



SCHOOL MINIBUSES

1. Introduction

The School owns a number of minibuses to assist with transporting pupils to and from school activities. Each minibus carries a driver and 16 passengers. Staff are not permitted to drive a minibus unless they have received written confirmation from the Bursary that they are an authorised driver. The authorisation process will include checks as set out in this Policy. Staff should not drive a minibus with passengers unless they are competent and are authorized to do so. There are additional restrictions and specific authorisation is required to drive a minibus abroad.

2. Permitted Use and Users

Minibuses should only be used for School business i.e. to transport pupils to or from an official school activity. If you are unsure whether your journey would be defined as School business, you must obtain written permission from the Headmaster in advance of using the minibus. Under no circumstances should the minibuses be used without prior authorisation. Private use is not covered by the terms of the Corporation's Vehicle Insurance Policy and special arrangements are required to drive overseas.

To become an authorised minibus driver staff must have either;

- taken the Corporation Minibus Test and been passed as competent and safe drivers or,
- (since September 2010), have undertaken and passed training provided under the Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MIDAS) or similar.

These tests include checks that staff hold the relevant category of driving licence and it is expected that staff will hold a 'clean' driving licence. They should report any private accident or incident affecting their licence in which they are involved during their employment at City of London Freeman's School to the Bursar. A copy of the driving licence will be kept by the school and staff will be asked to bring both parts of their licence for checking at least annually.

Newly authorised minibus drivers will be asked to attend a health check from the School Nurse. Health checks will be required for all drivers periodically thereafter. You will be informed by the Nurse when this is required. Sports coaches and some non-employees will need to have a health check provided by their GP, and you will be notified when this is required. Please discuss the cost of an external health check with the bursar before committing expenditure.

Under no circumstance should drugs or alcohol be used twelve hours before or during driving the minibus. Staff must inform the Bursary or Medical centre of any changes to their health if they are on the approved Minibus user list. This will include being prescribed long term medication or changes to vision.

Under no circumstances should mobile phones be used whilst driving the minibuses, not even when a hands-free kit is fitted to the vehicle. Mobile devices should be switched off and stored out of reach of the driver for safety reasons. Full attention must be paid to driving, and the prevailing conditions, at all times, including whilst driving on the School site.

The Headmaster reserves the right to refuse staff access to the School Minibuses.

3. How to book a Minibus

All minibus bookings are handled via the Gatehouse. The Gatehouse is open from 8.00am – 5.00pm Monday – Friday only.

TO BOOK A MINIBUS:

Academic network users only:

Go to **Start, My Computer, Staff-shared on Starsky, Sodexo**

Open the **Minibus Diary**. (This is a 'read only' document.) Click on the relevant week (bottom tabs) on the Excel spreadsheet. Scroll along the top to view the relevant day of the week. Check to see if a minibus is available for times that you require. Exit the Diary system.

City network users only:

Select the **H Drive**. Click on the folder **Catering & Housekeeping**

All users:

Select the **Minibus Hire Form**. The document will open in the form of an email.

Complete selected form including full details of trip, destination and reason.

Change subject heading to reference your booking.

Click **Send** to automatically email Sodexominibus@clfs.surrey.sch.uk

Please note that the person booking the minibus MUST be the same as the one who collects the keys from the Gatehouse

You will receive email confirmation that your booking has been accepted and entered onto the diary system.

On the day of your requirement, collect the Key and Fuel Card for the minibus from the Gatehouse.

For weekend bookings – Drivers should collect minibus keys and fuel cards from the Gatehouse on a Friday before 5.00pm and must be returned before 8.00am on Monday. (These can be put through the letterbox to the right of the Gatehouse door or handed to a manager in the Sodexo catering office in Main House).

For minibus bookings for the collection of visitors from Ashtead Station, use the above booking process noting your requirements.

4. **Advice to Users**

Each vehicle has a log book in which details of each journey should be entered including the destination and date and times of departure and return. Mechanical problems of any kind should be recorded as accurately as is possible in the log book and a return incident report form must be completed, if applicable, when you return to the Gatehouse.

The following are checked regularly by the maintenance department and Gatehouse staff:

- Safety Belts
- Brakes (including handbrake)
- Horn
- Lights
- Indicators
- Tyres and Wheel nuts
- Steering
- Fuel
- Oil
- Water
- Wipers/Washers
- Fire Extinguisher
- First Aid Kit

5. **Drivers - What to check before use**

The driver is legally responsible for the condition of the vehicle. Before departure, check that you are satisfied with the condition of the minibus you are using and report any concerns to the Gatehouse.

