
- insurance covering the specific business use and carriage of pupils;

- a valid MOT where required;
- valid vehicle tax;
- a roadworthy and suitable vehicle;
- appropriate seat belts and child restraints; and
- compliance with CMAT safeguarding arrangements.

Parental consent must be obtained where reasonably practicable.

Parental consent does not replace CMAT's duty to ensure that the driver, vehicle and arrangements are lawful and safe.

Routine or informal pupil transport in staff-owned vehicles is prohibited unless CMAT has specifically approved the arrangement.

32 Passenger supervision

The visit leader must determine and record whether a passenger assistant is required.

The decision must consider passenger age and number, behaviour, medical and additional needs, wheelchair use, journey duration, multiple stops, boarding, driver distraction and emergency evacuation.

A passenger assistant will normally be required where passenger behaviour could distract the driver, specialist medical or mobility support is needed, wheelchair equipment is used, boarding cannot be safely supervised by the driver alone or an emergency evacuation could not reasonably be managed by the driver alone.

The driver must not attempt to manage serious passenger behaviour while the vehicle is moving. The driver must stop in a safe place before intervention.

33 Passenger manifests and information security

A passenger manifest must be completed before departure and updated whenever a passenger joins or leaves the vehicle.

Headcounts must be completed before departure, after every stop, after every passenger change and at the final destination.

The manifest must contain the information necessary to identify passengers, contact CMAT and respond to relevant medical, mobility, communication or additional needs.

Passenger and medical information must be limited to what is necessary for safe travel, securely stored, accessible only to authorised adults and removed from the vehicle immediately after the journey.

At the end of every journey, a named adult must physically check every row of seats, the rear of the vehicle and all luggage areas.

No pupil may be left unattended in or beside a vehicle.

34 Driving license checks

A DVLA driving-licence check must be completed:

- before a driver is first authorised;
- at least annually thereafter;
- more frequently where required by the insurer or indicated by endorsements or risk assessment; and

- immediately following notification of a licence change, offence, disqualification, medical restriction or other relevant event.

Drivers must provide the information or check code required to complete the check.

Drivers must immediately disclose:

- penalty points;
- fixed penalties;
- pending prosecutions;
- disqualification;
- licence revocation;
- relevant collisions;
- medical restrictions;
- changes in eyesight;
- changes in medication that may affect driving; and
- any other matter that could affect legal entitlement, insurance or fitness to drive.

A driver must not be disqualified and must meet CMAT's and the insurer's acceptance criteria concerning endorsements, restrictions, collisions and driving history.

Driving-licence information must be stored securely and retained in accordance with CMAT's data-protection and records-retention arrangements.

35 Overseas travel

A Trust minibus must not be taken outside the UK without prior written approval from the Executive Policy Owner.

Before approval, CMAT must obtain competent advice and verify driver entitlement, operator licensing, permit requirements, insurance, breakdown cover, Driver CPC, tachograph and drivers' hours requirements, vehicle documentation, environmental zones and country-specific equipment and road rules.

A Section 19 permit and domestic category B concession must not be assumed to authorise driving outside the UK.

36 Implementation and assurance

Before this policy takes effect, CMAT must:

- complete the vehicle and legal-operating-basis register;
- record each minibus's registration, passenger capacity, plated MAM and dimensions;
- confirm the legal operating basis of every transport service;
- confirm which Section 19 permits are held by each CMAT legal entity;
- obtain written insurance confirmation;
- check each authorised driver's licence and contractual status;
- approve the vehicle maintenance and safety-inspection schedule;
- issue journey-risk, pre-use, defect, passenger-manifest and incident forms;
- confirm school-specific vehicle-movement controls; and
- obtain competent advice for any charging, commercial, contractual or overseas arrangement.
- This policy must be reviewed annually and following a serious incident, significant near miss, legal or official-guidance change, insurance change, material fleet change or change in operating arrangements.

Appendix

The School Minibus pre-drive safety check

The authorised driver must complete and sign this check immediately before every duty or journey.

