



**THE ALTUS SCHOOL**

**MINIBUS &  
DRIVING FOR SCHOOL  
POLICY**

Date Approved: January 2023

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## 1. Driving for School – including use of personal vehicle

These conditions only apply where no payment has been made by any passenger either directly or indirectly and does not permit driving abroad.

A log of all current registered users is kept by the Business Management team. All drivers are asked to complete a Drivers Check Form annually (see Appendix 1):

Drivers:

- Must hold a full current driving licence
- Must provide a copy of their driving licence and car insurance details to cover business
- Drivers with penalty points on their license or endorsements must check if they are still eligible to use both school and personal vehicle for business purposes, with the Business Management team
- When driving any vehicle for business purposes, drivers are accepting responsibility for a larger number of passengers than a private car. This means that the safety of passengers must be the prime consideration at all times. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is in a safe condition before starting out on your journey, no matter how short, and that passengers are adequately supervised at all times. If there are any doubts the journey should not be undertaken
- Vehicles should undergo safety checks before each journey. A Vehicle Checklist is available at each centre, and in each vehicle, for this purpose (see Appendix 2)
- Journeys must be carefully planned and driving hours restricted taking into account the time of day and the conditions (see 5. Operating Procedures, below)
- Vehicles will not be driven abroad.

## 2. Driving School Vehicles

Drivers of school vehicles:

- Must be over 25 years of age unless special approval has been obtained from insurers
- Must hold a full current driving licence for at least 2 years.
- Must have completed the Drivers Form (Appendix 1) and have provided a copy of their driving licence.
- Must have no temporary or permanent medical condition which would significantly affect their ability to drive the minibus. In case of doubt the DVLA must be informed and a written record of their acceptance of any medical condition must be available for inspection on request.
- Must be driving on a voluntary basis, ie not receiving any payment or compensation, nor have 'driving' listed as part of their job description
- Must not tow a trailer
- Can drive vehicles with up to 16 seats IF the vehicle is *less than 3.5 tonnes*, including passengers (see 3. Minibus Driving)

Note: drivers with penalty points on their license or endorsements must check with the Business Management team if they are still eligible to drive school vehicles. As a general rule the insurance company will accept a maximum of six penalty points for minor offences before restrictions apply.

### 3. Minibus Driving

Minibuses are classified as vehicles with 9 to 16 passenger seats which weigh **more than 3.5 tonnes**, including passengers. Most school minibuses weigh in excess of 3.5 tonnes; clarification on which categories the Altus fleet fall in to should be sought from the Operations Manager.

In addition to 2, above, the following applies to Minibus driving for The Altus School:

- Drivers must hold a full current driving licence that includes a Category D1:
  - Drivers who passed their test and obtained their driving licence before 1 January 1997 will automatically have a Category D1 (101) licence, which allows them to drive the minibus (on a 'not for hire or reward' basis -see 4, below)
  - Drivers who passed their test later than this date must apply for a D1 from the DVLA and pass an additional driving test
- The minibus must not be used for 'hire or reward' (see 4, below)
- The minibus must not tow a trailer

### 4. Hire or Reward

It is considered that the Altus School vehicles are **not** operated on a hire or reward basis.

Government guidance on driving school minibuses states that "a minibus is not being used for hire or reward, ..., where the pupils are not obliged to pay in exchange for the right to be passengers. This applies .... to take pupils off-site for trips within the school day or as an extra-curricular activity, where the pupils do not pay for their transport".

The Altus School does not request payment for trips from its students, and therefore considers that it does not operate vehicles for hire or reward.

For full guidance, see the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/driving-school-minibuses-advice-for-schools-and-local-authorities/driving-school-minibuses-advice-for-schools-and-local-authorities>

Should this arrangement change, the school must apply for a Section 19 permit, to allow drivers with a D1 (101) licence to operate the vehicle on a 'hire or reward' basis.

