

NOTES AND GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF MINIBUSES



DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL

Revised September 2009

This booklet is designed to help you obtain the best possible service to support your use of the Minibus and to ensure your safety and that of your passengers and other road users. It is essential that the person(s) responsible and driver(s) of your Minibus have read and fully understood the contents. It would be good practice to keep a copy of the guidance notes with the vehicle and ask all drivers to sign for their copy to confirm that they have read and fully understand these guidance notes.

With effect from April 2009 new legislation has been introduced regarding the issue of Section 19 Permits. From this date permits will be issued for a maximum of 5 years and after this establishments will be required to apply for new permits if they wish to continue using minibuses.

Please read the contents carefully and if you have any queries, do not hesitate to contact Dorset Passenger Transport, at k.rice@dorsetcc.gov.uk who will be pleased to assist you.

Copies of "Notes and Guidance on the Use of Minibuses" can be obtained by accessing Dorset County Council's website at www.dorsetforyou.com and clicking on: Home > Working > Business > Doing business with us > Services > Procurement services provided by Dorset County Council > Vehicles and fuels > Minibus procurement, maintenance, operation and safety

PLEASE NOTE THAT A CHARGE OF £11.00 WILL BE MADE FOR ISSUING A MINIBUS PERMIT.

CONTENTS

Section	Page Number
1. WHAT IS A MINIBUS	3
2. APPROVAL OF JOURNEYS	3
3. DRIVING LICENCE AND REQUIREMENTS	3
4. VEHICLE RECORDS	5
5. LOADS	6
6. INSURANCE (where arranged by Dorset County Council)	6
7. VEHICLE EXCISE DUTY (VED)	7
8. ACCIDENTS	8
9. ROAD SAFETY	8
10. SEAT BELTS	9
11. BREAKDOWNS	10
12. JOURNEYS ABROAD	11
13. INSPECTION, REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	12
14. FARES	12
15. SPEED LIMITS	13
16. TRAILERS	13
17. DRIVING TIME	13
18. TIREDNESS AND FATIGUE	14
19. MOBILE PHONES	15
20. MINIBUS PERMITS	16
21. DRIVERS HOURS	16
22. TRIPS	16
23. INCOME	17
24. SECURITY	17
25. CONTACT NUMBERS	18

1. WHAT IS A MINIBUS

- 1.1 A minibus is defined as a passenger carrying vehicle having more than 8 seats but no more than 16 seats in addition to the drivers.

2. APPROVAL OF JOURNEYS

- 2.1 The vehicle can only be used for purposes and journeys approved in advance by the head of your establishment or the person responsible for your Minibus. It is suggested that a record is kept of all persons that are competent to operate the Minibus to ensure compliance with current regulations and to provide duty of care to your passengers, drivers and other road users.
- 2.2 It is strongly recommended that drivers take advantage of the Minibus training and assessment schemes provided by the County Council's Road Safety Team for details contact 01305 224588. If a potential driver has a motoring conviction this does not necessarily bar him/her from driving a Minibus, although the Head of Establishment will no doubt wish to take full account of recent serious convictions before giving their approval.

3. DRIVING LICENCES AND REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 To drive a Minibus you must normally be aged twenty-one or over and hold a full driving licence with category D1 entitlement. All entitlements on British Licences will continue to be accepted at face value during temporary visits to EC/EEA countries. Please note that under a permit minibuses used for hire and reward cannot be driven outside the UK unless the driver has a D1 or D category. If unsure advice should be sought from the licensing authority of the country being visited.
- 3.2 **Driving licences held before 1 January 1997** If you had entitlement to drive cars prior to 1 January 1997 - shown as group A (B for automatics) on an old style green or pink licence or as category B and D1 not for hire or reward on the new style pink and green or photo-card licence - you can drive a Minibus provided you are 21 or over, the Minibus has a maximum of 17 seats including the driver's seat and is not being used for hire or reward.
- 3.3 To drive a Minibus which has 9 or more passenger seats for hire or reward (hire or reward encompasses any payment in cash or kind by or on behalf of passengers which gives them a right to be carried) you will normally need passenger carrying vehicle entitlement category D1. To obtain this you must meet higher medical standards and take a further driving test. The acquisition of this category is involved and a lengthy process as drivers must pass a stringent medical, apply for provisional Category D1 to be added to their driving licence, pass a two-part theory test and take a practical driving test conducted by the Driving Standards Agency.
- 3.4 Changes to the type of vehicle that you are able to use if you need to acquire a Category D1 licence has changed. Minibuses must have a gross weight that exceeds 3500kgs and as most School Minibuses may not meet this requirement you are strongly advised to check with your vehicle maintenance provider or supplier on the suitability of your organisations Minibus.

