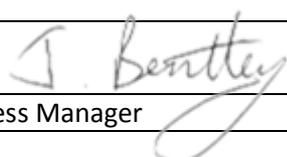


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NORTHFIELD SCHOOL VEHICLE POLICY

Date Adopted:	June 17
Signed by chair of finance and resourcing committee:	
Member of staff responsible for monitoring:	School Business Manager
Review Frequency:	Biennial

Date	Changes made	Agreed by	Authorised for use by	Date of review

Northfield School Vehicle Policy

This policy has been created through reference to

- OCC Regulations and Guidance Notes for the use of Minibus and other Passenger Carrying Vehicles owned and/or operated by all Oxfordshire County Council establishments/settings. &
- OCC Driving at Work - Managing Work Related Road Safety

Section 1: Regulations and Guidance Notes for the use of Minibus and other Passenger Carrying Vehicles

Introduction

Northfield school benefits from a number of vehicles. The use of vehicles is strictly limited to the requirements of the school curriculum, including any trips, visits and excursions deemed necessary by the school for the delivery of pupils' education and, where necessary, to support the attendance of staff to meetings, conferences or workshops where their attendance is required on behalf of the school. School vehicles must not be used for personal gain, social, domestic, hire, the transportation of goods, recreation or other purpose without the express prior permission of the governing body.

This policy outlines how school vehicles must be used, maintained and monitored by the school.

This policy will apply to any vehicle used by the school whether owned, hired or leased.

Responsibility

The named person with responsibility for the day to day operation of the vehicles is the **caretaker**.

The **caretaker** will ensure that the following requirements are complied with at all times.

Drivers

All drivers must be approved by the Headteacher. Approval may only be given providing the following requirements are met.

- a) Only employees of the school may drive school vehicles. An employee of the school is any person paid to work at the school.
- b) The driver has a valid full driving licence for the vehicle to be used.
- c) All drivers are required to inform the DVLA in Swansea of any physical or mental disability, which might affect their fitness to drive any vehicle.

Minibus Driving Licence D1 Entitlement

The date on which an individual passed their car test (Cat B before or after 1st January 1997) dictates whether they can drive certain minibuses. Further information & guidance is available from the Vehicle Fleet Management Team within the Integrated Transport Unit.

Private Use

Under no circumstances must a vehicle be used for private use. If an accident occurs whilst the vehicle is being used for an unauthorised private trip, the insurance cover will be invalidated and the establishment will be responsible for the cost of any resulting claim and potential prosecutions.

Private use is defined as:

1. Use of a car or minibus for any other than school related activities
2. Use of a car or minibus or vehicle by members of staff for social events (such as Christmas parties)
3. Use of a car or minibus or vehicle as a 'private' taxi service
4. Use of a school vehicle by a staff member for personal use

Safety

The safety of the occupants of the car or minibus must be the first concern of the driver and others responsible for vehicle. The driver and/or other responsible person need to have a current certificate in Emergency First Aid at Work.

Seat Belts

Seat belts must be fitted to all cars and/or minibuses, and must be worn by all passengers including the driver.

A "child" is defined as one aged between 3 – 16 years. A child booster seat must be used as required by law (further detailed below).

Loading

The vehicle must never be loaded beyond the capacity laid down by the makers. This also can be found in the V5 Registration Document and on a plate attached to the vehicle. If in any doubt contact the Vehicle Fleet Management Team at the Integrated Transport Unit.

When a vehicle is used and there is any doubt about the capacity, reference can also be made to the local dealers for that particular make or ITU.

Speed

Subject to local speed limits which must be complied with, the vehicle must not be driven at speeds exceeding those specified with the current edition of the Highway Code, applicable to the vehicle being driven and the type of road. NB: Many minibuses are now fitted with speed limiters which limit maximum vehicle speed to 62 mph.

