

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY – APPENDIX 2 DRIVING POLICY

INITIO LEARNING TRUST

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Reviewed Annually

DRIVING POLICY

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SECTION 1

Statement of Intent

Only authorised drivers use school vehicles.

Journeys using school or private vehicles are planned and managed so as to minimise risks to the health, safety and welfare of staff, pupils and visitors to the school.

The main purpose of this policy is to ensure vehicles are operated in a safe, efficient and effective manner so as to minimise risks to employees and others affected by our operations by implementing the following processes:

- Effective planning of vehicle provision, maintenance and use;
- Assessment of driver competency and qualification;
- Ensuring safe driving through training and monitoring;
- Maintaining effective co-operation and communication with all authorised drivers;
- Monitoring and review.

SECTION 2

Policy Arrangements

2.1 Aims and Purposes of the Driving Policy

To provide a clear framework for ensuring that all employees who are required to drive for work are qualified and fit to drive, insured and competent to drive safely.

To clarify the responsibilities of drivers and managerial staff in line with the expectations on these individuals to encourage a positive attitude towards safe driving at work.

To ensure that vehicles which are used for work related journeys are suitable as well as roadworthy and journeys are planned to be conducted safely.

2.2 Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all school employees. The Trust Board also has a duty of care to volunteers and agency staff/consultants who are not employees and who drive on our behalf, this policy also applies to them.

Employees who hold an LGV/HGV or PCV licence are subject to a medical examination and driving assessment as part of licensing arrangements. The additional requirements within this policy also apply to these employees.

2.3 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply:

<u>Driving at Work</u> -	Refers to any work carried out on school business that involves the employee driving a vehicle and covers all journeys other than to and from their normal place of work.
<u>School/Service Vehicle</u> -	Any vehicle owned, leased or hired by the school
<u>Private Vehicle</u> -	Any vehicle used by a person driving on school business which is not owned, leased or hired by the school
<u>Minibus</u> -	A vehicle that can carry 9-16 passengers plus the driver.

2.4 Responsibilities

Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that:

- driving at work policy and procedures are communicated to all members of that school;
- there is a mechanism in place to ensure that staff are qualified to drive school owned or leased vehicles via <https://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information>;
- there is a system in place to ensure that any school vehicle is maintained in a roadworthy condition and complies with legal requirements.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that they:

- hold the appropriate driving licence entitlement
- are medically fit to drive
- do not use a hand-held mobile phone or hands free devices to make or receive calls whilst driving on school business
- comply with the legislation with regard to the wearing of seatbelts whilst driving and make every effort to enforce the wearing of seatbelts for passengers in their vehicles
- are satisfied that prior to any journey on school business that the vehicle they are driving is fit for its purpose and roadworthy
- inform the person in charge of the vehicle if they become aware of any faults
- where appropriate, are adequately insured to use their private vehicle for school business
- report any accidents or incidents whilst driving on school business
- comply with any school rules and risk assessment requirements for driving at work activities.

2.5 Convictions or disqualification

Where employees are required to drive school owned, leased or hired vehicles or their own vehicle as an essential part of their duties, they must inform their line manager of any convictions (including penalty points) or periods of disqualification immediately.

If managers are notified that an individual has been disqualified from driving due to a motoring offence, they must relieve the person of all driving duties with immediate effect and seek advice from their reporting manager regarding the most appropriate course of action.

2.6 Risk assessment

Employers must conduct suitable risk assessments and ensure that:

- Work related journeys are safe
- Staff are fit and are competent to drive safely
- Vehicles are fit for purpose and in a safe condition.

For journeys or driving activities that present additional risks a more detailed assessment should be completed. Examples of where this would be appropriate include:

- non-routine long distance journeys;
- trips that include driving overseas;
- driving that is expected to take place in severe weather conditions;
- journeys that involve lone working in remote or potentially dangerous areas
- trips that involve driving types of vehicles that are not normally driven or where the driver may be inexperienced or have a poor accident record;
- the transport of dangerous goods or animals;
- the transport of large numbers of passengers for example in a minibus.

2.7 School vehicle checks

Where school/service vehicles are operated under permits issued under Section 19 of Transport Act 1985 then schools must operate the school/service vehicles under the terms of the legislation in addition to the Trust requirements set out below.

The Headteacher should delegate responsibility for periodic maintenance checks of their vehicles to a designated officer.

Periodic checks should include monitoring of fluid levels (oil, coolant and screen wash) and tyre pressures. The frequency of checks must be risk based depending on the frequency and type of use, and checks should be recorded.

Before undertaking any journey, the driver has primary responsibility for the operation of any vehicle and must be satisfied that the vehicle is fit for its purpose and roadworthy.

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the record of weekly checks is up to date and then to undertake their own driver basic safety checks and adjustments.

2.8 School vehicle maintenance

Where school/service vehicles are operated under permits issued under Section 19 of Transport Act 1985 then schools must operate the school/service vehicles under the terms of the legislation in addition to the Trust requirements set out below.