If another driver takes over the vehicle, the incoming driver must complete a new check.

A previous-day check does not replace the current driver's check.

Any defect affecting legal compliance or safe operation requires the vehicle to be withdrawn from service.

Date		Driver	
Time		VRN	
Starting mileage		Journey or Destination	
Check	Satisfactory	Defective or not applicable	Details and action taken
Section 19 permit disc and required vehicle documents are present, where applicable.			
Tyres and wheels are secure and free from visible damage.			
Tyre pressures and tread condition are satisfactory.			
Tyres are free from cuts, bulges, exposed cords and other defects.			
Lights, indicators, brake lights and reflectors are clean and working.			
Number plates are present, secure, clean and legible.			
Windows and mirrors are clean, secure and undamaged.			
Wipers and washers operate correctly.			
No unreported body damage, dangerous sharp edges or visible fluid leaks are present.			
All passenger doors and emergency exits open, close and secure correctly.			
The passenger lift and ramp are secure and operate correctly, where fitted.			
The driver's seat and head restraint are secure and correctly adjusted.			
The driver understands the dashboard controls and no safety-critical warning lamp remains illuminated.			
The steering, parking brake and service brake respond normally.			
The horn operates correctly.			

Heating, ventilation and demisting systems operate correctly.			
Passenger seats are securely fixed.			
Seat belts, child restraints and specialist harnesses are present, undamaged and operating correctly.			
Wheelchair tie-downs and occupant restraints are present and serviceable, where required.			
The first-aid kit is present, complete and in date.			
The fire extinguisher is present, in date and securely mounted.			
High-visibility clothing, a working torch and a webbing cutter are present.			
Emergency communication equipment is charged and working.			
Emergency contact and breakdown information is available.			
The vehicle has sufficient fuel or charge for the journey and foreseeable delays.			
Luggage and equipment are securely stowed.			
All gangways, doors and emergency exits are clear.			
All identified defects have been recorded and appropriately actioned.			
Driver signature:		Time completed:	
Release authorised by, where applicable:		Vehicle withdrawn from service: Yes / No	
Release date and time:		Defect reference number:	

Brake checks

Before carrying passengers, the driver must check that the parking brake and service brake respond normally.

Any low-speed operational brake check must be undertaken only in a safe and suitable location, in accordance with vehicle-familiarisation training and instructions issued by the manufacturer or competent fleet-maintenance provider.

The driver must not undertake an improvised brake-efficiency test on a public road, in a pedestrian area or where the test could place passengers or other persons at risk.

If the brake response is abnormal, the vehicle must not be used. The defect must be reported immediately and the vehicle withdrawn from service.

Mandatory procedures for minibus drivers and passenger assistants

Where a passenger assistant is assigned, the passenger assistant is responsible for passenger supervision, headcounts, boarding, alighting and responding to passenger needs. The driver

must remain responsible for vehicle checks, safe control, route decisions and compliance with road traffic law.

Before setting off

- Before departure, the driver and visit leader must review current and forecast weather, road closures and official travel warnings.
- The journey must be delayed, rerouted or cancelled where snow, ice, flooding, high winds, extreme heat, poor visibility or another condition makes the journey unsafe.
- The driver's decision that conditions are unsafe must be supported and must not be overridden because of timetable, cost or operational pressure.
- Allow sufficient time for the journey
- Plan suitable rest and welfare breaks for the driver and passengers. Passenger boredom or restlessness must be managed by the passenger assistant and must not distract the driver.
- Conduct a pre-drive safety check before every journey
- 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
- The visit leader or passenger assistant must supervise boarding and alighting. Seating must take account of passenger age, behaviour, medical and additional needs, emergency evacuation and the suitability of front and door-adjacent seats.
- Do not exceed the carrying capacity of the minibus
- Ensure that every passenger occupies one approved passenger seat and wears the fitted seat belt or approved restraint before the vehicle moves.
- Confirm that prescribed school-bus signs are correctly displayed where required and do not obstruct the driver's view.
- Ensure that disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility are seated and restrained safely in accordance with the individual journey risk assessment. Wheelchair users must be secured using the approved wheelchair tie-down and occupant-restraint systems. Unoccupied wheelchairs and mobility equipment must be securely stowed.
- Carry an accurate passenger manifest, emergency contacts and essential medical or additional-needs information. The information must be stored securely but remain readily accessible to authorised adults in an emergency.
- Comply with the manufacturer's instructions when using passenger lifts, ramps, wheelchair restraints, occupant restraints or other specialist equipment.
- Check that no bags or clothing are caught in doors, that all luggage is secure and gangways and exits are clear
- Check all mirrors every time before moving off in case latecomers are approaching the vehicle.

