



Learning and Growing Together
Hand in Hand

Education Visits Policy & Minibus Guidance

Reviewed: November 2024

Next Review: Autumn 2027

MRS C M STURMEY

Policy confirmed by the Governing Body of Grace Mary Primary School on:

Date: 3rd December 2025

Headteacher Signature:

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Chair of Governors Signature

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SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and the governors of maintained schools to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Section 157 of the same act and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies) to have arrangements to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. "Keeping Children Safe in Education" was issued to schools September 2016 detailing statutory guidance, placing a duty on schools to promote the welfare of children. In March 2015, the definition of safeguarding children was revised in the document "Working Together to Safeguard Children" to the following:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's' health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding children is consequently more than contributing to the protection of individual children and the school is committed to the development of policy and practice that supports children and their families to be safe, healthy, enjoy and achieve, contribute positively and achieve economic wellbeing

Grace Mary Primary School strives to promote the welfare of our pupils by:

1. Creating and maintaining a safe learning environment.
2. Identifying child welfare concerns and taking appropriate action.
3. Using the curriculum to enable our children to develop keep safe strategies
4. Operating safe recruitment and selection procedures to prevent unsuitable people working with our children.

The school has a suite of policies designed to meet these needs and are available on request or via the school website or school office.

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Grace Mary Primary School has formally adopted, through its Governing Body, the Sandwell 'Policy & Procedures for Off-Site / Out of Hours Educational Activities' and www.oeapng.info and as outlined on EVOLVE www.sandwellvisits.org.uk Further procedures have been agreed with the Governing Body to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

Aims and purposes of Educational Visits

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom and beyond the school premises. It will seek to provide a broad & balanced range of Learning Outside the Classroom opportunities for all its pupils.

Each year the school will arrange a number of activities that take place off the school site and out of school hours, which support the aims of the school. The range of activities which the Governing Body has given its approval includes:

- Out of hours Clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework etc)
- School sports teams
- Regular local visits (places of worship, swimming, other local amenities)
- Day visits for particular groups
- Residential visits
- Adventurous Activities.

Approval Procedure

The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of Educational visits and activities to the Headteacher. The Head teacher has nominated Mr K Toones / Mrs J Maddick as the Educational Visits Co-ordinators (EVC) and the Governing Body has approved this appointment and the EVC has received training by the LA.

Before a visit is advertised to parents the Head teacher and EVC will approve the initial plan. The Headteacher / EVC will also approve the completed plan and risk management for the visit before departure.

This will be undertaken using EVOLVE as the planning and approval system.

The School has agreed a policy for categorising its visits in line with Sandwell Policy & Procedure for Offsite and out of Hours Educational Activities i.e.:

Residential or Adventurous Activities

Visit Leader - Record application on EVOLVE

EVC - Check application and either request additional information or Submit through to Head.

Head - Check application and either request additional information or Authorise for onward submission to the LA.

LA - Check application and either request additional information or Approve

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N.B. An exception to the above is where a Sandwell Residential Centre is being used AND centre staff are running the activities, in these circumstances delegated approval has been given to the Head and the visit does not need to be submitted to the LA.

Local regular day visits

Visit Leader - Record application on EVOLVE

EVC - Check application and either request additional information or Submit through to Head.

Head - Check application and either request additional information or Approve.

N.B. Approval for this type of visit has been delegated. This visit does not need to be submitted to the LA for approval.

Staffing

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit.

Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing visits. There will be a system within the school to allow less experienced members of staff to work alongside more experienced colleagues on visits. The selection of staff for Educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. Staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for proposed activities.

The school values and recognises the contribution of volunteer adults and parent helpers assisting with Educational activities and visits. Any volunteer will be approved by both the Head and Visit Leader and is entered on the voluntary helpers list kept by the School. They will be carefully briefed on the scope of their responsibility. Where it is appropriate the school will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteers.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and/or other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments. The Visit Leader will have received Visit Leader training endorsed by the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP).

Visit staff will not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs such that their ability to recognise hazards or respond to emergencies is in any way restricted.

