

West Exmoor Federation



Transport Policy July 2024

West Exmoor Federation – Transport Policy

The aim of this Policy is to help the Federation provide a safe, effective and efficient service. Anyone who drives or operates a federation minibus or private car to carry passengers has a duty to take all reasonable precautions to ensure that they are operated safely. The Federation must comply with all relevant legal requirements, the advice provided in the Highway Code, and take all other reasonable measures to protect the driver, the passengers and other road users from accident and injury risks.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments including the use of the minibuses and or private cars should identify:

- Hazards.
- The likelihood of a hazard occurring.
- The likely severity of any injury or property damage resulting.
- Who might be affected.
- Existing safety measures.
- New safety measures that might be needed.
- How safety measures are implemented.

For regular or frequent journeys, it is not necessary to conduct a separate risk assessment for each trip. Although the risk assessment for regular trips should be periodically reviewed to ensure it remains appropriate and that it is being followed properly.

However, an individual risk assessment should be conducted, in advance for every unusual or non-routine journey, or when passengers have special needs. This risk assessment will form part of the DCC approved Trip Risk Assessment and will be uploaded to Evolve for approval by the Executive Headteacher.

Legal requirements

Every vehicle must:

- Be correctly licensed.
- Display a valid tax disc.
- Be adequately insured.
- Be well maintained.
- Have a valid MOT certificate.

The following minibus records need to be kept by the Federation:

- All documents relating to the vehicles.
- Operating log, including booking the vehicle in and out.
- Accident / incident book, including faults reported and rectified.
- List of authorised drivers.
- Training and re-training forms.
- Medical check details (for those drivers over 70).
- Emergency equipment form.
- Contact names and details (including out-of-hours details).
- Maintenance / safety checks.

These records are an essential part of the safety management system. It is important that they are kept accurate and up-to-date and that any changes recommended following reviews are implemented.

The vehicle drivers

The Federation needs to ensure that every driver has the appropriate license entitlement to drive the minibus and car and undergoes an initial and then periodic re-assessment of their ability to drive a minibus. That he / she understands their responsibilities, has a clean driving license and is medically fit to drive.

The Trust has overall responsibility for ensuring a safe service is provided. However, every driver is personally responsible for ensuring that their vehicle is roadworthy before they take it out onto the road. It is also the driver's responsibility to ensure the safety (including the use of seat belts by young passengers) and welfare of all passengers.

Before any journey, and every time a minibus is used, the driver must:

- Plan the journey so that it can be completed safely and comfortably in accordance with the passengers' needs.
- Ensure the minibus or car is suitable for the passengers being carried.
- Conduct a pre-drive vehicle safety check.
- Be fit and able to drive.
- Conduct a moving brake test.
- Ensure a charged and ready to use phone is available and that staff and child contacts are carried.

The driver of a federation minibus should complete a logbook, provided by the Federation, to show they have conducted the necessary checks.

After the journey, the minibus driver should conduct a post-trip vehicle check, inside and outside the vehicle and record any visible damage or faults, any emergency equipment that has been used and any incidents that have occurred during the journey. Any faults should be reported as soon as is practicable, and the vehicle should not be used again until the fault is rectified.

Passenger care

Drivers must make certain that all passengers have boarded, are safely seated and are wearing properly adjusted seat belts, if fitted, before moving off. The doors must be properly closed, but not locked, before the driver moves off. Equally, they must make sure that all passengers have left the vehicle and are clear of the doors before moving off. They should be aware of the danger of passengers' clothes becoming trapped in a door.

Drivers should only use suitable, agreed, drop off points. They should ensure that passengers do not exit from doors opening into traffic. When collecting or dropping off passengers from / to premises on the offside of a one-way street, the vehicle should stop on the nearside and the passengers be escorted across the road when it is safe to do so. Places where passengers are picked up and dropped off should be pre-arranged. Consideration should be given to the safety of passengers waiting for the vehicle to arrive and boarding and leaving the vehicle at these places. Children should not be left alone at a drop-off point if their parents or carers have not arrived to collect them.

Passengers should be aware of the behaviour expected of them. Children in particular should be briefed before the journey begins so that they understand why boisterous behaviour is inappropriate. Passengers should be aware of the time when they must return to the vehicle after rest stops, or for the return journey. Drivers should also know what to do in the event of passenger illness. This will require the driver to have details and a contact number for the relevant persons and understand how to deal with the safety of other passengers whilst dealing with the unwell passenger.

Duty of care towards passengers:

- The vehicle is suitable for the needs of the passengers, including any passengers with

disabilities.

- The vehicle is roadworthy.
- All minibus drivers are properly trained and regularly re-assessed.
- All passengers have a seat and a seat belt.
- Journeys are properly planned with adequate rest stops.
- Drivers know the emergency procedures.
- All luggage and equipment are safely stored.
- The doors are closed, but not locked, before moving off.
- Journey details are left with a nominated person.
- Aisles and exits are clear.