### 5. Operating Procedures

#### **Minibuses**

Driving a minibus is significantly different from driving a car. It is larger, longer and which means that steering and cornering characteristics are markedly different and in particular braking distances are longer. Drivers are expected to modify their driving style accordingly.

Drivers must be aware of the speed restrictions which apply to minibuses, especially on motorways and dual carriageways.

## **Personal safety requirements**

The personal safety planning for any educational visit organised in the name of The Altus School must include awareness and implementation where appropriate, of the requirements that follow:

- In any emergency, the safety of the pupils who are in the care of the party adults is to be the prime concern.
- The party leader is to ensure that any pupil medical requirements are noted and can be dealt with on the visit.
- Seatbelts must be used at all times; it is the responsibility of the party leader in the vehicle to ensure that all students wear them
- All minibuses must carry a working fire extinguisher
- Every transport vehicle and walking party must carry an adequate First Aid kit.

## **Driving times**

Staff may drive the minibus for up to 2 hours before taking a break of at least ½ hour and the same driver can repeat the cycle of 2 hours driving with a ½ hour break up to a maximum of 6 hours driving in any one day.

There is an important exception: when the minibus is used for an after-school event and the driver has undertaken a day's work in school, there is a maximum driving time permitted of one hour which must be followed by a minimum 1½ hour break, which can be the time spent at a concert, theatrical production or other event, followed by a maximum return journey of one hour.

For evening events which require a longer driving period than one hour staff should consider: hiring a coach; ensuring that two registered drivers accompany the visit; booking an alternative performance, e.g. a matinée.

The time limits must not be exceeded except through unforeseen circumstances such as a traffic jam.

Appendix 1

**Drivers Transporting Young People  
Checks for Licence, Insurance and MOT**

We greatly value your support helping to transport young people to activities and using your own vehicle should a school vehicle not be available. It is our duty to do what we can to minimise the risks associated with road transport and we therefore ask all our drivers to read the checklist below, complete the information and sign and date it.

**Name of Driver:**

- I have no endorsements or points on my licence/have declared any points on my licence and the reasons for accruing them (delete as applicable). I will keep the school updated if there are any changes.
- My car carries current insurance, which is renewed annually, and I have checked that I have business insurance included.
- The vehicle I shall be using is insured in my name. As a named driver and an employee, I confirm that the insurance covers me for business use.
- The road fund license is current and always renewed by the expiry date.
- The vehicle is regularly serviced, kept in safe running condition and, where required, has a valid MOT certificate.
- I am aware that overloading the vehicle could invalidate its insurance.
- All passengers I shall carry will have and use a seat belt, including those in the back seat.

I understand that I must meet the requirements set out in the above statements.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle registration \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your driving licence, business use insurance and MOT (when applicable) will be checked annually.

Please use the link <https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence> to issue a code that we can use to check your licence information

Driving licence code

Date issued

## Appendix 2

### The Altus School - Vehicle Checklist

Employees using privately owned vehicles must ensure vehicles are roadworthy and it is recommended that the following checks are undertaken although they need not be recorded.

Employees using GCC vehicles should make visual checks before each journey and may use the following checklist as a prompt. Any defects should be recorded and reported to the Operations Manager as soon as identified.

<b>Vehicle Registration Number:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Defect reported by:</b>		
<b>Item</b>		<b>Comment</b>
Fuel level		
Windscreen wipers and blades		
Washer jets		
Washer fluid level		
Headlights – main and dip		
Sidelights		
Rear lights		
Indicator		
Brake lights		
Reversing lights		
Hazard warning lights		
Mirrors – rearview and wing		
Horn		
Bodywork – condition/damage		
Special items where fitted:-		
Torch		
First Aid Kit		
Tyre tread/condition (inc. spare)		
Tyre pressure		
Oil level		
Water level		
Any other items specific to vehicle		

Checks should be made to the best of the employee's ability and should be reported to the Operations Manager once identified.