



Education Trust

Inspiring the individuals of today, for a better society tomorrow,

“Aspire, Belong, Collaborate”

MINIBUS POLICY

Review Frequency	Annual
Reviewed	03.11.25
Next Review	November 2026
Agreed by Trustees	3 rd November 2025

The Aims of this Policy

- To ensure that Riviera Education Trust academies comply with current legislation and guidance concerning the maintenance and driving of the Trust minibuses.
- To ensure that the safety of minibus users (both drivers and passengers) and other road users and pedestrians is paramount at all times.
- To ensure that Riviera Education Trust is meeting its health and safety and safeguarding obligations towards all members of the Trust community.

Policy Statements

The Trust follows current guidance contained within Driving Academy Minibuses – Advice for Schools and Local Authorities (09/2013) which was published jointly by the Department for Education, Department for Transport and Association of Chief Police Officers.

This policy and the procedures contained within it have been written to provide any members of staff who may need to drive vehicles on behalf of the Trust with the necessary knowledge and information in the light of growing legislation regarding the qualifications, insurance, operating, servicing and inspection requirements to safely operate our minibuses and carry passengers.

The behaviour and competence of the minibus drivers will be fully assessed to ensure the safe operation of the minibuses and to keep employees and others free of harm.

This policy extends to the use of hired vehicles that are used by the Trust.

A copy of this policy will be provided to all minibus drivers and will be also be kept in the Office.

This policy and the procedures contained within it will be reviewed regularly as part of the Riviera Education Trust health and safety review.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body

The Governing Body of Riviera Education Trust is responsible for ensuring that minibuses operated on behalf of the Trust fully comply, in every respect, with all legal transport and health and safety requirements. This responsibility is delegated to the Head of School to ensure its appropriate implementation.

- To monitor the implementation of this policy through the Link Governor for Health and Safety and review it on a regular basis.

Head of School

- The Head of School will ensure that the Trust has appropriate safety procedures for the minibus based on the ROSPA Advice for Minibus Safety and their code of practice (in addition to the DfE guidance). A copy of the full code of practice is available at www.rospa.com and is also available in the Google Drive.

The Site Supervisors/Caretakers will:

- Ensure that mini-checks (fuel, water, oil and battery levels, tyre pressures and lights) are conducted by a trained member of the caretaking team on a weekly basis. Any issues identified should be brought to the attention of the Head of School.
- Review weekly the 'Vehicle Check Lists' returned by drivers, identify any issues and act accordingly.

The Finance Department will:

- Arrange for appropriate insurance cover and for the payment of annual road tax.
- Ensure that servicing of the minibuses is performed at the correct mileage and that the service book kept is ready for inspection at any time.
- Ensure that the annual MOT is carried out within the necessary timeframes.

Minibus Drivers

- Follow and comply fully with the requirements outlined in 'Procedures and Practices' section below.
- Ensure that pre-use checks of the vehicle are conducted and pass the completed vehicle checklist to the Caretaker when returning vehicles keys (see Appendix).
- Report any concerns about the safety and/or condition of the minibus to the Site Supervisor/Caretaker immediately.
- Familiarise themselves with the relevant ROSPA guidance:
<https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/practitioners/minibus-drivers-handbook.pdf>
- Understand the personal legal implications if procedures are not adhered to. For example, 'It is the driver's licence that will suffer if the vehicle is found to be defective. It is also the driver's responsibility to ensure the safety (including the use of seat belts) and welfare of all passengers'. (ROSPA, August 2015)
- Comply fully with all road traffic laws, respecting speed limits and ensuring use of seatbelts at all times. For longer journeys, frequent rest breaks are to be taken.
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately if unfit to undertake a journey in order for alternative arrangements to be made.

- Never use a mobile phone (hand held or hands free) as the driver of the vehicle unless it is parked in a safe place with the engine switched off. Making genuine emergency 999 or 112 calls whilst driving is legal.

PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES DRIVER ELIGIBILITY

Persons Entitled to Drive the Minibus

- Only those named on the approved drivers list (a copy of which is on the Trust Premises drive) will be eligible to drive the Trust minibus. Minibus drivers must meet the driver licence requirements set out in Driving Trust Minibuses – Advice for Schools and Local Authorities (09/2013).
- Drivers must be medically fit, legally qualified to drive a minibus and are required to complete and sign a driver declaration form to that effect before driving the Trust minibus. The form will be kept on file in the HR office.
- Staff with a medical condition that needs to be declared to insurers or have any changes to their driving licence must advise HR accordingly.
- Drivers will be required to give consent for their licence to be checked every 12 months via the online 'Check someone's driving licence information' tool on the DVLA website. The driver will need to obtain the code at View Your Driving Licence Information on the DVLA website (<https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence>). The code must be provided to the HR department within 21 days. The HR department will use this code to check the driver's eligibility to drive.
- Before being authorised to drive the minibus, staff must undergo a Minibus Driver Awareness training course and pass an assessment. The assessment and training will be carried out by an external Driver Assessor Trainer.
- Additionally, staff will have refresher training every four years to ensure that they maintain the necessary level of proficiency to drive the Trust minibus safely.
- Drivers will be required to report any changes to their licence (including the acquisition of penalty points) to the Head of School and HR department.

Penalty Points on Driving Licences

Where a driver informs the Trust that he/she has acquired penalty points on his/her licence the Head of School will determine whether he/she is permitted to drive the Trust minibus. This will also apply to use of the driver's own vehicle or a vehicle owned by another organisation for Trust business purposes.

Vehicle Readiness and Maintenance

Servicing, MOT, Insurance and Taxation

- Servicing and MOT testing will be carried out at the appropriate intervals, and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

- Trained members of the premises team will conduct weekly mini-checks on fuel, water, oil and battery levels, tyre pressures and lights. A record will be maintained to demonstrate that these checks have been undertaken.

Minibus Bookings and Administration

- All bookings should be made using the RET Minibus Google Calendar via the school office.
- A list of students and staff on the journey, and journey details (to include departure and return times) is to be left with the Trust office prior to departure. The office should be provided with relevant contact numbers for staff using the vehicle(s). This information is held on the Evolve platform.
- Drivers must sign in for the vehicle at the School Office when collecting the minibus keys from the Office (failure to do so may render the journey unauthorised for insurance purposes). Each bus contains a Minibus File, which contains the Minibus Policy, checklists, mileage log, a notepad and pen.
- If leaving or returning out of hours the Site Supervisor/Caretaker should be informed in advance to ensure access to the site if required.
- Drivers must return the vehicle's keys and the Minibus File to the Trust Office on returning to Trust along with the Vehicle Check List. If the minibus is being returned out of Trust hours, the keys, and minibus file should be brought to the Trust first thing in the morning.
- Diesel purchasing. Following authorisation from the Head of School drivers may sign out the fuel card at the school office and return it with the receipts should this be required. Any purchases should be added to the mileage log in the Minibus file.

Pre-Use Vehicle Checks

- The Trust minibus must be maintained to high levels. As well as MOT, servicing and half termly checks, drivers should satisfy themselves that the vehicle is safe to drive. If the serviceability of the vehicle is in doubt, it is not to be used until it has been repaired.
- Pre-use checks are to be recorded on the vehicle checklist found in the Minibus File which must be signed for on collection and return to the Trust Office. Completed vehicle checklists are to be given to the Site Supervisor/Caretaker on return of the minibus who will take any action necessary. These lists will be retained by the Trust.
- Pre-use checks must include lights (headlights, hazards, brakes, reversing, side and indicators), horn, mirrors, doors (open, close and lock correctly), steering, seatbelts and windscreen wipers (including windscreen wiper wash). A walk around the vehicle should occur to check for damage / defects and to assess tyre condition.
- If the driver has concerns about the condition of the vehicle it must not be used and these concerns must be reported to the Site Supervisor/Caretaker.
- Mileage records should be used to help monitor fuel consumption.

- Prior to the start of each journey, the driver is to go through a brief talk with students regarding the wearing of seatbelts, journey time, being seated at all times, behaviour, noise levels and escape procedures. The journey is not to commence unless the requirements of the driver are complied with.
- The Trust has 3 minibuses.
The number of seats in each bus are 14 seats in the back and 3 in the front including the driver. Only children over 135cm tall may travel in the front seat of the bus.