The minibus

Under the Road Vehicles Lighting (Amendment) Regulations 1994, minibuses carrying children to or from the Federation must display a prescribed 'School Bus' sign to the front and rear of the vehicle. The driver may use hazard warning lights when the vehicle is stationary and children are entering or leaving the vehicle. Every minibus must carry a British Standard fire extinguisher of water, foam, halon 1301 or halon 1211 type, with a minimum test rating of 8A or 21B. The regulations also specify that a suitable, clearly marked first aid box is kept readily available and in good condition. The driver should check all the items are present before each trip. Every time an item is used the driver should inform the federation who should ensure the item is replaced or re-filled as appropriate.

Seat belts – It is important that seat belts and child restraints are correctly adjusted for the wearer to maximise their effectiveness. The basic points to note are:

- The belt should be worn as tight as possible.
- The lap belt should go over the pelvic region, not the stomach.

Booster seats

These should be used in the cars for children aged 3 and above, until they reach either their 12th birthday OR 135cm in height. Children under the age of 3 should use a properly fitting car seat.

In the Rear Seat of the minibuses, children must use the correct restraint, where seat belts are fitted. Nursery aged children can be transported in the buses with the correct booster seating and / or correct restraint. Children under the age of 3 should use a properly fitting car seat.

There are three exceptions where there is not a child seat available. In each case the child MUST use the adult belt instead. They are -

- 1) in a licensed taxi or private hire vehicle;
- 2) if the child is travelling on a short distance for reason of unexpected necessity;
- 3) if there are two occupied child restraints in the rear which prevent the fitment of a third.

In addition, a child 3 and over may travel unrestrained in the rear seat of a vehicle if seat belts are not available.

It is the driver's legal responsibility to ensure that the child is correctly restrained.

Before setting off on a journey

1. Allow sufficient time for the journey.
2. Conduct a pre-drive safety check and sign the Driver's declaration.
3. Never allow passengers to board until the vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked.

4. Passengers should enter the vehicle from the pavement.
5. Ensure the children are supervised when boarding the vehicle.
6. Make sure everyone is sitting and that seat belts are secure.
7. Make sure there is a complete list of passengers being carried with a note of any special medical or other needs. Check that children have any necessary medication with them.
8. Check that no bags or clothing are caught in the doors and check all mirrors every time before moving away in case latecomers are approaching the vehicle.
9. Check all luggage is secured, and that gangways and exits are clear.
10. Know the height, width, length and weight of the vehicle, and the position of the exterior fuel cap.
11. Check you have the insurance details for emergency purposes.
12. Fix the phone to the dashboard of the vehicle in the correct holder. Phones should only be used 'hands free' and only in order to follow directions. Phone calls should only be made when the minibus is stationary unless there is an emergency.

At the end of the journey

1. Ensure that children are supervised when leaving the vehicle.
2. Never allow passengers to leave until the vehicle is at a complete standstill, and safely parked by an adjacent pavement or other traffic-free area and the hand brake is engaged.
3. Always park so that passengers step onto the footway and not onto the road.
4. Do not leave children alone if no one has arrived to collect them. Ensure you know what to do if a child is not collected.
5. Report any problems or incidents that occurred during the trip to the Executive Headteacher and Admin staff.
6. Complete the logbook.

Pre-drive safety check

Every day the minibus is used a visual inspection should be made by the driver. This should be repeated whenever another driver takes over the vehicle. He or she should walk around the vehicle, to check for visible defects, and visually check the items listed below.

Exterior Check	Interior Check
Oil level (once only at the start of the day) ☐	Mirrors are correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed ☐
Coolant level (once only at start of day) ☐	Position and function / purpose of all the dashboard controls ☐
Windscreen washer fluid level (once only at the start of the day) ☐	Position of driving seat so that all controls can be operated comfortably ☐
Brake fluid level (only once at the start of the day) ☐	Check for pressure on brake pedal ☐
Windscreen and windows are clean and undamaged ☐	Wipers and washers are working properly ☐
Wiper blades are clean and undamaged ☐	Fuel level ☐
Lights, including brake lights and indicators, are clean and working ☐	Seat belts, where fitted, are undamaged and working properly ☐
Tyre pressures, including the spare ☐	Location of wheel brace and jack ☐
Tyre tread (at least 2.00mm across centre 3/4 is recommended) ☐	Location of relevant paperwork (permit disc, insurance, road tax disc, M.O.T, emergency numbers and driving license) ☐
Any cuts and bulges ☐	Mobile Phone ☐
Doors open and close properly ☐	Damage or sharp edges ☐
Damage or sharp edges ☐	