Legal Requirements

All legal requirements must be conformed to. For example all seat belts must be worn, windscreen washers and wipers must be in working order and sun visors fitted. All lights should be working and tyres meet legal requirements. The driver is responsible for the vehicle and any passengers; although weekly checks are carried out by the responsible person the safety of the vehicle remains the responsibility of the driver at all times.

N.B. Passengers must not stand whilst the vehicle is in motion.

It must be clearly understood that if there is any doubt concerning these requirements, the vehicle shall not be taken onto the highway even if this may mean the POSTPONEMENT, CANCELLATION OR ABANDONMENT OF A JOURNEY FOR WHICH PREPARATIONS ARE FAR ADVANCED OR ABOUT TO START.

Carriage of Passengers in Wheelchairs

All wheelchair passenger carrying vehicles must conform to the Department Of Transport Code Of Practice Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC). Drivers must be given proper training in correctly securing wheelchairs and passengers must be fully aware of the various means of fitting and releasing passenger restraints.

Further information and guidance can be found from the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) which covers best practice regulations and detailed technical specification for road based transportation of passengers in wheelchairs which Oxfordshire County Council vehicles should comply with.

Maintenance and Inspection of Vehicles

The person responsible must ensure that the vehicle is correctly serviced and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Note for all vehicles with 9 or more passenger seats, an MOT must be arranged annually from year 1.

- (i) (Vehicle Excise Duty Regulation). Cars and minibuses with up to 12 seats excluding the driver may be tested at any garage authorised to carry out the standard test. Minibuses with more than 12 seats must be tested at either: (1) The Vehicle Testing Station, Launton Road, Bicester (01869) 242562; The Vehicle Testing Station, Hambridge Lane, Newbury, Berks (01635) 47649 or any other dept. of Transport Testing Station. (2) The County Council's Vehicle Maintenance Contractor and Vehicle Fleet Management, Integrated Transport Unit can advise.
- (ii) In addition to daily vehicle checks which need to be recorded on the vehicle journey log sheets, the person responsible for the vehicle must ensure that a Vehicle Check Sheet (see appendix) is completed by a competent person at least every two weeks and any defects/faults reported to the headteacher for action.
- (iii) Maintenance must be carried out by one of the manufacturers' main dealers or a garage which is a certified MOT testing station.
- (iv) A record of all services must be kept within the school and be available for inspection.
- (v) The person responsible must have an arrangement in place for reporting by drivers of any defects which come to their notice and arrange for defects to be rectified (see Appendix).
- (vi) The Replacement of tyres and batteries may be arranged as set out in vehicle check sheet

Regulations Regarding Drivers

The responsible person must ensure that the regulations regarding the drivers of cars and minibuses are observed, and that all minibus drivers have passed the County Council's Minibus Proficiency Test.

(i) Anyone nominated to drive a minibus should be over 21 years of age; must have at least 2 years of car driving experience and should hold a driving licence free of endorsements. These restrictions apply to any person, whether a County Council employee or not, except as specifically authorised in accordance with (ii) and (v) below.

(ii) The position of any driver of a minibus who is involved in an accident will be reviewed. Under certain circumstances their names may be removed from the list of drivers.

(iii) Any drivers who incur endorsements must notify the responsible person and provide a copy of the licence when the endorsement has been registered.

If a driver has lost their licence (been banned from driving) then that driver will only be considered to be allowed to return to driving under the insurance policy after 2 years of endorsement free driving.

(iv) Please note, all drivers of minibuses and any other passenger carrying vehicle which has more than 4 passenger seats, i.e. mpv's / people carriers etc are required to take the Oxfordshire County Council Minibus Proficiency Test.

The school can arrange for drivers (whether County Council employees or not) to take the County Council Minibus Proficiency Test by contacting the appropriate assessor or, in case of difficulty, the Vehicle Fleet Management Team. Anyone driving a minibus must either:

(a) be nominated from an approved list of experienced, competent drivers

(i.e. have passed the OCC Minibus Proficiency Test);

(b) be a driver who is under instruction who is of suitable age and experience as above who is driving only with a person holding a minibus proficiency test approval and no other passengers.