Fuel

It is the driver's responsibility to check there is sufficient fuel for the intended journey.

Equipment

It is recommended that the following equipment is carried on board the Minibus. If items are used during a journey, please inform the First Aid team in school who will replenish supplies:

The Trust Minibuses have fuel cards that enable fuel to be purchased and charged to the Trust's account.

A member of the premises team will regularly check the Trust minibuses to ensure that the vehicles are fully replenished for the intended known journeys each day. It may, however, be necessary for the minibus driver to refuel whilst on a journey.

The diesel level should not go below a quarter and would preferably be filled up when it is half full. This helps prevent primer damage and fuel tank sediment entering the engine.

First Aid Box

- First Aid Box - mandatory
- Appropriate PPE equipment - spare masks, disposable gloves, hand sanitiser, hygiene wipes, cloths and disinfectant spray (Eliminator), bin bags, if required

Fire Extinguisher

At least one fire extinguisher (which complies with BS 5432 or equivalent and has a minimum test rating of 8A or 21B) that contains foam.

Warning Triangle

This should be used in the event of breakdown and carefully positioned 50m behind the vehicle to warn other road users of the broken-down vehicle.

Cleanliness

The Minibus should be left tidy. Eating and drinking on it should be discouraged (exceptions can be made in circumstances of long delay). Note extra cleaning for infection control measures below must be adhered to, if required.

Bin bags are to be carried and made available for rubbish.

Dirty/muddy kit (especially boots and shoes) must not be worn in the minibus.

Enhanced Infection Control Measures to use in the event of PHE advice

The bus must be cleaned between use. Sanitising buckets and instructions are in each bus for after every journey – see information below. It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure the bus is sanitised.

There is a sanitising bucket in each minibus containing:

Appropriate PPE equipment - spare masks, disposable gloves, hand sanitiser, hygiene wipes, disposable cloths and bottle of cleaning disinfectant spray (Eliminator), bin bags for waste.

Instructions for sanitising the minibus in the event of PHE advice

- Regularly touched areas must be sanitised more regularly and after each bubble uses the minibus. This includes door handles, seatbelt clasps, handrails, steering wheel, gear stick.
- Use wipes to clean fuel pumps before and after use
- Clean vehicle keys before and after handling
- Use the cleaning products provided for regular cleaning making sure you bag and dispose of used cleaning products in the school bin
- Check with visit leader that the children/adults have washed hands before boarding vehicles
- Drivers use the hand sanitiser/wipes within vehicles to clean hands after each delivery/drop-off

Vehicle Operation

Capacity

No more than 16 passengers and a driver may be carried in the minibus.

Seat Belts/Luggage

Before setting off, the driver and/or driver's assistant must ensure that passengers are wearing seat belts and any luggage is securely stowed. Students are to be informed that seatbelts are to **be worn at all times when the vehicle is in motion.**

Driving Rules

Drivers are responsible for driving within the law and in accordance with the Highway Code <https://www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk>. The Trust will not refund fines or other costs incurred by drivers as a result of any road traffic or parking offence. Drivers must inform the Head of school and HR of any penalty points received whilst using the Trust minibus; failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

National speed limits apply to the Trust minibus.

It is the Trust policy that under normal road conditions, a minibus should not be driven in the third lane of a motorway.

Vehicles are not to be driven by anyone who has consumed any amount of alcohol or illegal substance.

Some medication may impair a driver's ability and employees who are taking medicines of this nature are not to drive vehicles.

All accidents, whether or not they cause injury to persons or damage to property, are to be reported to the Trust as soon as possible after they occur.

Keys must not be left in an unattended vehicle at any time.

Due consideration must be given to parking in secure areas as much as possible, particularly where overnight stays are required.

Vehicles must not be driven at any time if the load being carried exceeds the maximum allowable weight capacity.

Smoking is prohibited on the minibus at any time.

Driver's Assistant

- With the exception of short journeys, a second member of staff or an adult volunteer will normally be on every journey as the driver's assistant.
- For short journeys of less than thirty minutes duration an assistant should not be needed unless circumstances require one – the minibus risk assessment will determine if a driver's assistant is needed.
- This person should be positioned near the back of the minibus to observe behaviour and maintain good order. They can also make and receive phone calls so the driver does not have to. They should also help with reversing and need to be visible at all times to the reversing driver so will need to wear a high visibility vest. They should assist in a breakdown or accident and can act as a relief driver if they are trained and authorised to do so.

