



Achieving together in faith

Holy Cross Catholic MAC

MAC Minibus Policy 2025 / 2028

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Resources Approval Date	22/01/2025
Posted on Website	07/02/2025
Sent out to Schools	07/02/2025
Date of Policy Review	22/01/2028

Document Control:

Version History

Version	Status	Date	Author	Department	Summary of Changes
1.0	Draft		M Alcott C Connoll	HCCMAC, Central Team	Creation of document from template.
1.0	Approved	22/01/2025		HCCMAC, Central Team	Approved by MAC Resources

1. Aims of the Policy

To ensure that Holy Cross Catholic MAC complies with current legislation and guidance concerning the maintenance and driving of the school minibuses.

- To ensure that the safety of minibus users (both drivers and passengers) and other road users and pedestrians is always paramount.
- To ensure that Holy Cross Catholic MAC is meeting its health and safety and safeguarding obligations towards all members of the school community.

2. Rationale

The Board of Directors and Local Governing Bodies recognise the great educational and social development value of offsite and extracurricular activities, and they commend and support all staff that run and organise such. This Policy is essential as it defines the responsibilities of Directors, Governors, Headteachers and Staff when a minibus is used to transport staff and pupils. The use of the minibuses will be strictly controlled to conform to the policy so that safety is always treated as the overriding principle.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Board of Directors

3.1.1. The Board of Directors of Holy Cross Catholic MAC are responsible for ensuring that school minibuses operated on behalf of the school fully comply in every respect, with all legal transport and health and safety requirements. This responsibility is delegated to the CEO/CFOO to ensure its appropriate implementation.

3.1.2. To monitor the implementation of this policy through the Resources committee and the MAC Health and Safety advisor.

3.2. CEO/CFOO

3.2.1. The CEO/CFOO will ensure that all MAC schools have appropriate safety procedures for the operation of minibuses 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

3.2.2. Ensure that servicing of the minibuses is performed at the correct mileage and correct interval, and that the service book kept is ready for inspection at any time. This information is record and monitored on the Every compliance

3.2.3. The MAC will arrange for appropriate insurance cover and for the payment of annual road tax.

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

3.3. School Business Manager / Office Manager

3.3.1. Ensure that mini checks (fuel, water, oil and battery levels, tyre pressures and lights) are conducted by a trained member of the Site Service Team on a weekly basis.

4. The vehicles

Insurance cover dictates that the minibus must only be used to transport staff and pupils to and from places connected with the official business of the school (delivery of the curriculum/education or extracurricular activity).

Only drivers holding a current MiDas certificate are authorised to drive the minibus. Drivers with a current Coventry City Council Defensive Driving Certificate taken before 31 December 2024 (and in date) are authorised to drive the minibus.

4.1. Our insurance does not cover:

- Private use (personal transport, private party, towing vehicles, staff social outings).
- Use by any other organisation other than the Holy Cross Catholic MAC

4.2. The MAC minibuses are insured to be driven by;

- Any Employee
- Any Governor / Director
- Any Volunteer with permission from the CEO
- Any other person with the prior approval of the insurance but not for driving the vehicle for social, domestic or pleasure purposes.

4.3. The MAC minibuses can carry up to 16 passengers plus a driver. This limit must not be exceeded. All passengers must be seated and be wearing a seatbelt at all times. Pupils must not sit in the front passenger seat/s alongside the driver if any other seat is free.

4.4. Transporting a wheelchair user can only be undertaken by drivers with the relevant training. Wheelchair users can only be carried when removing of the relevant chairs and the installation wheelchair restraints and ramp. Carrying a wheelchair user will reduce the passenger limit.

4.5. The Minibus is fitted with standard adult seatbelts, and it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure all passengers are seated in the correct seat for the size/age of the child. (<https://www.gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules/when-a-child-can-travel-without-a-car-seat>)

4.6. A weekly safety check of the minibus will be carried by a designated member of the site staff team.

4.7. On rare occasions when drivers wish to park the minibus overnight at home or other location (excludes overnight trips) they must seek permission of the CEO.

4.8. Usage outside of the UK will require prior permission from the CEO.

5. The Driver

- 5.1. Follow and comply fully with the requirements outlined in 'Procedures and Practices' section below.
- 5.2. Ensure that pre-use checks of the vehicle are conducted and complete the Vehicle Check List (see Appendix One).
- 5.3. Report any concerns about the safety and / or condition of the minibus to the Health and Safety Coordinator immediately. If there are any concerns about the safety of the minibus, it should not be driven.
- 5.4. Familiarise themselves with the relevant ROSPA guidance.
- 5.5. 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 February 2008
- 5.6. Comply fully with all road traffic laws, respecting speed limits and always ensuring use of seatbelts. For longer journeys, frequent rest breaks are to be taken.
- 5.7. Inform a member of the relevant management team immediately if unfit to undertake a journey in order that alternative arrangements can be made.
- 5.8. Drivers must be medically fit and legally qualified to drive a minibus and are required to complete and sign a driver declaration form to that effect before driving the minibus.
- 5.9. Staff with a medical condition that needs to be declared to the insurers should advise the CEO/CFOO accordingly.
- 5.10. Never use a mobile phone (handheld 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.