Note: Pupils in secondary school, students in colleges or establishments/settings of further education and members of youth organisations are Not Eligible to drive.

(v) Drivers must exercise due care at all times and observe all the traffic regulations. They must ensure that the behaviour of passengers is such that it does not distract/interfere with his/her concentration. The driver must also be aware of the effect of drugs and alcohol over a period of time on skills needed to drive a vehicle and ensure that it is taken into account when preparing for driving on the same day or the following day.

(vi) Drivers will benefit from reading 'Essential Minibus Driving'. (ROSPA).

(vii) It is essential that all establishments set up a procedure for checking annually the driving licences for all approved drivers for endorsements received during the previous 12 months. Details of endorsements should be referred to the Insurance Team.

(viii) Escort - the need for escorts will depend on the risk assessment based on the individual needs of the passengers. These may be physical or psychological. Appropriate levels of support will depend on the severity of the needs of the individuals. When escorting passengers who pose a known risk to safety due to their challenging behaviour, the driver must be satisfied that the requirements of the

Risk Assessment have been met with regard to the training received by escorts, particularly if restrictive physical intervention is required.

(ix) All drivers must take a break of 15 minutes after 2 hours of driving. Where a long journey is planned after normal working additional competent/ qualified driver must be used.

Record of Journey's (Vehicle Log Sheets)

(a) The responsible person will ensure that all drivers record mileage covered by noting the milometer reading in the log-book. Log-books must be kept up to date and must be available for inspection. The drivers name must also be recorded in the log-book against any journeys made. See Appendix.

(b) The responsible person must ensure that the log-book is always kept in the minibus and is always available for users, and that pre-use checks are made as specified in the log-book. Drivers must check the log-book before the journey is made to ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy. If the vehicle is not road worthy it must be taken out of service until repairs have been carried out by a competent contractor and these should be rectified as soon as possible.

(c) The responsible person will ensure where applicable, the fuel purchases are made using a 'Fuel Card' available from the School Business Manager.

The use of the fuel card will be monitored by the School Business Manager. Drivers are required to state the mileage when using the card and this will be periodically spot-checked to ensure that usage does not exceed that which has been recorded within the log-book for the specific and/or journey and overall (between the points of refuelling). In the event of a discrepancy, all drivers will be asked to account for the discrepancy, and any suspected miss-use will potentially be subject to disciplinary action in line with the disciplinary policy.

(d) Completed log-sheets with a record of journeys travelled should be held in the vehicle folder available for inspection and is also required to be produced when requested by the enforcement authorities.

In the event of an Accident

(i) The Road Traffic Act requires that:

In the event of an accident where personal injury is caused to any person, or domestic animal and/or damage of any vehicles or other property, the driver shall stop and exchange names and addresses etc., with the driver/other person, or owner of the animal or property. If names and addresses are not exchanged at the time of the accident the incident must be reported to the police as soon as possible or in any case within 24 hours. Details of witnesses and relevant insurance details should also be obtained.

(ii) Drivers should in no circumstances admit liability as an admission may adversely affect any claim.

(iii) If the vehicle is roadworthy, the driver must decide whether to continue the journey or return to base. Otherwise the vehicle should be removed to the nearest garage or to one of the County Council's Vehicle Maintenance Contractor's depots. A list of all Depots is attached under Appendix D.

Vehicles not maintained and under an OCC vehicle maintenance contract will need to make their own arrangements.

(iv) Vehicle Accident Report Forms should be obtained from the School Business Manager

(v) In the event of a personal injury, an on line Accident Report Form must be completed for each injured person.

Administering this policy

The school will ensure that all drivers are fully informed as to what is expected of them when taking the vehicle out.