During the journey

- Do not allow boisterous play of any kind
- Where appropriate, the passenger assistant should provide safe, non-disruptive activities for pupils. Activities must not obstruct aisles, create loose objects or distract the driver.
- Smoking, vaping, possession or consumption of alcohol and use of illegal drugs are prohibited inside every Trust vehicle.
- Do not allow passengers to operate doors
- Approach each stop slowly and with care

- Use hazard warning lights only where permitted by the Highway Code and applicable lighting regulations. Hazard warning lights do not make an unsafe stopping place acceptable and do not replace appropriate passenger supervision.
- Following a significant delay, the passenger assistant or visit leader must notify the school so that parents and carers can be updated. If the driver is the only adult, the driver must stop and park safely before making or receiving any communication.
- Children must not be left unaccompanied on the minibus
- If there is a risk of fire, evacuate vehicle and move occupants to a safe place

Motorway breakdowns

- If a vehicle develops a fault, the driver must stop in a place of relative safety wherever possible.
- On a motorway or high-speed road, the driver should leave at the next exit or enter a service area if possible.
- If this is not possible, the driver should use an emergency area or hard shoulder where available and stop as far to the left as practicable.
- Hazard warning lights must be used where appropriate. A warning triangle must never be placed on a motorway.
- Passengers must be kept away from moving traffic and must never stand between the vehicle and approaching traffic.
- The current Highway Code motorway-breakdown procedure must be followed.
- Passengers should leave the vehicle only where it is safer to do so, taking account of live traffic, barriers, the vehicle's position, passenger mobility and instructions from the emergency services.
- Where passengers leave the vehicle, the group must move behind a safety barrier where one is available and remain well away from the carriageway and the vehicle.
- If the vehicle cannot reach the left lane or a place of relative safety, and the occupants cannot leave the vehicle safely, everyone must remain in the vehicle with seat belts fastened and hazard warning lights operating. The driver or visit leader must call 999 immediately and request police assistance.

Collision procedure

Following a breakdown, collision or significant incident, the driver and visit leader must:

- stop in the safest available place and secure the vehicle;
- assess injuries and call 999 where necessary;
- protect and supervise passengers;
- follow current Highway Code requirements;
- notify the CMAT emergency contact;
- contact the breakdown provider and insurer where applicable;
- exchange details required by law;
- avoid admitting liability;
- preserve photographs and other evidence where safe;
- arrange onward transport only through an authorised provider;
- report defects, incidents and near misses; and
- complete CMAT's incident report as soon as reasonably practicable.

The Headteacher must consider safeguarding notifications, police and insurer reporting, RIDDOR applicability, driver welfare, vehicle inspection and driver suspension or reassessment.

At the end of the journey

- Passengers must not leave the vehicle until it is stationary, safely parked and authorised by the visit leader or passenger assistant.
- Passengers must normally alight directly onto a footway or traffic-free area.
- Boarding and alighting must be appropriately supervised.
- Where reversing is unavoidable, a trained banksman must be used where the risk assessment identifies the need.
- Headcounts must be completed after every passenger change and at the final destination.
- A named adult must physically check every row of seats, the rear of the vehicle and all luggage areas.
- No pupil may be left unattended where an expected parent or carer has not arrived. CMAT's safeguarding and late-collection procedures must be followed.
- Defects, damage, incidents, behaviour concerns and near misses must be reported before the journey is closed.
- The vehicle must be left secure, with all personal and confidential information removed.