6. Insurance

6.1. Our insurance dictates that drivers must be:

6.1.1. in possession of a current clean driving licence *

6.1.2. at least 25 years of age or over and have held a full driving licence for at least 12 months.

6.2. It is strictly at the MAC's discretion to allow anyone that does not meet the above two conditions to drive a MAC minibus. The following are considered to be minor offences by the MAC and as such they have granted permission for them not to be taken into consideration

6.2.1. parking violations/tickets

6.2.2. ***one** unspent SP30 minor speeding offence on a licence at any time. Where more than one speeding offence has occurred for which points are added to a licence, or more than three points are added for any one offence (a more serious violation) then written permission to drive has to be obtained from the CEO/CFOO prior to driving.

6.3. Approved drivers must immediately report any driving convictions including pending prosecutions, accidents or changes in circumstances that may affect their status as an approved driver. Failure to do so may invalidate insurance cover.

6.4. The law dictates that the driver will be responsible for the safety of the party and be in overall charge of any journey, and he/she must satisfy his/herself that the minibus, and trailer if used, is roadworthy, safe and conforms to legal requirements e.g. brakes (do they work), tyres (pressure, tread depth, obvious cuts, bulges or splits) lights (do they all work) tax (visible and in date), weight (not overloaded/carrying too many passengers).

6.5. All drivers must complete the Minibus Pre Journey Safety Checklist booklet which will support with the checks outlined in point 10. This will record those appropriate checks have been completed, any defects or issues, minor accidents and incidents, mileage start/finish etc.

7. Pre-Use Vehicle Checks

7.1. 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.

7.2. If the driver has concerns about the condition of the vehicle, it must not be used, and these concerns must be reported to the relevant management.

7.3. Mileage records should be completed before every use.

7.4. 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 always seated, behaviour, noise levels and escape procedures. The journey is not to commence unless the requirements of the driver are complied with.

8. Driving Rules

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

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

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

8.4. All accidents, whether they cause injury to persons or damage to property, are to be reported to the school as soon as possible after they occur.

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

8.6. 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.

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

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

8.9. Smoking\vaping is prohibited on the minibus at any time

9. 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.

10. The Journey

- 10.1. Drivers must always plan the journey and conduct a risk assessment if required as part of an educational visit, bearing in mind driving conditions and their own state of health and degree of tiredness. It is important that risks should be minimal. A trip specific Risk Assessment is required for all Offsite visits in accordance with Holy Cross Catholic MACs Offsite visits Policy. The 'Transport' section of this Risk Assessment must be completed in all instances.
- 10.2. When transporting pupils, Drivers must dynamically risk assess the group of pupils they are transporting and decide about effective and safe control of the group during the journey. If there is any doubt about this, one or more additional staff member should accompany the group.
- 10.3. National guidelines refer to inside and outside the 'local' area. At present it is stated in OEAP National Guidelines, any reference to 'local' is defined as within a 1.5-hour journey (each way) from school.
- 10.4. For 'local' fixtures and events, it is appropriate for **one member of staff** to be responsible for the group; this includes driving and supervision.
- 10.5. It is appropriate for **one member of staff** to be solely responsible for a mixed gender group or a group of pupils who are not the same gender as the member of staff (e.g. a male teacher attending a girls' football fixture).
- 10.6. ***This is acceptable unless:***
 - 10.6.1. For fixtures and events which are more than 1.5 hour's journey from school. There is a requirement for **two members of staff**; both of which would need to be qualified to drive the minibus if required.
 - 10.6.2. There is a requirement for a **second member of staff** for a journey within 1.5 hours if the age, maturity, special needs, and behaviour of the pupils undermines the safety of the group. This should be evaluated in the risk assessment. In this instance the second member of staff would not need to be qualified to drive the minibus.
 - 10.6.3. **Two members of staff** are required when transporting any primary school pupils. If the journey is within 1.5 hours of the school, then the second member of staff would not need to be qualified to drive the minibus.