Risk Management

The Visit Leader will complete a Risk Assessment for all offsite and out of hours Educational Activities. This will be assessed and approved by the EV Co-ordinator and the Head Teacher.

The Visit Leader will seek to identify any significant risks from any activity that is under their control and take appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe. Good practice precautions and safety measures will be taken.

Risk management needs to be:

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- Reasonably practicable
- Foreseeable
- Suitable and sufficient
- Focusing on significant hazards
- Simple, efficient, cost effective and reflecting good practice
- Promoting a duty of care

When an injury or damage may not be reasonably foreseen it could be deemed an accident; where there is a breach of duty of care, with harm resulting from that failure to exercise reasonable care, this is negligence.

External Activity Providers

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit, the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the school accounts.

The Visit Leader will make appropriate checks before committing the school to the contract. This will include seeking assurances about health and safety, and any accreditation and licensing. Wherever possible the school will seek to use holders of the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge for which no Providers Contracts or other assurance checks are required.

Parental Consents

Grace Mary use the one-off consent form available within the Sandwell Policy & Procedure for Offsite and out of Hours Educational Activities. This form will be sent to parent(s) (or those with parental responsibility) on enrolment of their child in a school.

For visits which contain any element of the following:

- Adventurous activities
- Residential visits

Additional consent will be requested in the form of a Specific Consent form which parent(s) (or those with parental responsibility) will need to complete prior to the activity/visit. The school has policies for Charging and Remissions, Behaviour and Inclusion, which applies to all visits.

The expectations of Pupils and Parents

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents. Pupils, whose behaviour is such that the Visit Leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, can be withdrawn from the activity. The Visit Leader will consider whether such pupils should be sent home early and parents will be expected to cover any costs of the journey home early.

Emergency Procedures

The school will appoint a member of the Senior Management Team as the emergency contact for each visit. If the visit is residential or overseas details of two emergency contacts should be provided. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

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The Visit Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contact, including the home contact details of parents and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back and recorded following normal school procedures for reporting and investigating accidents.

Charging for Activities and Visits

The school may invite, but not require, parents to make voluntary contributions for school activities in order to enhance what is otherwise provided. There is no obligation to contribute and pupils will not be treated any differently according to whether or not their parents have made a contribution.

The level of contribution will be calculated for each activity and may include, for example, an element to cover the participation by young people from low-income families or the cost of travel for accompanying teachers. Some activities may not take place if parents are reluctant to support it

The school will comply with the law in relation to charges that may be made for the cost of activities provided outside school hours, within school hours and for board and lodging on residential courses.

The school has a policy on remission of charges stating how much they are prepared to contribute etc.

Use of the School Minibus

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS TO DRIVE

To be able to drive the minibus staff must:

Fulfil the following requirements:

- Be licensed to drive motor vehicle categories
Either Category B and D1 (for driving tests taken before January 1997)
Or Have taken the additional test for a D1 category (post- Jan 1997).
- When driving on category B licence you must make sure that Permit 19 is visible and valid.
- Be 25 years of age and under 75 years and must have held a full driving licence for at least 3 years.
Any previous convictions for drink driving or dangerous driving offences must be declared.
- Complete a Minibus Driver Application Form and Occupational Health Medical Form and await approval.
- Complete the Sandwell Minibus Driver Assessment by an approved trainer on the use of the minibus or the Midas training course – to be determined by the school.

Must comply with the procedures relating to:

- Fitness to drive

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- Booking the minibus and having an escort on the journey Daily/ Weekly Inspections and Weekly Mileage Forms
- Driving the minibuses
- What to do in the event of accident/incident
- What to do in the event of a breakdown
- Emergency procedures
- Returning to the school.

Must immediately inform the head teacher or minibus coordinator (Natalie Howen):

- any change to their driving licence (i.e. endorsements &/or court proceedings)
- any change in health that may affect their ability to drive said minibus (This may also include certain types of medication)

The minibus coordinator undertakes the day to day management of the mini bus drivers and allocation of duties.

Natalie Howen has overall responsibility for the management of the minibuses.