- 3.5 New rules from 1 January 1997 your Minibus entitlement will remain valid in the UK and on temporary visits abroad until your licence is next renewed. When your licence is renewed, your Minibus entitlement can only be issued if you make a special application which will involve meeting higher medical standards.
- 3.6 If your Minibus entitlement is renewed you will normally be granted a D1 and D1+ E licence for 3 years which will allow you to drive Minibuses, not for hire or reward, in the UK and on temporary visits to other EC/EEA countries.
- 3.7 If your Minibus entitlement is not renewed, categories D1 and D1+E will no longer appear on your licence. However, if you are aged less than 70 years, you may still be able to drive Minibuses in certain circumstances.
- 3.8 Drivers whose licences are due for renewal will receive advice about these new procedures with their renewal reminder letter.
- 3.9 **New Driving Licences obtained on or after 1 January 1997** any Driver who passed a test on or after 1 January 1997 does not automatically receive category D1 entitlement. However, the holder of a new category B entitlement who passed a test on or after 1 January 1997 is permitted to drive a vehicle in category D1 which is not used for hire or reward on behalf of a non-commercial body so long as the following conditions are met. you drive on behalf of a non commercial body for social purposes but not for hire or reward, unless operating under a permit;
- 3.9.1 You are aged 21 or over
- 3.9.2 You have held a car (category B) licence for at least 2 years;
- 3.9.3 You are providing your service on a *voluntary basis; and
- 3.9.4 The Minibus maximum weight is not more than 3.5 tonnes excluding any specialist equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers. Minibuses up to 4.25 tonnes will be permitted in certain circumstances.
- 3.9.5 If you are aged 70 and over, you are able to meet the health standards for driving a vehicle (i.e. Minibus) which comes within the D1 class;
- 3.9.6 When driving a Minibus under these conditions you may not receive any payment or consideration for doing so other than out of pocket expenses, tow any size trailer and you may only drive Minibuses in this country.

**Guidance from the County Council's legal service on volunteer drivers states " if a person drives a minibus out of normal working hours and does not get paid the additional time spent (apart from out of pocket expenses), and driving the minibus is not an obligation in the contract of employment then the driver can be classed as a volunteer. If however, the driver drives the minibus during normal working hours, and then the driver is clearly being paid for that days work, and cannot be classed as a volunteer and will need the correct licence". DfES guidance states "it is bad practice for School staff to drive a minibus solely on the basis that the have held a class B licence for at least 2 years (DfES, 2006). RosPA advice is that irrespective of the legal requirements those teachers and other school staff who may be exempt should*

undergo specific minibus driver training and preferably hold a D1 category on their licence (RosPA, 2006).

- 3.11 **Medically Restricted Licences** in general, car licences have to be renewed when drivers' reach the age of 70 but younger drivers with restricted medical licences will also be affected by the new rules when their licences are renewed after 1 January 1998. If you have a medically restricted licence you should note that entitlement to drive non-commercial Minibuses on a voluntary basis will not be subject to the higher standards until you reach the age of 70.
- 3.12 **Medically Fit to Drive** DVLA is legally responsible for deciding if a person is medically unfit to drive. They need to know when driving licence holders have a condition that may (now or in the future) affect their safety as a driver. You are required to declare any medical conditions that may affect your ability to drive on Council business. For example DVLA requires you to inform them if you have ever had, or currently suffer from any of the following medical conditions - Psychiatric Conditions - Alcohol or Drugs - Vision Problems - Diabetes - Heart Conditions - Sleep Disorders - Spinal Injuries - Cancers or Tumours. Further information can be found on the DVLA Website at <http://www.dvla.gov.uk/drivers/dmed1.htm>. A full PCV medical is not necessary unless you have a PCV Licence.
- 3.13 Employees of the County Council, including teachers, who drive Minibuses, are required to be medically fit to drive. To ensure that there is a system in place to ensure all drivers are medically fit to drive a Minibus a Self Declaration Medical form is available at www.dorsetforyou.com and clicking on: Home > Working > Business > Doing business with us > Services > Procurement services provided by Dorset County Council > Vehicles and fuels > Minibus procurement, maintenance, operation and safety. The County Councils Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Section will assist you if you have any concerns or issues over a person's medical condition to drive a Minibus.

PLEASE NOTE. If you have a medical condition which has become worse since your licence was issued or you develop a new medical condition, you must inform DVLA Swansea of your condition, as it may affect your fitness to drive. Failure to do so is a criminal offence and is punishable by a fine of up to £1000.

4. VEHICLE RECORDS AND VEHICLE DEFECT REPORTING

- 4.1 A Minibus Logbook which can include a Vehicle Defect Report book, or be used in conjunction with a Vehicle Defect Report, is to be maintained and kept on the vehicle. Vehicle Defect Report Books are to be supplied by the establishment that operates the Minibus or they can be purchased from DCC's Vehicle Maintenance Manager at Dorset Works Organisation Vehicle Maintenance. Advice and guidance on the correct use of the books is also available from Dorset Works Organisation Vehicle Maintenance.
- 4.2 Drivers are responsible for the condition of their vehicles when in use on the road and must be able to report any defects found that could prevent the safe working of the vehicle. All defects should be recorded in writing and reported to a responsible person to take the appropriate action. Nil defects should also be reported, as this is a good way of ensuring that the checks are being carried out. Defect reports are an essential

part of any maintenance system and should be attached to the vehicles maintenance records and kept for 15 months with a record of the remedial action taken to repair the defects

- 4.3 Before the vehicle is driven **each** driver on **each** journey should carry out a pre-journey “walk around” check of the vehicle. The items that need to be checked are listed in any good quality Drivers Defect Report book but should generally cover the items listed below. Batteries and tyres should be checked at least once a week especially if the vehicle is not used regularly, and the date of checks noted in the logbook. The cooling system should be kept filled with the appropriate strength anti-freeze at all times.

Oil, Coolant, and Brake fluid levels

Tyres

Lights

Exterior of Body

Seats and Seat Belts

Exits and Access points

Horn

Brakes

Fire Extinguisher and First Aid Kit

Legal documentation

Windscreen washers and wipers

Mirrors

Instruments

- 4.4 The Director of Children’s Services on advice from PCM and/or the Vehicle Maintenance Manager or his elected representatives is authorised to prohibit the use by Schools or youth centres, of vehicles of which he considers to be unroadworthy. In the cases of doubt about the roadworthiness of a vehicle, the vehicle should not be used until an inspection has been made.
- 4.5 To ensure that these guidelines are being adhered to Dorset Passenger Transport Crew and Compliance officers will visit all permit holders on an annual basis and call occasionally during the year.
- 4.6 Permit holders are required to inform Dorset Passenger Transport of all changes regarding the permit. In addition all permit holders should provide Dorset Passenger Transport with the name and contact details for a nominated person who will be responsible for the permit,

5. LOADS

- 5.1 Luggage and equipment carried should not exceed the gross vehicle weight stated in the manufacturer’s handbook and/or on the chassis ID plate. Exits and access points should be kept clear at all times. If the vehicle has a roof rack great care must be taken when loading to ensure the loads are secured and evenly placed. Great care must be taken to ensure the vehicles maximum load is not exceeded.

6. INSURANCE (where arranged by the Council)

- 6.1 The Council will arrange full comprehensive insurance cover through its block policy if

requested. The cost of insurance premiums will fall on the establishment. Further details are available from the Insurance and Risk Management Section.

- 6.2 Cover is comprehensive for the vehicle. However, the first £250.00 of any damage (whether to the Minibus or third party vehicle or/and property) will be borne by the School.
- 6.3 The vehicle is to be kept locked at all times when not in use or when parked on visits and all valuables removed. The keys must be returned to the Head of the Establishment, or his representative on completion of the journey. Failure to do this could invalidate your insurance cover.
- 6.4 It is a condition of the Authority's insurance policy that vehicles must only be used on officially approved business of the School/Dorset County Council. "Business" can be interpreted to include School visits, attendance at sporting events etc. **Unauthorised use invalidates the Council's insurance policy**, and in the event of an accident may render your School, establishment or the driver liable to the cost of any resultant claim for damages. **Private use is not permitted.**
- 6.5 Your Minibus may be loaned or hired to any School, affiliated youth organisations or other County Council establishment. However, use must not go contrary to the Minibus Permit issued to the School (see section 19), and any fee charged must relate purely to running costs and an allowance for depreciation. It is for the Head of the Establishment to determine any such charge. **If you hire or loan your minibus out always remove your section 19 permit.**
- 6.6 It is the responsibility of the Head of Establishment to satisfy themselves that any person driving the vehicle is capable, medically fit, and legally entitled to do so. It is strongly recommended that the driver should have attended a recognised driver improvement/training programme which is repeated every 3 to 4 years. Details of the scheme operated by the County Council are available from the Road Safety section on 01305 224558.
- 6.7 Journeys abroad - Individual written applications for prior approval of all journeys abroad must be submitted to the Insurance and Risk Management Section at least two weeks before the proposed journey. An original Certificate of Motor Insurance will be issued, and should be held with the vehicle for the duration of the visit. It is no longer necessary for a Green Card to be issued in respect to visits to all member countries of the European Union, or to the Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Hungary, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland. A Green Card can be arranged for other visits, but any costs imposed by the Insurers would have to be met by the School. **It should be noted that the insurance cover does not cover the cost of recovery in the event of a breakdown.**
- 6.8 Where insurance cover has been arranged independently with an external provider, it is the School's responsibility to ensure that all conditions in the policy are complied with.
- 6.9 **Hiring out of Minibuses insured through DCC.** Your Minibus may be hired to any School or youth organisation that is recognised by the Authority. Advice on this is available from the Insurance and Risk Management Section.

6.10 It should be noted that the first £250 of any damage is not covered. It is for the Head of Establishment to determine the hire charges. If in doubt, about any aspect of insurance, please contact the Insurance and Risk Management Section

7. VEHICLE EXCISE DUTY (VED)

7.1 Various new arrangements concerning the licensing of Minibuses have been introduced. These include the requirement that all vehicles used for "hire and reward" should be taxed as a bus rather than private light goods.

7.2 The definition of "hire and reward" covers any circumstances in which money is paid, either directly or indirectly, by those travelling on the vehicle.

7.3 It will be for the Head of Establishment to decide whether to operate under a permit (see section 19) and make a charge for trips, or remain in the private light goods category and make no charge.

8. ACCIDENTS

8.1 Drivers must be aware of and comply with the requirements of the Road Traffic Acts.

8.2 In the event of a vehicle being involved in an accident, a written report should be submitted to the Head of Establishment and if you are insured with the Authority the Insurance and Risk Management claims team (on 01305 224137) within 24 hours if possible.

8.3 Details of any independent witnesses should be obtained, as this will help in defending any claim that may be made by a third party.

8.4 The accident should be recorded in the vehicle logbook immediately below the entry for the journey.

8.5 No admission of liability or blame should be made either verbally or in writing to any other person involved, or making enquiries, on behalf of other persons involved at the time of, or after, the accident.