Notes for transporting pupils in Federation vehicles	
• When driving young children, it is essential that each child is using a booster seat (when using the car or front seats of the bus). • Prior to driving the driver should carry out a visual check on the vehicle to ensure that it is safe and legal to use. • There must be no alcohol consumed on any transport involved in activities or visits. • There should be no alcohol stored or carried on any vehicle. • Drivers must not have consumed alcohol prior to driving or within twelve hours of consuming three units of alcohol (a unit being a glass of wine, a measure of spirits or half a pint of beer or similar) and 24 hours after consuming more than three units. • These restrictions also apply to restricted drugs. • Drivers must not drive when taking medication that warns the user of drowsiness; when ill or when fatigued. • Drivers should report any road traffic accidents they are involved in. • Drivers should note the following: ▪ To report any changes to their licence ▪ To report any changes to their original/current driver's ▪ Declaration form held by their manager ▪ To report any DVLA notifiable medical condition ▪ To report any faults noted on 'company' vehicles	• When driving, drivers are asked to: ▪ Drive with due care and consideration of other road users ▪ Adhere to the Highway Code ▪ Drive with the vehicle lights on during the day when there is poor visibility ▪ Drive within the speed limits ▪ Plan their journey to allow sufficient time to complete it safely ▪ Not to use a handheld mobile phone whilst driving ▪ Use a hands-free phone only when it is safe and legal to do so ▪ Use in car technology only when it is safe to do so ▪ Keep their eyes on the road whilst driving, and not to be distracted ▪ Not eat, drink or read whilst driving ▪ Ensure the safety of any occupants by ensuring that seat belts are all used ▪ Child seats and head restraints are used correctly

Driver's Declaration		
• I have read and understood the information regarding the transporting of pupils in the Federation vehicles. • I agree to ensure that: The vehicle is safe to drive I am in a fit state to drive I will abide by the Highway code • I will notify the Trust of any changes in my ability to transport pupils		
Driver's Signature:		Print Name:
Vehicle:		
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐

Weekly Vehicle Safety Check

EXTERIOR & INTERIOR CHECKS	
Warning Light - Engine Oil level light 	Condition of mirrors, adjustable, clean and unobstructed
Warning Light - Coolant level (top-up only when engine cold) 	Position and function /purpose of all dashboard controls
Warning Light - Windscreen washer fluid level light 	Ad-Blue Indicator
Warning Light - Brake fluid level 	Condition of driving seat so that all controls can be operated comfortably
Warning Light - Power Steering Fluid Level 	Check for pressure on brake pedal
Windscreen and windows are functional, clean and undamaged 	Interior Clean
Wiper blades are clean and undamaged 	Fuel level and mileage
Lights, including brake lights and indicators, are clean and working 	Seat belts, where fitted, are undamaged and working properly
Tyre pressures, including the spare 	Ramps & Accessories
Tyre tread (at least 2.00mm across 3/4 of width & around total circumference) 	Location of relevant paperwork (permit disc, insurance, road tax disc, M.O.T, emergency numbers and driving license)
Tyres any cuts and bulges 	Mobile Phone
Doors open/close properly & warning signs operate 	First Aid Box
Body Damage & Sharp Edges 	Damage & sharp edges
Body Exterior Clean 	

Declaration		
• I have read and understood the information regarding the transporting of pupils in School vehicles • I agree to ensure that: The vehicle is safe to drive		
Signature:	Print Name:	Date:
Vehicle:		
☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐



West Exmoor Federation

Bus Process for parents

Parents can pay a contribution towards the minibus service, running from and returning to Combe Martin each day, using School Money via the online payment website. The donation is calculated at £1 per journey (75p per journey for siblings) and multiplied by the number of weeks in the term. This charge goes towards the running costs of the minibuses.

If parents book a place on the bus they will need to complete and sign the bus use agreement form that outlines our expectations for its reasonable use.

Cancellations: The commitment is to 1 term, and this is not refundable. We cannot refund individual journeys missed either. If we in the rare occasion where we are unable to run the service, we will not make refunds for that missed journey either.

Bus use agreement for parents

By signing this agreement you agree to the terms therein. If you break these terms, you will be given two warnings. If you should further break the terms, your contract with the school in relation to the bus will be terminated and your child will not be able to use the service. Please note that whilst you will be given two warnings for any break in this contract, there is NO warning for number 4 of this contract and should you break this, your child will be suspended from the bus immediately:

1. I agree that I will be at the designated bus stop before and after school at the time given to me by the school and no later.
2. I agree that I will not keep the bus waiting.
3. I agree that should I have to take a car to the bus stop I will park this in a safe manner, not blocking any driveway or parking in such a way as to cause a nuisance and I will not leave the engine idling.
4. I agree that under no circumstances will I be offensive, rude or derogatory to any school bus driver or member of staff assisting with such service and that should I have a problem I will contact the school office to take it further.

Pupil's Name

Signed (Parent/Carer)

Date