2.0 ROAD TRAFFIC ACT 1972 2.1 The Law

The Law requires THE DRIVER to ensure that the vehicle being driven on the public highway complies with the Road Traffic Act 1972, and with the Construction and Use Regulations. Staff do this when driving their own cars but extra care is necessary to ensure the safety of students on the minibus.

2.2 Speed limits

Motorways 60 mph

Dual Carriageways 60 mph

These are maximum limits and when road signs indicate lower speeds these must be obeyed. Drivers must take account of the fact that they are driving vehicles containing young students and must adjust their speed accordingly.

2.3 Seating and capacity

No more than one person per seat. (Where luggage would impede egress some seats may have to be used for storage therefore reducing capacity accordingly). The seating capacity of each minibus must never be exceeded

All passengers are required to wear a seatbelt at all times. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that seatbelts are worn and the minibus driver must not start the minibus until all passengers are wearing their seatbelt. It is the driver who is liable for prosecution if students are under 14 years of age, if 14 and over the student will be prosecuted.

All escorts must comply with the minibus drivers requests at all times and instruct students in accordance with his/her requirements and the conditions of this policy.

If a child is under 135cm they must use a booster seat.

2.4 Authorisation

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All staff must have been authorised to drive the minibus by Natalie Howen.

Written authorisation from the Head Teacher is required for any private staff use of minibuses however, it must be noted only authorised drivers who satisfy the conditions above can drive the minibus and if necessary will be charged for private use at the discretion of the Principal.

2.5 Alcohol, Smoking, Use of Mobile Phones.

Under no circumstances may a driver have consumed any alcohol during a period which would affect his/her driving of the Academy minibus.

No passengers should be allowed to drink alcohol on the bus.

No smoking is allowed on the minibus.

The driver can only use the mobile phone if the vehicle is parked and engine is turned off.

2.6 Food and drink

Food and drink may be consumed on the minibus at the drivers discretion. Staff are to ensure that the bus is returned clean and tidy.

2.7 Load

The total weight of passengers and luggage must not exceed the maximum gross vehicle weight which is indicated in the vehicles manual. Aisles and exits must be kept clear.

3.0 FITNESS TO DRIVE

Under no circumstances must a member of staff be required to drive the Academy minibus when in a state of ill health. This may also include certain types of medication (please consult your GP). Staff must declare to the minibus coordinator if they are taking over the counter or prescription drugs; even if they do not affect their ability to drive.

4.0 BOOKING THE MINIBUS

4.1 Booking register

The minibus can be booked through Natalie Howen who will confirm if the bus is available on the dates requested. Complete a booking form (appendix 1)

It is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure that the appropriate off site paperwork is completed and that their risk assessments relating to the activity/trip cover the use of the mini bus.

Where it is only a short journey a risk assessment has been carried out and is available in the Vehicle Information File. The driver and escort must make themselves familiar with this and report if there are any significant changes that are required to the risk assessment to their line manager.

4.2 Block bookings

Block bookings (i.e. of more than one day or repeatedly on certain days of the week) will be given priority unless circumstances prevent this. In these circumstances the final decision will be made by the head teacher

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4.3 Budget costs

Any external organisation e.g. local schools may enquire to use the minibus and driver. A voluntary donation will be agreed on a journey by journey basis. Only an approved Sandwell minibus driver can drive the school minibus.

5.0 BEFORE MOVING OFF

The minibus driver must complete the Weekly Mileage Sheet (Appendix 2), this form is in the vehicle information file and the mileage should be recorded for each journey NOT on a daily basis.

Before moving off check: (walk around vehicle check)

- Horn
- Mirrors
- Screen Visibility (clear of ice/mist)
- Is the road fund license valid and visible? Is the Permit 19 displayed?
- Check tyres
- Instruct the students to fasten their seatbelts.
- Brief students on safe and responsible behaviour during journey?

6.0 MINIBUS ESCORTS

Minibus escorts should take a register of students before every journey and:

- Seat themselves so they are able to manage students.
- Ensure the driver is not distracted by poor behaviour
- Help the driver ensure that seatbelts are fastened.