Note: the school must be aware that laws, regulations and guidelines may be changed at any time, if there are any doubts contact the Vehicle Fleet Management Team within Integrated Transport Unit for further guidance.

Section 2: Driving at Work: Managing Work Related Road Safety

Introduction - Health and Safety and Driving

Driving at work remains one of the most common causes of serious injury and death at work. The legislation and obligations associated with driving are aimed at promoting road safety. This policy identifies the obligations placed on managers and employees in order to identify and minimise associated risks.

Employees' Responsibilities

An employee must, if using a vehicle for work or to travel to locations other than their normal place of work for work purposes, including training courses, ensure that he/she:

- Adheres to the Highway Code and Health & Safety Legislation.
- Confirms with his/her insurance company that the vehicle is insured for business use (note: vehicles used for business use must be insured for that purpose, not just commuting to and from work; this includes travel to locations other than their normal place of work for work purposes, including training courses).
- Checks the car used has a road fund licence, is roadworthy and has a current MOT (if more than 3 years old).
- Checks he/she has a current full driving licence, appropriate to the vehicle being driven.
- Checks the following are satisfactory - oil, water, washer fluid, wipers, lights, horn, tyre condition and pressures and properly functioning seat belts.
- Checks the vehicle is properly maintained and suitable and fit for its purpose and expected mileage.
- Advises his/her manager if he/she is charged with any motoring offence or he/she incurs any penalty points on his/her driving licence or if he/she becomes disqualified from driving (Note more than 6 points will affect the County Council Insurance for driving a County Council vehicle.) Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- Reports any accidents arising in the course of employment to his/her line manager and also through the on-line Accident and Incident reporting system. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- Always wears a seat belt or an appropriate cycle helmet.
- Ensures that appropriate safety measures have been implemented following a risk assessment and if transporting children/pupils/students or vulnerable adults in vehicles that all appropriate equipment and arrangements have been put in place including restraints, escorts, locking of doors, and considerations relating to challenging behaviour whilst driving.
- Ensures that all equipment carried should be secured to prevent any movement likely to endanger driver and/or passenger/s.
- Ensures that adequate time is available to make journeys safely with appropriate rest breaks being taken. (The Highway Code advises a 15 minute break every 2 hours).
- Advises his/her line manager if he/she has a disability or medical condition that could affect his/her ability to drive or if he/she believes he/she is unfit to drive for any reason.
- Never drives under the effect of drugs or alcohol or if otherwise not in a fit state – e.g. after receiving a shock or while very upset.

- Never uses any interactive communication device when driving or the engine is switched on e.g. mobile phone, BlackBerry etc– hands free devices must also not be used (please note that ‘driving’ includes when the vehicle is stopped e.g. at traffic lights or during other hold-ups).
- Smoking is not allowed in school vehicles.
- Advises his/her manager/colleagues where they are going and expected return time.
- Ensures that all appropriate checks, insurance and permissions are in place before driving any vehicle belonging to a client or contractor.

Managers’ Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that any requirements for driving are set out and checked as part of the recruitment process, including making specific mention of this in reference requests and during the induction process.
- Preventing staff from driving if they are known to be mentally or physically unfit to drive.
- Carrying out an annual check and recording that:
 - the employee’s insurance covers the required level of business use
 - there is a valid MOT certificate
 - the employee holds a valid driving licence, including whether any penalty points have been awarded that have not previously been reported (see below for action in these circumstances).
- Considering the implications for any driver with penalty points, or who has been convicted of any driving offence. See below.
- Managers must inform the insurance section of any employee who has penalty points and drives a County Council vehicle. If a driver incurs a driving disqualification of more than a month, then on the return of their licence the County Council requires them to complete 2 year’s endorsement free driving before the Council’s insurers will review the position with regard to driving a Council vehicle.
- Examining the driving licence of staff hiring a vehicle on county council business and send a copy to the Insurance Team if there are any endorsements (points) on the licence.
- Undertaking a risk assessment of all hazards associated with driving in your team, school or setting’s activities and reviewing these annually. The need for appropriate escorts and the safeguarding concerns of transporting lone pupils/students or vulnerable people should also be addressed when private vehicles are being used for such purposes (see Appendix A for copy of risk assessment form).
- Ensuring that all driving accidents and incidents are reported on the online incident reporting system and to the Insurance team if involving a County Council vehicle.
- Investigating any driving related incidents or accidents at work and take appropriate action (see below for action in these circumstances).
- Drawing to the employee’s attention any issues arising from driving on Council business and take appropriate action if required.
- Carry out the check of employee’s driving licence in accordance with the contents of Appendix B.