Headteachers will ensure that when choosing vehicles to be used on behalf of the school that they are suitable for the intended purpose and that adequate maintenance arrangements are in place.

Vehicle inspections and maintenance could be provided through Dorset Council's Fleet Services and Vehicle Maintenance SLA or an alternative competent person providing an equivalent level of service as determined by the Headteacher. As a minimum the manufacturers' recommended service intervals should be adhered to and the maintenance schedule must also include the annual MOT test.

A maintenance log must be kept up to date for each departmental vehicle containing all information relating to that vehicle.

Any specialist equipment such as tail lifts should be inspected according to the legal requirements and any manufacturer's recommendations.

2.9 Accidents and incidents

Where employees who are driving on school/service business are involved in road traffic accidents or incidents which result in damage to vehicles, loss or damage to property or persons they must report it for insurance purposes and as a work related accident/near miss.

The accident and insurance investigation should take into account any reasonable cause to review driver competency and additional training needs.

This applies to accidents in a school owned or leased vehicle as well as in an individual's private vehicle.

2.10 Minibus Transport and D1 Licence Requirements

Where minibuses are operated under permits issued under Section 19 of Transport Act 1985 then schools must operate the minibuses under the terms of the legislation in addition to the Trust requirements set out below.

A higher level of competence is required to drive a minibus, as:

- the vehicle is larger/heavier (requires greater stopping distances);
- more passengers are taken leading to increased stress on the driver e.g. extra responsibility, noise and distraction;
- minibuses tend to be used for long distances and on an infrequent basis.

All Drivers of minibuses must hold a D1 Licence.

An annual driver declaration must be completed by drivers and authorisation processed by the Headteacher or their delegate, including a check of licence details on <https://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information>.

Before authorising a driver to use a school minibus a Headteacher must be satisfied that the driver has adequate experience and training to drive a fully occupied minibus to a high standard of safety. This may be achieved through MIDAS training or alternative training to be determined by the Headteacher.

Drivers must not drive if unwell or if on medication or receiving medical treatment which advises against driving.

Seat Belts: Students and staff travelling in minibuses must wear seat belts by law.

Overloading

The minibus is overloaded if the total weight (bus + fuel + passengers + luggage) exceeds the **maximum laden weight** for the vehicle. This weight is printed on the vehicle and in the handbook. For guidance, the vehicle should only carry passengers, driver and hand luggage.

2.11 Private Vehicles

An annual driver declaration must be completed by drivers and authorisation processed by the Headteacher or their delegate, including a check of licence details on <https://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information>.

If private vehicles are used, the vehicles must be roadworthy and adequately insured.

Members of staff who use their own car in connection with work (including travelling between schools for meetings, training etc.) must have 'business use' cover. Business use cover should be part of the driver's personal insurance policy.

The Trust does have Occasional Business Use cover for drivers who are genuinely driving on an occasional basis and do not have personal business use cover. If a driver is intending to make a journey using this cover, it must be authorised in advance by the Headteacher or their delegate, and the driver must be provided with a copy of the relevant insurance documentation.

All cars which may be used to transport children must be fitted with suitable child restraints.

2.12 Mobile Phones and Hands-free Devices

Mobile phones are now used in many different ways and high mileage or school vehicle drivers are more likely than most to use a mobile phone while driving and very often they are using the phone for work purposes.

It is illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone while driving. This includes using the phone for calls, texts, emails, photos, to go online or for any other reason.

There are financial penalties for using a mobile phone whilst driving as well as penalty points. In addition, drivers can be taken to court and be banned from driving or receive heavier fines.

New drivers, who have had their driving licence for less than two years, will have their licence revoked after a single offence.

Whilst using a hands-free phone while driving is not specifically illegal, drivers who do so could be charged with 'failing to have proper control of their vehicle'.

As a result of this, it is the policy of the Trust that there will be no use of mobile phones whilst driving on school business and this includes both hand held and hands free devices. In order to make an essential call, the driver should pull over and park in a safe area before proceeding.

Senior Managers must:

- Lead by example, both in the way they drive themselves and by not tolerating poor driving practice among colleagues.
- Never use a mobile phone while driving.

Line Managers must ensure:

- they also lead by personal example
- they do not expect staff to answer calls, or otherwise use a mobile phone when they are driving
- staff understand their responsibilities not to use a hand-held or hands-free mobile phone while driving
- staff plan journeys to include rest stops which also provide opportunities to check messages and return calls
- work practices do not pressurise staff to use a mobile phone while driving
- compliance with the mobile phone policy is included in team meetings and staff appraisals and periodic checks are conducted to ensure that the policy is being followed
- they follow our monitoring, reporting and investigation procedures to help learn lessons which could help improve our future road safety performance

Staff who drive for work must:

- never use a hand-held or hands-free phone while driving
- plan journeys so they include rest stops when messages can be checked and calls returned
- ensure their phone is switched off and can take messages while they are driving, or allow a passenger to use the phone
- co-operate with monitoring, reporting and investigation procedures