CARWARDEN HOUSE COMMUNITY ACADEMY

DRIVING FOR WORK POLICY

Reviewed by SBM:	March 2024
Approved by Headteacher:	March 2024
Review date:	March 2027

Based on Judicium's model policy

1. Statement of Intent

The Board of Trustees and Headteacher will ensure that only authorised drivers use school vehicles and 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:

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

The Policy applies to all relevant academy activities and is written in compliance with all current UK health and safety legislation.

Review Procedures

This Policy will be reviewed regularly and revised as necessary. Any amendments required to be made to the Policy because of a review will be presented to the Headteacher for acceptance.

Document / revision no.	Date	Status / Amendment	Approved by

Distribution of copies

Copies of the Policy and any amendments will be distributed to the Headteacher; Premises Manager; Business Manager; All Staff; and Administration office.

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2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has a duty of care to employees who are required to drive and to volunteers and agency staff/consultants who are not employees and who drive on the Academy's behalf.

2.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that:

2.2.1 This Policy is fully implemented.

2.2.2 Staff who drive for work purposes (Drivers) are aware of local traffic controls or restrictions, for any local by-laws or specific local authority arrangements that apply in addition to the highway code requirements, e.g. road closures or traffic controls between certain times around the school and give them time to plan journeys.

2.2.3 There is a mechanism in place to ensure that staff are qualified to drive academy owned or leased vehicles via https://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information;

2.2.4 There is a system in place to ensure that any academy vehicle is maintained in a roadworthy condition and complies with legal requirements.

2.2.5 Risk assessments are completed for medium and high-risk driving activities, e.g., long journeys, using a motorway.

2.2.6 Monitoring systems are in place to ensure all driving activities are carried out safely.

2.3 Drivers – Staff who drive for work purposes.

Drivers are people who drive for school purposes; they are responsible for ensuring that they:

2.3.1 Comply with all legal requirements for driving and with this policy's requirements.

2.3.2 Hold the appropriate driving licence entitlement.

2.3.3 Are medically fit to drive.

2.3.4 Do not use a hand-held mobile phone or hands-free devices to make or receive calls whilst driving on school business.

2.3.5 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 vehicle.

2.3.6 Are satisfied that prior to any journey on academy business that the vehicle they are driving is fit for purpose and roadworthy.

2.3.7 Inform the person in charge of the vehicle if they become aware of any faults.

2.3.8 Where appropriate, are adequately insured to use their private vehicle for academy business to ensure themselves, passengers and the vehicle are covered.

2.3.9 Report any accidents or incidents whilst driving on school business.

2.3.10 Produce, upon request, their driving licence, insurance certificate and/or MOT certificate (if appropriate).

2.3.11 Do not drive vehicles when adversely affected by alcohol or when taking medication or drugs that may induce drowsiness.

2.3.12 Comply with any academy rules and risk assessment requirements for driving at work activities.

3. Arrangements

3.1 Aims and Purposes of the Driving Policy

3.1.1. 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.

3.1.2. 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.

3.1.3. To ensure that vehicles used for work-related journeys are suitable, roadworthy and journeys are planned to be conducted safely.

3.2 Scope of Policy

3.2.1. This Policy applies to all school employees who are required to drive and to volunteers who are not employees and who drive on the Academy's behalf.

3.2.2. 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.

3.3 Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy the following definitions apply:

3.3.1. **Driving at Work** - 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.

3.3.2. **School Vehicle** - Any vehicle owned, leased, or hired by the school. (including any vehicle up to 8 passengers plus the driver i.e. cars, multi-purpose vehicles, people carriers and minibuses that can carry 9-16 passengers plus the driver).

3.3.3. **Private Vehicle** - Any vehicle used by a person driving on academy business which is not owned, leased, or hired by the school.

3.3.4. **Minibus** - A vehicle that can carry 9-16 passengers plus the driver.

3.4 Convictions or Disqualification

3.4.1. 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 the School Business Manager of any convictions (including penalty points) or periods of disqualification immediately.

3.4.2. If the School Business Manager is notified that an individual has been disqualified from driving, she must relieve the person of all driving duties with immediate effect

and seek advice from the Senior Leadership Team regarding the most appropriate course of action.

3.4.3. If there is a reason to suspect that an employee is not fit to drive, the School Business Manager should investigate to ensure the person is fit for driving.

3.5 Risk assessment

3.5.1. Employers must conduct suitable risk assessments and ensure that:

a) Work related journeys are safe.

b) Staff are fit and are competent to drive safely.

c) Vehicles are fit for purpose and in a safe condition.

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

a) non-routine long-distance journeys.

b) trips that include driving overseas.

c) driving that is expected to take place in severe weather conditions.

d) journeys that involve lone working in remote or potentially dangerous areas

e) 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.

f) the transport of large numbers of passengers, for example in a minibus.