Motoring Offences

If a driver receives 12 points or more, within a 3 year period, he/she will receive an automatic ban. For first time offenders this ban will be for a minimum of 6 months, but for drivers who have received a 'totting up' disqualification in the past 3 years, the ban will be for a minimum of 1 year. Courts have the discretion not to disqualify, or to reduce the period of disqualification, when they consider that mitigating circumstances exist.

Drivers can also face disqualification if they have less than 12 points in some circumstances, for example because of drink driving or dangerous driving.

New drivers who reach 6 or more penalty points within the first 2 years of passing their driving test will automatically have their driving licence revoked until they pass both the theory and practical driving test again.

If an employee receives any penalty points the manager will consider:

- (i) Whether a breach of health and safety rules has occurred amounting to misconduct or gross misconduct and whether disciplinary action is necessary.
- (ii) Whether this has any impact on the employee's ability to drive safely.
- (iii) Whether this has any impact on the employee's ability to transport others safely.
- (iv) Whether the reasons for receiving penalty points are as a result of any behaviour that is likely to bring the County Council into disrepute.
- (v) Whether this has any implications for the Council's insurance policy (6 points or more).

If an employee is banned from driving, as well as considering (i) - (iii) above an assessment will also need to be made about whether an employee can continue to carry out his/her job role.

In cases where disciplinary action follows the HR Management Advice Team or Schools HR Team should be consulted to ensure all cases are dealt with consistently and in accordance with County Council policies and procedures.

Transporting children in vehicles

Legislation applies to the transporting of children in cars and other vehicles inasmuch that all children up to the age of 12 years or 135cms tall must normally use a child car seat. Children over 12 or more than 135cm tall must wear a seat belt. The child car seat used can be based on the child's height or weight. Under new UN rules from 9 February 2017 no new models of backless booster seats for children shorter than 125cm or weighing less than 22kg (Group 2) can be introduced.

Applicable Legislation

Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts) Regulations 1993 as amended

Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat belts by Children in Front Seats) Regulations 1993 as amended

Children with disabilities or medical conditions

The same rules apply for children with disabilities or medical conditions, but they can use a disabled person's seat belt or a child restraint designed for their needs.

A doctor can issue an exemption certificate if a child is unable to use a restraint or seat belt because of their condition.

When a child can travel without a car seat

A child can travel without a child car seat in some circumstances.

Taxis and minicabs (private hire vehicles)

If the driver doesn't provide the correct child car seat, children can travel without one - but only if they travel on a rear seat:

- and wear an adult seat belt if they're 3 or older
- without a seat belt if they're under 3

Minibuses, coaches and vans

Minibus or coach drivers and companies don't have to provide child car seats. You must provide your own if you want to make sure a child has one.

Minibuses

All children must travel in rear seats (any seats behind the driver) if a child car seat or an adult seat belt isn't fitted.

Children aged 3 or older must:

- use a child car seat if there's one available in a minibus
- use an adult seat belt if child car seats are not fitted or are unsuitable

Coaches

Children can travel without a child seat or seat belt, if they're not available.

Vans

The rules for vans are the same as for cars.