- a. Look for any damage and note details in log book. Report back to the Gatehouse any serious damage before you take it out.
- b. Check the fuel gauge - any user is expected to fill up if the tank shows close to one quarter full. Fuel must be paid for using the fuel card obtained from the Gatehouse. The details of each purchase of fuel must be recorded in the appropriate column in the vehicle log book and receipts returned with the key and fuel card.

- c. Visually check tyres, wipers and lights especially when commencing a long journey.
- d. Check tax disc.
- e. Check the A.A. breakdown card is in the vehicle.
- f. Check a First Aid kit is in the vehicle (see paragraph 16).
- g. Check to see the fire extinguisher is in the vehicle.
- h. Whilst the maintenance of the vehicle is not the responsibility of the member of Staff, if a very long journey is planned, it is advisable to drive the minibus for a short distance the day before departure.

6. **On return**

Ensure all rubbish is removed, that doors and windows are locked, that the interior lights are switched off and there is plenty of petrol in the tank. Details of the journey must be recorded in the log book immediately at the end of each journey. Return the key, fuel card and any receipts to the Gatehouse as soon as you return to School.

Any accidents, incidents or concerns with the operation of the minibus during your booking **must** be reported in writing immediately on return. This will enable swift rectification of problems and insurance claims if necessary. An accident report form is available from the Gatehouse.

7. **Reporting any Damage**

If any significant defect or damage is noted or occurs before, during or after use, please complete a minibus incident form which is available in the Gatehouse. Any damage will also require the completion of an Insurance Claim Form available from the Bursary.

Should you be involved in an accident in a school minibus you **must** personally report it to the School as required by law especially where injury to persons is involved. You must exchange names and addresses with other drivers but make no admission of liability at all.

Drivers found to be responsible for regular or frequent accidents or damage may be required to undertake additional training and may have their authorisation to drive the School minibuses revoked. In addition, subject to prior written warning, any driver responsible for regular or frequent damage may be required to personally contribute towards the cost of repair.

8. **Passenger Numbers and Supervision**

Do not take more passengers than there are fixed seats in each vehicle. To carry more would invalidate the Corporation's insurance.

9. **AA or other Assistance**

In case of breakdown or mechanical difficulty the AA can be called. The membership card is in each vehicle on the front windscreen or glove compartment

Driving Abroad

Drivers wishing to take minibuses abroad must discuss their requirements in advance with the Bursar.

10. **Safety**

The minibuses have lap and diagonal safety belts and forward facing seating with head-rests. They all carry Small 'Bus Permits on their windscreens. This indicates that we have complied with the following:-

- the number of passengers the 'bus may carry is clearly displayed and is never exceeded;
- there is a First-Aid kit on board;
- there is at least one fire-extinguisher on board;
- the minibus is serviced regularly.

The School must NOT hire our minibuses but confine them to School usage at all times. This is also required by our Insurance policy.

It is the responsibility of the Drivers of our School Minibuses to ensure orderly behaviour and the wearing of safety belts. Pupils must sit well back in their seats and not move around. They must not distract the driver in any way. Pupils must be supervised when boarding or alighting from a minibus. Gangways must be clear; luggage and other equipment must be stored safely and securely under seats. It should not be located where it can cause an obstruction to an exit, entrance or gangway.

11. **First Aid Kit**

A First Aid kit is available on each minibus. If any of the contents are used please write details in the log book

12. **Other guidelines for Drivers**

The door(s) must remain closed until the bus is at a complete standstill and the driver indicates that the pupils/passengers may get on/off the bus.

- a.
- b. Hazard lights, if fitted, should be used when pupils are boarding or alighting.
- c. Check that no bags or clothing are caught in the door when closed.

- d. Where seat belts are fitted, always insist the pupils use them.
- e. Do not drive away until all the pupils are seated and seat belts are fastened.
- f. Always park so that pupils alight on the footway and not on the carriageway.
- g. Be aware of pupils running back for items they may have left on the bus.
- h. If pupils have to exit by the rear of a minibus, then the driver should supervise this operation.
- i. Reversing should only be attempted when absolutely necessary and preferably with adult guidance.
- j. Remember some pupils may have a disability e.g. difficulties in walking, or poor eyesight.
- k. Cases of indiscipline should be reported to the Headmaster and offenders suitably punished.
- l. Drivers must know the procedures for dealing with:
 - accidents
 - breakdowns
 - poor weather
- m. Drivers should know how to use the fire extinguisher and first aid kit.
- n. No smoking or drinking of alcohol is allowed on the minibus by the driver or passengers. The driver must not drink any alcohol in the 12 hour period before driving a minibus.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in formal disciplinary action being taken.

Reviewed April 2014