Reversing of vehicles

- Reversing vehicles can be particularly hazardous. The best way of avoiding a reversing accident is to avoid reversing a vehicle wherever possible.

- Always check behind your vehicle before reversing – if necessary, ask someone to watch the area into which you will be reversing.
- If you use a guide, ensure they can be seen at all times whilst manoeuvring – if two members of staff are present, one must at all times be the guide when reversing.
- Ensure rear view mirrors are clean and properly adjusted at all times. Distraction during driving
- The use of mobile phones is strictly prohibited whilst operating the vehicle. There are other similar activities, which can be unsafe and thus may attract the attention of the police, such as drinking (soft drinks), eating, smoking, or even changing a radio channel. To this end, any action whilst driving, which could cause distraction must be avoided.

Tiredness

- Driving when tired greatly increases the risk of an accident. The Highway Code recommends that a driver takes a minimum break of at least 15 minutes after every two hours of driving. However, after a full working day, drivers MUST NOT drive for a continuous period of more than two hours without taking a suitable break.
- If an authorised relief driver is available to drive a journey can be continued without a break.
- Drivers should use common sense to ascertain their suitability to drive at a given time (consider tiredness, recent alcohol or medicine consumption, illness etc).

Safety

- Whilst driving the minibus, drivers should ensure that all doors are unlocked to assist with emergency egress if the need arises.
- Internal lights may be used when driving at night for passengers comfort and safety as long as the driver's vision is not impaired by this.
- Exits/gangways should be clear of obstructions (such as bags) at all times. Bags can go on spare seats and under seats.
- If a trailer is used, the back doors of the minibus need to be able to open fully to help students escape safely if necessary.
- Dealing with 'road rage':
 - If threatened by another driver, do not retaliate by flashing lights, sounding the horn or making offensive gestures; this only attracts a response and will often make a situation worse
 - If forced to stop, stay in the vehicle with windows closed and doors locked and be prepared to drive off
 - If necessary, use your mobile phone to contact the police for assistance
 - Note the registration number of the vehicle, and the make and colour, plus a description of the driver and occupants and give the police these details.
- Unsafe situations: if you feel that driving cannot be in complete safety, do not continue. Members of staff are not required to put themselves at risk at any time whilst driving on behalf of the Trust.

Security

- Whenever the vehicle is left unattended, all windows are to be closed and doors locked.

Accident and Breakdown Procedures

Breakdown Procedures

Standard breakdown procedures are to be followed where necessary:

- If on a public road, get out of the vehicle on the safe side – nearest the path or verge.
- If on a motorway, follow the instructions of the emergency operator, which may include staying in the vehicle, or getting out of the vehicle and not getting back into the vehicle again.
- Avoid going near the traffic flow and exercise extreme caution at all times.
- If possible, leave a motorway, dual carriageway or main road if a fault occurs, which will reduce the risk of collision, but park in a well-lit place so that the vehicle can be seen by other road users.
- It is best to use a roadside emergency telephone if possible as this will pinpoint your location.
- Staff should not change a tyre or attempt repairs. This should be carried out by a breakdown team.
- Breakdown cover is arranged for all RET minibuses and details are kept in the vehicles. In the event of breakdown contact the school first, when practical.

Emergency recovery details use:

0333 014 5516 OPTION 2

Accident

In the event of an accident:

- Deal with any injured persons.
 - Ensure the safety of everyone involved.
 - If necessary, call the emergency services.
-
- In all cases, stop at the scene and take the names, addresses and telephone numbers of people involved, including independent witnesses. Take photos of the accident scene from various angles if possible. Breakdown procedures should be carried out if necessary.
 - In the event of a serious incident, emergency contact numbers are available in the Minibus Paperwork File (carried on all journeys).
 - Trust Contact numbers are:

Main Trust Numbers: Oldway Primary School: 01803 557190

Roselands Primary School: 01803 525375

Out of Hours Emergency SLT – as per school records

General

Any member of staff who has queries relating to the driving of the Trust minibus or the condition of the vehicle should bring them to the attention of the Site Supervisor/Caretaker.