7.0 Fuel

The minibus takes diesel fuel. All receipts of fuel purchased must be retained and given to the Finance Office on return to the school.

8.0 Accidents and Breakdowns (Appendix 4)

Information relating what to do in the event of an accident can be found in appendix 4 of this policy.

In the event of an accident the school Minibus Accident/Incident Form (Appendix 3) must be completed and returned to upon return to the school. Details of assistance for breakdown are kept in the vehicle, the breakdown services telephone number can be found in Useful Telephone Numbers in (Appendix 5)

Should an incident occur staff should remove both themselves and the students to a safe position away from the vehicle and other hazards. The minibus contains both a first aid kit and a fire extinguisher, which all drivers should acquaint themselves with.

9.0 Arrival times

Staff must contact school on arrival to destination and call school just before leaving for the return journey.

10 Faults

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Report operational faults and damage to body work to the minibus coordinator.

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Appendix 1



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MINIBUS REQUEST FORM

Staff Name: _____ Date: _____

Drivers Name: _____

Escort Name: _____

Number of Students: _____ Year Group: _____

Destination/Reason: _____

Date/s Minibus is required: _____

Time of departure: _____ Time of return: _____

Special requirements: _____

N.B. ALL USERS MUST READ THE MINIBUS POLICY
NO SMOKING IN THE MINIBUS

Office Use Only:

Request for Minibus booking – Accepted/Declined

Staff Name: _____ Date: _____

Date Required: _____ Time: _____

Vehicle Reg: _____

Destination: _____

Authorised: _____

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Appendix 2



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Weekly Mileage Sheets.

Vehicle Registration Number:				Week Commencing:				
Date	Destination	Start Mileage	End Mileage	Total	Escort Yes/No	No Passengers	Emergency Contact	Drivers Signature
Total Mileage								

Appendix 3



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Minibus Accident/Incident Form

Date: _____

Driver's Name: _____

Name of other Driver: _____

Address of other Driver: _____

Registration of other vehicle: _____

Make of vehicle: _____

Model: _____

Names of numbers advertised on Vehicle: _____

Insurance Company: _____

Telephone number of Insurance Company: _____

Independent Witnesses

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Details/Sketch of accident (complete on reverse if necessary)

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Appendix 4

What to do in case of an accident or breakdown

The following procedures must be followed:

1. Road Traffic Accident

- **STOP - BRAKE ON - ENGINE OFF**
- Move passengers to safety if in danger.
- If practical move vehicle to a safe position.
- Inform emergency services if necessary via mobile phone and the emergency contact person as soon as possible with brief concise details.
- Details required by Emergency Contact Person are:-
 - Location - Brief and Accurate
 - Damage to vehicle and whether any passenger will need to be transferred if the vehicle cannot be driven.
 - Brief details of damage to third party.

Obtain necessary third party details:

- Make, model, colour and registration of third party vehicles.
- Name and address of driver.
- Name and address of owner (not always the same).
- Damage to third party vehicle.
- Obtain third party details including insurance details.

Give details to anyone requiring them i.e. Police or third party:

- Drivers name.
- Name and Address of Academy.
- Registration number of our vehicle.
- Give telephone number, details of insurance, any other information as may be required.

Obtain names and addresses of any independent witnesses, excluding passengers on your vehicle or passengers in the third party vehicle, the name, number and station of any police officer in attendance.

If possible make a rough sketch of the accident.

Do not visit, contact or discuss the accident with anyone involved other than the Police and the Academy.

NEVER ADMIT LIABILITY TO ANYONE OR OFFER TO PAY FOR DAMAGE INCURRED.

As soon as is practicable, return to the school and complete the Minibus Accident and Incident Form (Appendix 3) and return to Minibus Coordinator who will forward details to insurers.

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2. Breakdown

Motorway

If a problem develops, leave the motorway at the next exit or pull into a service area. If this is not possible then:

- a) Try to stop the vehicle near an emergency telephone (situated at approximately 1 mile intervals) along the hard shoulder, pull onto the hard shoulder and stop as far to the left as possible with your front wheels turned to the left. If considered safe to do so pull onto the grass verge to give an extended safety zone between the vehicle and moving traffic. Leave the vehicle by the left-hand door. Hazard warning lights should be switched on to warn other traffic.
- b) Keep the sidelights on if it is dark or visibility is poor.
- c) Use the emergency telephone (the telephone is free of charge) as this will enable the Police to identify the vehicle's exact location.
- d) Walk to the nearest emergency telephone which is indicated by arrows on marker posts (on the hard shoulder) pointing in the direction of the telephone, the number on the marker post nearest to the vehicle must also be given to the emergency services as well as other important information such as, students on board, then return to your vehicle and wait near by, well away from the carriageway and hard shoulder.

Alternatively:

If there is a motorway exit or service area very close to your vehicle and the vehicle is driveable, drive slowly along the hard shoulder (with hazard warning lights switched on) to the place of safety, providing there is no danger to the vehicle, the occupants or other road users. The driver MUST ensure in such circumstances that the breakdown/recovery service which is contacted is aware of the vehicles exact location as well as other important information such as, students are on board.

Otherwise, the driver should telephone the Police (999/121) using a mobile phone, stating which motorway the vehicle is on, as well as the direction of travel, ensure that you have identified your exact location from the marker post number on the side of the hard shoulder, other important information must also be given such as, students on board,

Able-bodied passengers should be moved out of the vehicle (using the left-hand door) and as far away from the minibus as possible. Passengers should be taken onto the embankment and as far away from the traffic as is practicable. Students should be kept together, kept calm and be strictly supervised.

In some circumstances it may be safer to leave the passengers in the vehicle with the escort, if available, for example, if there is not a safe waiting area close by.

If leaving the vehicle to summon assistance it is advisable that the driver should go for help and wear a suitable fluorescent/reflective jacket, leaving the escort with the vehicle and any other passengers.

A mobile phone should be used to pass relevant information to the academy or nominated contact person, to tell them what has happened and to ask them to relay messages to parents and others.

When help arrives, passengers who are outside the vehicle must not board the vehicle again until repairs have been carried out and the fault rectified.

Should a replacement vehicle be required and passengers need to be transferred from one vehicle to another then the driver of the replacement vehicle must inform the Police of this requirement so that they can provide a back up motorway patrol vehicle to facilitate this procedure, and provide safety cover from other passing traffic.

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On no account attempt to carry out repairs or change any wheel for whatever reason whilst travelling on a motorway, always telephone the emergency services and wait for assistance to arrive.

Other roads

If the driver has a vehicle breakdown, they must think first of other traffic and road users, Get the vehicle off the road to a safe position, lay by etc. not on the footpath, as this will endanger other road users or pedestrians.

If the vehicle is causing an obstruction, warn other traffic by using your hazard warning lights. If the vehicle carries a red warning triangle, put it on the road at least 50 metres before the obstruction and on the same side of the road.

At night or in poor visibility, do not stand behind the vehicle or let anyone else do so – you could prevent other drivers seeing your rear lights.

In some circumstances, it may be safer to leave the passengers in the vehicle. For example, if it seems too dangerous to unload passengers if there is not a safe waiting area. The police must be informed immediately as to the situation.

Call the nominated breakdown service.

A mobile phone should be used to pass relevant information to the school or nominated contact person, to tell them what has happened and to ask them to relay messages to parents and others.

When help arrives, passengers who are outside the vehicle must not board the vehicle again until repairs have been carried out and the fault rectified.

On no account attempt to carry out repairs or change any wheel for whatever reason whilst travelling on a motorway, always telephone the emergency services and wait for assistance to arrive.

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Appendix 5

Contact	Telephone Number
Breakdown Assistance	0121 569 6845 day time out of hours
Grace Mary Primary School	01384 255910
Head Teacher	
Waterfall Lane	0121 569 6845
Jean Maddick	
Simon Cains	
Robert Beasley	

Numbers will be inserted manually for data protection to go in minibus file

Named drivers

<i>Driver</i>	<i>Date of Test</i>
<i>Robert Beasley</i>	<i>17/10/2016</i>
<i>Clare Sturme</i>	