3.6 School - Vehicle Checks

3.6.1. 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. Fault to the vehicles such as tyres, damaged lights, etc., can result in the Driver receiving fine and penalty points.

3.6.2. Please refer to the ‘Pre-Use vehicle checklist’.

3.6.3. Compliance with this requirement is achieved by Premises Manager taking responsibility for the majority of periodic maintenance checks of their vehicles.

3.6.4. The Premises Manager checks should include monitoring of fluid levels (oil, coolant and screen wash) and tyre pressures. It is recommended that these checks and associated maintenance are recorded on a weekly basis (the frequency of checks must be risk-based depending on the frequency and type of use).

3.6.5. 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.

3.6.6. Please refer to the Vehicle Pre-use Check and Maintenance Guidance document for additional detail. The pre-use check guidance only outlines the minimum requirements for safety checks; some vehicles may require additional checks such as inspection of lifts, safety signage, safety equipment such as reversing alarms, guards on dangerous parts and rotating beacons.

3.7 Academy - Vehicle Maintenance

3.7.1. The management will ensure that when choosing vehicles to be used on behalf of the school that they are entirely suitable for the intended purpose and that utmost importance is placed on safety features.

3.7.2. Vehicle inspections and maintenance should only be conducted by a competent person. The manufacturers' recommended service intervals and warranties should be adhered to which will ensure so far as reasonably practicable the ongoing safety of the vehicle. The maintenance schedule must also include the annual MOT test.

3.7.3. A maintenance log must be kept up to date for each vehicle containing all information relating to that vehicle. It is recommended that service records are kept for at least 5 years.

3.7.4. It is recommended that routine checks are made of minibuses at set intervals which are time-based rather than mileage-based, e.g. every 6 weeks. Any specialist equipment such as tail lifts should be inspected according to the legal requirements and any manufacturer's recommendations.

3.8 Accidents and incidents

3.8.1. In the event of a breakdown, employees will follow clear accident and emergency procedures that are in place and are included in driver and passenger assistant training. ROSPA's "Minibus Safety - A Code of Practice" includes an example of a suitable breakdown procedure. All vehicles are covered under the RAC breakdown cover.

3.8.2. Where employees who are driving on school business are involved in road traffic accidents or incidents that 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.

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

3.8.4. This applies to accidents in an academy-owned or leased vehicle as well as in an individual's private vehicle.

3.9 Minibus Transport and D1 Licence Requirements

3.9.1 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.

3.9.2 The school policy is that all drivers are required to complete a Minibus Driving Evaluation test (through Southeast Minibus Consultancy) before being permitted to drive.

All Drivers of minibuses above the specified weight limit of 3.5 tonnes must hold a D1 Licence (those who obtained a licence before January 1997 will have one).

Drivers will only be permitted to drive a minibus without a D1 licence if the following conditions are met:

a. The minibus weighs no more than 3.5 tonnes.
b. The minibus has no more than 16 seats
c. The driver is over 25 years of age.
d. The driver has been driving on a full licence for more than 2 years.

3.9.3 Re-assessment should take place at least every 5 years and more often if an incident or risk assessment merits it.

3.9.4 Driver fatigue or distraction has been highlighted as a factor in recent minibus incidents nationally.

3.9.5 For journeys not exceeding 1 hour, a single teacher/driver may be considered adequate, subject to the nature of the group and the driver's ability and confidence to manage that group.

3.9.6 For journeys involving between 1 hour and 4 hours of driving, a second responsible adult should be present to supervise the group.

3.9.7 For journeys involving over 4 hours of driving, the second adult should be a suitably qualified minibus driver. For journeys involving over 4 hours, at least one of the drivers should have had a rest period of at least one hour prior to the start of the journey. Further regular rest periods must be taken – a 15-minute break every 2 hours is recommended.

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

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

3.10 Overloading

3.10.1. 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.

3.10.2. The use of a trailer greatly increases the maximum laden weight and is **essential** when transporting a full load of older students plus luggage.

3.10.3. Liability for driving an overladen vehicle remains with the driver and is not transferable.

3.11 Private Vehicles

3.11.1. If parents' or teachers' private vehicles are used, the vehicles must be roadworthy and adequately insured.

3.11.2. Standard car insurance is for 'social, domestic and pleasure' purposes only, permits travel to and from your normal place of work, but **does not** cover the use of the vehicle whilst at work. Members of staff who use their own car in connection with work whether only very occasionally or more frequently must ensure that they have 'business use' cover on their personal Policy.

3.11.3. Documentation must be checked by the School Business Manager through https://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information and all cars must be fitted with suitable child restraints. Parents must provide specific permission for their child to be transported in a private vehicle.

3.12 Mobile Phones and Hands-free Devices

3.12.1 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.

3.12.2 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.

3.12.3 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.