- 10.6.4. If the nature of the activity has implications for supervision (e.g. supervision of changing rooms at swimming pool) then it is necessary to have **one male and one female member of staff**. There must be the capacity to always supervise pupils.
- 10.7. **Under no circumstances should a member staff travel 1:1 with a pupil.**
- 10.8. When travelling in convoy for a trip beyond 1.5 hours from school, there is a requirement for two members of staff per vehicle. In this situation, it is not necessary for the second member of staff on each vehicle to be qualified to drive the minibus. However, at least one of the additional members of staff must be suitably qualified to replace the driver of any of the vehicles in convoy (including trailer).
- 10.9. Journeys following a school day must not involve a member of staff driving for more than 2 hours in total (there and back) and no more than 1 hour before taking at least a 30-minute break away from driving. This should also consider the possibility of traffic conditions.
- 10.10. All passengers must wear the lap/diagonal seat belts as fitted to our vehicles throughout the journey. The driver must satisfy him/herself that all belts are being worn before driving off. No-one must be allowed to unbuckle their belt or leave their seat whilst the minibus is moving.
- 10.11. **PLEASE NOTE ALL MINIBUS USE DIESEL NOT PETROL. If you put petrol in do does not start the engine call the breakdown company listed in the minibus booklet (on collection of keys).**
- 10.12. Pupils should not be allowed off the bus when refuelling at a petrol station. If pupils require the use of a toilet the bus must be moved to a position of safety away from the pumps and pupils must be allowed out in a controlled and calm fashion under the strict guidance of the driver or other member of staff.
- 10.13. Drivers must ensure (unless an alternative has been agreed when booking) that the minibus is returned to its parking bay and all doors and windows are locked, steering wheel lock engaged and the keys are returned to the key holder.

11. Safety

- 11.1. Whilst driving the minibus, drivers should ensure that all doors are unlocked to assist with emergency egress if the need arises.
- 11.2. Drivers should ensure that internal lights are off whilst driving so that their vision is not impaired by the internal light.

- 11.3. Exits/gangways should always be clear of obstructions (such as bags). Bags can go on spare seats and under seats.
- 11.4. 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 school.

12. A Breakdown or Accident:

Standard breakdown procedures are to be followed where necessary:

- 12.1. If on a public road, get out of the vehicle on the safe side – nearest the path or verge.
- 12.2. 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.
- 12.3. Avoid always going near the traffic flow and exercise extreme caution.
- 12.4. 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.
- 12.5. Drivers and any accompanying supervising adults must wear a high visibility jacket or vest (provided on the bus) at times of hazard e.g. breakdown or accident.
- 12.6. In the event of breakdown, the driver's first priority is the safety of all passengers. Passengers should not (unless it is more dangerous to leave the bus) be allowed to sit in a vehicle that is broken down. They should first be moved to a position of relative safety e.g. off the hard shoulder on a motorway and beyond any crash barrier. The driver should inform National Breakdown using the number displayed in the bus and then inform the schools emergency contact for that trip.
- 12.7. In the event of an accident, liability should not be admitted. Names and addresses of vehicle owners, of insurance companies, and of witnesses should be obtained. A full accident report must be completed as soon as possible after the accident and submitted to the MAC. When safe to do so take photographs of the accident from multiple angles.
- 12.8. For major incidents, first contact the emergency services and then contact the school's emergency contact for that trip.

13. Booking a Minibus

- 13.1. All bookings to be made through the relevant booking system.
- 13.2. Disputes relating to availability will be settled by the member of Staff responsible for minibus bookings or the CFOO.

14. Leaving a minibus as you would wish to find it

- 14.1. It is the responsibility of the minibus driver/trip leader to ensure that the minibus is left in a clean condition (internally) at the end of the journey (e.g. clear of bottles, litter, spills etc.) and is available for further use at least half an hour before the commencement of the next/following trip.
- 14.2. When required, drivers should refuel the minibus at a petrol station that accepts the **FuelGenie** fuel cards such as Morrisons and Tesco. The refuel cards must be taken on all journeys and then handed back to the key holder once the trip has returned. The fuel receipt should be handed back with the keys.
- 14.3.
- 14.4. The minibus should be returned with not less than $\frac{1}{4}$ tank of diesel (So that the following trip can get safely to a filling station!)

15. Use of minibuses not owned or maintained by the school

- 15.1. For any hired in vehicle all safety related requirements of this policy apply with equal force. If a driver is supplied the organiser of the trip is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is safe to use and that all appropriate elements of this policy are applied to ensure the protection of all participants.

16. Appendix 1 : Driver Declaration

Minibus Declaration Holy Cross Catholic MAC

Personal Details Full Name:

Date of Birth:

Job Title:

Driving Licence Number:

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 Minibus Qualification (i.e. MIDAS or KCC) Authority

Date obtained

I give permission for the School Business Manager 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 convictions.

I understand that failure to do so and any false declaration made above may render the insurance cover for the vehicle invalid and that 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:

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Signature of Driver:

Date: