



SCHOOL VEHICLE POLICY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This vehicle policy is designed to ensure that only suitable, tested, insured vehicles are utilised by Reach South, and that any drivers/operators are suitably trained and licensed.

2.0 REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Vehicle Insurance

Any driver/operator of a Reach South owned or leased vehicle must be fully, comprehensively insured to operate the vehicle under the vehicle's insurance policy. The line manager of the driver/operator requesting use of the vehicle, is required to check this prior to the vehicle being driven on every occasion.

Records must be kept of when the vehicle is used and by whom.

School vehicles are not permitted to be used for personal business.

2.2 Licensing

Any driver/operator of a Reach South owned or leased vehicle must hold a current, appropriate, clean driving licence. (See Road Traffic Act 1988: Part III Licensing of Drivers of Vehicles [here](#)).

The school must hold a copy of the current, appropriate, clean driving licence on file, and must check the Government website [here](#), before any driver operates a Reach South owned or leased vehicle.

Where the driver has existing points on their licence, or knows of pending driving penalties, a risk assessment must be produced prior to driving/operating the vehicle, in liaison with the Reach South Health and Safety Advisor, to ensure safe and appropriate use of the vehicle.

Drivers will be responsible for all fines relating to speeding, parking and road traffic offences when driving a Reach South vehicle.

2.3 Confidence and Suitability

In addition to being appropriately insured and licenced, any driver/operator of a Reach South owned or leased vehicle must feel confident to take charge and control of that vehicle and its occupants. Staff must never be forced to drive or take control of the vehicle, where they do not feel confident to do so.

The driver should be able to affirm they do not suffer from any medical conditions that might impair their driving and they should meet the minimum eyesight standard

required for driving. If spectacles are needed, they must be worn.

2.4 Minibuses

Subject to sections 2.1 - 2.3 above, you may drive a Reach South minibus (up to 16 passenger seats) if you hold a car driving license and meet the following criteria:

- i. 21 years old or older
- ii. Have held your driving license for at least 2 years
- iii. Meet [Group 2 Medical Standards](#) if you're over 70
- iv. Maximum weight of the minibus is not more than 3.5 tonnes, or 4.25 tonnes including specialist equipment for disabled passengers, for example a wheelchair ramp
- v. The minibus is not towing a trailer
- vi. The minibus is not being used for hire or reward

If all the above criteria are not met, or if there is any change in legislation, you will need to apply for a minibus license.

2.5 Vehicle Permits

Under the Transport Act 1985, there are 2 types of permits:

- i. Permits issued under section 19 – relating to the use of vehicles by educational and other bodies
- ii. Permits issued under section 22 – community bus permits

[Section 19 permits](#) are either 'standard permits' for vehicles that are adapted to carry no more than 16 passengers (excluding the driver) or 'large bus permits' for vehicles that are adapted to carry 17 or more passengers. These permits may be granted to organisations that operate vehicles without a view to profit to transport their members or people whom the organisation exists to help.

Each school must review the need for a Section 19 permit and apply accordingly.

Section 19 permit vehicles cannot be used to carry members of the public.

2.6 Tax and Roadworthiness

All Reach South leased or owned vehicles must be:

- Appropriately taxed and insured
- Have a current MOT test annually (for all cars over 3 years of age and for minibuses over 1 year of age.)
- Subject to regular maintenance in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- Subject to regular checks and inspections in accordance with [Section 19 permit](#) regulations

- Subject to pre-use checks before every trip; **see Appendix 1: Reach South Vehicle Checklist**. The checklist should be completed, and the form saved as evidence of the check.

2.8 Suitability

Vehicles selected for a trip/activity should be suitable for the trip/activity, and the number of expected passengers.

Additional consideration must be given to passengers with physical disabilities / restrictions.

2.9 Training

Anyone driving a school minibus must be suitably competent and confident to do so. Competence to be assessed by a combination of theoretical and practical evaluation to the standards set within the Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MIDAS). Should the assessment indicate that further training is required, it must be delivered by MIDAS or equivalent standard.

Staff should be familiar with the vehicle to be used, what to do in an emergency, and journey planning.

It is recommended that all journeys, particularly those which exceed two hours of travel, should have a secondary driver in case an emergency arises.

2.10 Behaviour of Pupils

Pupils should be advised on acceptable/unacceptable behaviour whilst travelling and suitable and sufficient supervision should be available during the trip.

Dangerous behaviour is not acceptable, and any pupils displaying this, should not be transported, for fear of putting others at risk.

2.11 Use of Private Vehicles

The use of private vehicles for transporting students/pupils must be avoided where possible.

If you use your own vehicle on Reach South business, your insurance should include cover for 'business use'. The vehicle should be roadworthy, have a valid MOT and be taxed (as applicable), and be checked before using it for work purposes.

In addition, and subject to Sections 2.1 - 2.3 above, all drivers must have a full and valid UK car driving license (Cat B1) to use a car for transportation purposes.

Driving Licenses must be checked prior to drivers using a Reach South owned or leased vehicle.

2.12 Infectious Viruses

To minimise the possibility of infection or viruses:

- Vehicles should be well ventilated prior to use and during use
- Vehicles should be subject to regular cleaning, with anti-bacterial products, to minimise the possibility of transfer from contaminated surfaces, especially immediately prior to and after use
- Anti-bacterial handwash should be available for use

2.13 Preparing for your journey

If your journey is long or has the potential to be delayed, drivers must ensure that the vehicle carries fresh drinking water, appropriate clothing (including high visibility garments) and food supplies. Always ensure that the vehicle is fuelled sufficiently to accommodate significant delays or diversions.