3.12.4 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 academy that there will be no use of mobile phones whilst driving on academy business and this includes both handheld and hands-free devices. Phones should remain off during journeys and in order to make an essential call, the driver should pull over and park in a safe area before proceeding.

3.12.5 Senior Managers must:

a) Lead by example, both in the way they drive themselves and by not tolerating poor driving practice among colleagues.

b) Never use a mobile phone while driving.

3.12.6 Line Managers must ensure:

a) they also lead by personal example.

b) they do not expect staff to answer calls or otherwise use a mobile phone when they are driving.

c) staff understand their responsibilities not to use a hand-held or hands-free mobile phone while driving.

d) staff plan journeys to include rest stops which also provide opportunities to check messages and return calls.

e) work practices do not pressurise staff to use a mobile phone while driving.

f) they follow our monitoring, reporting and investigation procedures to help learn lessons that could help improve our future road safety performance.

3.12.7 Staff who drive for work must:

a) never use a hand-held or hands-free phone while driving

b) plan journeys so they include rest stops when messages can be checked, and calls returned.

c) ensure their phone is switched off and can take messages while they are driving or allow a passenger to use the phone.

d) co-operate with monitoring, reporting and investigation procedures.

3.13 Planning and local arrangements

3.13.1 It is the responsibility of drivers to be well-informed about local traffic controls and restrictions by staying updated on any local by-laws or specific arrangements imposed by local authorities, supplementing the highway code requirements.

3.13.2 Drivers are responsible for checking any unique regulations set by local authorities that may impact travel routes or conditions and staying informed about road closures, traffic controls, or specific restrictions, especially around sensitive areas like schools.

3.13.3 Managers give Driver's time to plan their journeys. Drivers plan their journeys taking into consideration potential road closures, traffic controls, or time-specific restrictions so sufficient time is allocated in schedules to accommodate any additional requirements imposed by local authorities, ensuring smooth and compliant work-related travel.

3.13.4 Drivers stay connected to a streamlined communication channel for prompt updates on changes in local traffic regulations and adjust their travel plans based on the latest information.

4. Conclusions

4.1 This Driving Policy reflects the academy's serious intent to accept its responsibilities in all matters relating to driving for work. The clear lines of responsibility and organisation describe the arrangements that are in place to implement all aspects of this Policy.

Appendix 1 - Minibus Safety Pre-Use Checklist

Vehicle registration no:	Checked by (name):	
Vehicle make/type:	**Odometer reading:**	**Date and time:**

CHECKS TO BE DONE BY DRIVER BEFORE EVERY JOURNEY

EXTERNAL MINIBUS CONDITION

Item	√ = satisfactory/available X = defective/missing N/A = not applicable	Comment
Condition of vehicle bodywork, windscreen, windows, lights		
Cleanliness of windscreen, windows, mirrors, lights, number plate		
Availability of spare wheel & jack		

VEHICLE INTERIOR AND EQUIPMENT

Item	√ = satisfactory/available X = defective/missing N/A = not applicable	Comment
Condition & function of seat belts		
Head restraint adjustment		
Mirror adjustment		
First aid kit		
Fire extinguisher		
Vehicle handbook		

FUNCTION CHECKS BEFORE STARTING THE JOURNEY

Item	√ = satisfactory/available X = defective/missing N/A = not applicable	Comment
All seat belts		
Warning light		
All lights		
Horn		
Washers & wipers		
Brake		
Fuel		
Wheelchair ramp		
Any wheelchair restraining devices		

All the items above have been checked and any defects and omissions reported.

Driver's signature: _____

WEEKLY CHECKS UNDERTAKEN BY PREMISES MANAGER

EXTERNAL MINIBUS CONDITION

Item	√ = satisfactory/available X = defective/missing N/A = not applicable	Comment
Condition of tyres, tyre pressure, tyre wear		
Condition of windscreen wiper blades		

FLUIDS

Item	√ = satisfactory/available X = defective/missing N/A = not applicable	Comment
Engine oil level		
Coolant level		
Windscreen wash level		
Brake/clutch fluid		
Power steering fluid		
Condition of battery		
Oil or waste leaks		

Wheelchair ramp		

All the items above have been checked and any defects and omissions reported.

Premises Manager's signature: _____

Further Guidance

Further guidance can be obtained from organisations such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or Judicium Education. The following are some examples. The Health and Safety lead in the academy will keep under review to ensure links are current.

- HSE
  https://www.hse.gov.uk/
- Department for Education - Driving school minibuses advice: schools and local authorities.
  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/driving-academy-minibuses-advice-for-academys-and-local-authorities
- National Education Union (NEU) – Safety of academy minibuses
  https://neu.org.uk/advice/safety-academy-minibuses

Further Resources

- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) – Road Safety – Advice and Information
  https://www.rospa.com/road-safety/advice
- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) – Minibus Safety - A Code of Practice
  https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/practitioners/minibus-code-of-practice.pdf