Passenger and parent information

- CMAT will provide age-appropriate safety information to pupils and relevant information to parents and carers before transport is used.
- Information will cover safe waiting, boarding, seat-belt use, behaviour, collection, road crossing, emergency contacts and how concerns should be reported.
- Parent and pupil information may be issued as separate guidance and must remain consistent with this policy and the current Highway Code.
- Be punctual: make sure your child is ready at the proper time. It is your responsibility to ensure that your child gets to and from the minibus safely. Make sure your child knows what to do if the minibus is late or does not arrive
- Wait with your child: wait on the side of the road where the bus stops. Make sure you stand on the side of the road where the bus sets them down on the return journey. Avoid calling your child across the road to you. Children are excited when they have just come back from a minibus outing and traffic will be the last thing on their mind
- Safe crossing places: make sure that your child knows and understands what are safe crossing places, and how to use them. E.g. zebra crossings, pelican crossings, central islands, subways, footbridges. Avoid more hazardous places like bends, corners, the brows of hills, between parked cars etc. Use the Green Cross Code. Make sure your child knows and understands how to use the Code. Young children should not be allowed to cross the road unaccompanied.
- Meet your child: make sure that you, or another carer are at the pre-arranged meeting point when your child returns home, and have the telephone number of other parents, the school or other relevant contact person to pass on messages if required
- Safe route: Make sure that both you and your child know the safest route home after leaving the minibus, and always use it.
- Behaviour: teach your child to act sensibly on or around minibuses. Make sure your child knows that boisterous and other poor behaviour is dangerous as it may distract the driver's attention and lead to an accident. Children need to listen to the driver's and escort's (if applicable) instructions and carry them out

- Contact details: make sure that the person responsible for the minibus has up-to-date information about your child, including contact details for emergencies.
- Medical details: if your child has any special requirements, make sure the person responsible for the minibus has all relevant medical information
- Other details: advise the driver (and escort) if there is a particular difficulty with your child on the day of the trip, e.g. is upset. Consider whether your child should go on the journey in such circumstances
- Damage: any vandalism caused by your child whilst on a journey is your responsibility. Persistent offenders may not be accepted on future journeys. Damage to a minibus could endanger your own, or someone else's child
- Concerns: report any worries you may have to a responsible person, such as the headteacher or group leader.
- Here are some helpful hints to keep you, and others, safe while on a minibus journey:
- Arrive on time, and wait for the minibus away from the road
- Don't push or rush towards the minibus when it arrives
- Find a seat quickly and quietly without pushing. You may have already been allocated a seat
- Stay seated when the minibus is moving and wear your seat belt
- Avoid kneeling in your seat as this is dangerous
- Make sure your bags do not block gangways and exits, or take up seats
- Only speak to the driver when he or she is not driving, or in an emergency. Distracting the driver can be very dangerous
- Never throw things or play about in the minibus; never ever throw things out of the minibus window as you could cause other drivers to have an accident
- Wait until the minibus has stopped completely before getting up to leave
- Take your belongings with you when you leave the minibus, except in an emergency when you should leave them behind
- Take care if returning to the minibus after getting off as the driver may be pulling away
- If you have to cross the road after getting off the minibus, wait for it to move away first. Use the Green Cross Code
- Go to the toilet before you get on the minibus. If you need to use the toilet or you feel unwell during the journey, tell the escort, or the driver if the escort is not present.
- CMAT will provide age-appropriate safety information to pupils and relevant information to parents and carers before transport is used.
- Information will cover safe waiting, boarding, seat-belt use, behaviour, collection, road crossing, emergency contacts and how concerns should be reported.
- Parent and pupil information may be issued as separate guidance and must remain consistent with this policy and the current Highway Code.