Organisations such as AA, RAC and Green Flag provide up to date traffic advice to motorists.

2.14 Using Mobile Telephones Whilst Driving

It is a specific offence to use a handheld mobile telephone when driving.

You can use devices with hands-free access, as long as you do not hold them at any time during usage. Hands-free access means using, for example:

- a Bluetooth headset
- voice command
- a dashboard holder or mat
- a windscreen mount
- a built-in sat nav

The device must not block your view of the road and traffic ahead.

Using a handheld device may result in a driver having their licence endorsed with penalty points and the receipt of a fine.

2.15 Smoking in Vehicles

The law does not allow smoking in vehicles which are used in the course of work, unless used primarily for private purposes.

This means that smoking is not permitted at any time in Reach South owned or leased vehicles, nor in any vehicles hired for work purposes.

2.16 Accidents and Incidents

All drivers must have access to a mobile telephone for the purposes of seeking assistance in the event of an accident/incident.

All Reach South vehicles should carry a first aid kit, a warning triangle and a fire extinguisher for use in an emergency, if safe to do so.

Minor accidents / incidents – *if the vehicle is still legal and roadworthy to drive*

If an accident occurs, the driver should ensure that all passengers are safe and uninjured.

The driver should ensure that the details of other vehicles at the scene are taken and recorded, e.g. type of vehicle, number plate, insurance details, the name and address of other driver(s).

Where possible photographs should be taken of the accident / incident to assist with any insurance claim.

The driver should notify their line manager about the accident as soon as practicable, and act according to advice received.

Major accidents / incidents – *if the vehicle is not drivable, and/or injuries have been sustained*

The driver must telephone the emergency services (as soon as it is safe to do so) and ensure passengers are safe as a priority.

The driver and passengers must follow instructions of the emergency services.

The driver should notify their line manager about the accident as soon as practicable, and act according to advice received.

Vehicle Breakdowns

If the vehicle breaks down, the driver should contact a breakdown company, such as the AA, RAC or Green Flag for recovery (as soon as it is safe to do so) and ensure passengers are safe as a priority, whilst awaiting further instruction.

If the vehicle cannot be repaired at the roadside, then the driver must advise school, so that arrangements can be made to safely return the passengers to school.

2.17 Electric Vehicles and Onsite Charging

Some Reach School schools benefit from having electric vehicle (EV) charging points on site.

Please note that the charging of personal vehicles using these EV charging points is permitted, as long as it is part of a public EV charging network, such as BP Pulse.

APPENDIX 1: REACH SOUTH VEHICLE CHECKLIST

Date:

Vehicle Registration:

Exterior Checks		
Item checked	Yes / No	Comments
Brake fluid, coolant, windscreen washer fluid and oil level check (once only at start of day)		
Doors open and close properly		
Exterior bodywork undamaged		
Exterior mirrors are correctly adjusted, clean, and unobstructed		
Fluid leaks		
Lift (if fitted) works safely and is securely stowed		
Lights, including brake lights and indicators (including trailers where fitted), are clean and working		
Number plates clean and readable		
Ramp (if fitted) works safely and is securely stowed		
Roof rack or trailer is properly fitted, and all luggage is securely held		
Tyre pressures and tread to be checked, including the spare and inner tyres and tyres on trailer, if applicable. At least 3.0mm across centre 3/4 is recommended. Any cuts, foreign objects, damage, or bulges?		
Windscreen and windows are clean and undamaged		
Wiper blades are clean and undamaged and washers operational		

Interior Checks		
Item checked	Yes / No	Comments
All doors are unlocked but firmly shut		
All seats are fixed and secure, and seat belts are undamaged and working properly, and used by all passengers and the driver		
Disabled Passenger Vehicle class (DPV) shown where applicable		
Emergency equipment (e.g. high visibility jacket, torch, warning triangle, webbing cutter, and stocked first aid kit)		
Equipment for wheelchair users (wheelchair tie-downs, passenger safety belts and harnesses) if applicable		
Fire extinguisher(s) foam/water (Minimum of two if passengers in wheelchairs are being carried)		
Footbrake and handbrake operation and effectiveness		
Fuel level (and type of fuel: diesel or petrol)		
Gauges and switches are operational (including speedometer) and no warning lights		
Heating and ventilation systems working		
Horn is in working order		
Interior lights are working		
Location of wheel brace and jack		
Luggage is securely stowed, and aisles and exits are clear		
Permit clear and displayed in front windscreen		
Position and function/purpose of all the dashboard controls		

Position of driving seat so that all controls can be operated comfortably		
Rearview mirror correctly adjusted, clean, and unobstructed for the driver		
Steering wheel operation and effectiveness		

I hereby confirm that the above checks have been completed and that the vehicle detailed above is:

☐

Suitable

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Not suitable for use, in its current condition.

Checked by:

..... (Print name)

..... (Signature)

POLICY HISTORY

Date	Summary of change	Contact	Policy Implementation Date	Review Date
June 2023	Policy creation	Director of Operations	September 2023	June 2024
September 2024	Policy amended	Director of Operations	October 2024	October 2025
October 2025	Section 2.9: Training updated to reflect MIDAS training	Director of Operations	November 2025	November 2026