Appendix:

- 1.1. Riviera Education Trust Drivers Registration Form
- 1.2. Minibus Driver pre drive safety checklist

(Minibus weekly maintenance safety check available on Google Forms)



Appendix 1.1

RIVIERA EDUCATION TRUST DRIVERS REGISTRATION FORM

Confidential

Personal Details

Full name:

Date of Birth:

Job Title:

Driving Details

If you answer 'yes' to any of the following questions, please give details in the space provided

Have you ever been disqualified from driving? **YES/NO**

.....
...
.....
...

Have you ever had a motor insurance policy declined, cancelled or been refused renewal, or had any special conditions imposed? **YES/NO**

.....
...
.....
...

Have you been involved as a driver in a collision in the last five years, regardless of fault? **YES/NO**

.....
...
.....
...

Have you currently, or have any history of, any conditions or disability which may affect your ability to drive safely now or in the future? If in doubt, declare any condition or disability. **YES/NO**

.....
...
.....
...

Are you currently taking any medication which may affect your ability to drive? **YES/NO**

.....
...
.....
...

Please give details of any minibus training

Provider Date
obtained.....

I give permission for the Riviera Education Trust to access my Licence details from the DVLA online portal **YES/NO**

I have provided a photocopy of my Driving Licence card **YES/NO**

Please read and sign the following declaration

I declare that the details given are correct and that, within my knowledge, there is no other material fact that I should disclose. I agree to exercise all due care for the safety of my passengers and security of the vehicle whilst it is in my charge. I also undertake to inform of any collision or accident that occurs whilst I am responsible for the vehicle. I understand that it is an offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988 to knowingly make a false statement to obtain insurance cover.

I undertake to advise of any subsequent illness, condition or event that might affect my suitability as a driver, including any subsequent refusal of motor insurance or any driving conditions. I understand that failure to do so and any false declaration made above may render the insurance cover for the vehicle invalid and I may then be held personally responsible to pay costs or damages. I understand that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Signature of Driver Date.....

CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES	
Details.....	
.....	
.....	
Signature of Driver.....	Date.....

We collect and process all personal data in line with our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices which can be found <https://www.rivieratrust.co.uk/policies/>

Appendix 1.2

Minibus Driver pre-drive Safety Checklist	Tick
Do this before every journey. Walk around the vehicle, to check for visible defects and then check the items listed below are correct. You must sign and date this form.	

Exterior Check	
Windscreen & windows clean and undamaged	
Lights including brake lights and indicators are clean and working.	
Tyre tread at least 3mm, including spares (and inner tyres as above No cuts or bulges	
Doors open and close properly	
Interior Check	
Mirrors correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed	
Position & function of all dashboard controls	
Position of driving seat so all pedals can be operated comfortably	
Check pressure on brake pedal for resistance	
Lights & indicators are working	
Wipers & washers working properly	
Fuel level (and type of fuel) and write in the mileage log the start figure	
Seat belts are undamaged and working properly	
Location of wheel brace and jack	
Location and contents of first aid kit & fire extinguisher(s)	
Location of relevant paperwork (permit, MoT, etc)	
Change for parking or telephone (mobile/phonecard)	
Luggage securely stowed; aisles & exits clear	
Brake Check before loading passengers	
With engine running, check handbrake is working & brake pedal is firm when pushed	
Conduct a moving brake test. Brakes should work efficiently and not pull bus sideways.	
Signed..... Date.....	Authorised by
Print Name.....	

DETAILS OF AMENDMENTS

June 2020

- Amendment including COVID-19 measures during Government restrictions

July 2021

- Reviewed 22.7.21 Note that the COVID-19 guidance for use in case of any future Government restrictions remains in place (though not mandatorily required).

September 2021

- Annually reviewed with addition that children are only allowed to sit in front of the bus if they are over 135cm tall.

July 2023

- Reviewed, amendment to include Site Supervisors

10.10.24

- Reviewed without changes

17.3.25

- Operations Manager removed

3-11-25

- Make and model of minibus removed
- Instructions for sanitising the minibus *in the event of PHE advice* – Bold and Italicised wording added to heading