Unexpected journeys

If the correct child car seat isn't available, a child aged 3 or older can use an adult seat belt if the journey is all of the following:

- unexpected
- necessary
- over a short distance

You can't take children under 3 on an unexpected journey in a vehicle without the correct child car seat, unless both of the following apply:

- it's a licensed taxi or minicab

- the child travels on a rear seat without a seat belt

No room for a third child car seat

Children under 3 must be in a child car seat. If there's no room for a third child car seat in the back of the vehicle, the child must travel in the front seat with the correct child car seat.

Children aged 3 or older can sit in the back using an adult belt.

Vehicles without seat belts

Children under 3 must be in a child car seat. If there's no seat belt, they can't travel. A child aged 3 or older can travel in a back seat without a child car seat and without a seat belt if the vehicle doesn't have one.

Manager's Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure that where child seats are provided by the Council for use on Council business they meet the legislative requirements regarding type-approval and labelling and that checks on the condition and suitability of all equipment used in the transportation of children. When equipment is deemed to be beyond its normal usable condition it must be withdrawn from service and replaced with a suitable item. If, whilst being used, the child seat or restraint has been involved in a road traffic collision it shall be disposed of as scrap and replaced. It should not be re-used.

Employee's Responsibilities

All employees have a duty to ensure that any equipment they use to restrain a child in a vehicle is suitable for the child's size and age, is in acceptable condition and is properly secured in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. If they are required to use the child's own car seat they must satisfy themselves as far as is reasonably practicable that the seat is appropriate and in an acceptable condition.

Other associated Policies and Guidance

There are other policies and guidance that may be useful to check when considering the content of this policy.

- Disciplinary Procedure

Vehicle Check Sheet

Vehicle Reg No:	Mileage:
Make & Model:	Date:

Codes: ✓ = Satisfactory **R** = Repair Required **X** = Safety Item Defect **N/A** = Not Applicable

External

No	Item Inspected	Result	Comment / PTO
1	Under vehicle – leaks etc		
2	Around vehicle - mudflaps, livery etc		
3	Around vehicle - Condition of bodywork		
4	Road Wheels – condition of rims (dents) & security		
5	Tyres – condition, uneven wear & pressures		
6	Spare Wheel – Condition & pressure		
7	All doors – Operational & locks		
8	Tax – confirmed		
9	Engine – fluid levels, engine oil, coolant/antifreeze, W/Screen washer, power steering, brake fluid		
10	Engine – signs of leaks		

Internal

No	Item Inspected	Result	Comment / PTO
11	Seats – Security and operation		
12	Seat Belts – condition & operation		
13	Mirrors - condition & operation		
14	Driving controls – switches, gears, horn - condition & operation		
15	Windscreen wipers - condition & operation		
16	All glass – Damage, view of the road		
17	Foot Brake – Firm pedal, even breaking, fluid level		
18	Hand brake – operational		
19	General interior – condition and security of fittings & fixtures, emergency hammer(s), warning signs, lights		
20	Safety kit – warning triangle, first aid kit, spill kit, reflective jacket, torch		
21	Fire Extinguishers – pressure gauge, safety seal, expiry date, location sign		
22	Other:		
23	Other:		

Static test / Driving

No	Item Inspected	Result	Comment / PTO
24	All lights – operation & condition of lens (cracks etc)		
25	Aux. Heater/Climate control – Operational		
26	Tail lift/steps – Operation (and test date)		
27	Winch – operational, fitting & security		
28	Suspension – Operational & noise		
29	Steering - Smooths, noise		
30	Exhaust – Security, emissions & noise		
31	Transmission – Gear selection & noise		
32	Speedometer - Operational		

Further comments on Faults Found

No:	Comment:

Action Taken on Faults Found

No:	Comment:	Date:

Inspection carried out by:

Print name:	Signature:
Position:	Date:

It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that the vehicle is in a safe, legal and roadworthy condition before use.