9. ROAD SAFETY

9.1 It has been estimated that up to a third of all road traffic accidents involve somebody who is at work at the time. This may account for over 20 fatalities and 250 serious injuries every week. Some employers believe, incorrectly, that provided they comply with certain road traffic law requirements, e.g. company vehicles have a valid MOT certificate, and that drivers hold a valid licence, this is enough to ensure the safety of their employees, and others, when they are on the road. However, health and safety law applies to on-the-road work activities as to all work activities, and the risks should be effectively managed within a health and safety management system. This guidance applies to any employer,

9.2 Many incidents happen due to inattention and distraction as well as failure to observe the Highway Code. You need to consider what steps you should take to ensure that your drivers use the road as safely as possible.

- 9.3 Road Safety in all its aspects is of the utmost importance. The behaviour of your passengers can directly affect the safety of your vehicle. You are strongly advised to have clear and concise guidelines laid down for all your passengers.
- 9.4 Work-related road safety can only be effectively managed if it is integrated into your arrangements for managing Health and Safety at work. You should look at your health and safety systems and consider whether they adequately cover this area of work. The main areas you need to address are policy, responsibility, organisation, systems and monitoring.
- 9.5 Practical advice on managing work-related road safety can be found in the publications available at the web sites listed on Page 18.
- 9.6 Each vehicle must carry an approved First Aid Kit and Fire Extinguisher which are fixed and clearly labelled in the vehicle.
- 9.7 It is recommended that each vehicle has a glass break hammer located above each window to break the glass in case of an emergency.

10. SEAT BELTS

- 10.1 The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) strongly advises that where seat belts are fitted, they are worn for all journeys by all passengers.
- 10.2 From the 18th September 2006, drivers must make sure that children up to 135cm (4'5") tall use the correct child car seats or boosters in cars, vans and goods vehicles. There are very few exceptions to these rules and Drivers risk being fined if they don't comply with the new laws.
- 10.3 In buses and coaches (including Minibuses), seated passengers aged 14 years and above will have to use seat belts where they are fitted. Regulations requiring children 3 years to 13 years to use seat belts (or child restraints if they are available) in these vehicles will be brought forward as soon as practicable. The regulations will not include any obligation for anyone to provide child restraints in these vehicles. Below is a summary for guidance only for further information on seatbelt regulations visit the Think Road Safety Website. Details are available under Section 26

Summary of the new Rules from 18 September 2006 in Cars, Vans, Goods Vehicles including Minibuses			
	Front seat	Rear seat	Who is responsible?
Driver	Seat belt MUST be worn if available.		Driver
Child up to 3 years	Correct child restraint MUST be used.	Correct child restraint MUST be used*. If one is not available in a taxi, may travel unrestrained.	Driver

Child from 3rd birthday up to 135cms in height (approx 4'5") (or 12th birthday whichever they reach first)**	Correct child restraint MUST be used.	Where seat belts fitted, correct child restraint MUST be used. Must use adult belt if the correct child restraint is not available: - in a licensed taxi/private hire vehicle; or - for a short distance for reason of unexpected necessity; or - two occupied child restraints prevent fitment of a third. A child 3 and over may travel unrestrained in the rear seat of a vehicle if seat belts are not available.	Driver
Child over 1.35 metres (approx 4ft 5ins in height) or 12 or 13 years	Seat belt MUST be worn if available.	Seat belt MUST be worn if available.	Driver
Adult passengers (i.e. 14 years and over)	Seat belt MUST be worn if available.	Seat belt MUST be worn if available.	Passenger

11. BREAKDOWNS

11.1 In the event of a breakdown:

- Move the vehicle off the road or as far away from other traffic as possible
- Switch on Hazard lights
- Get passengers to leave the vehicle from the nearside and move as far away from the other traffic as possible (particularly on a Motorway)
- Keep passengers together and make sure children are supervised
- Use a mobile phone (or roadside emergency telephone on a motorway) to get assistance
- If disabled passengers are being carried, it may be safer not to move them from the bus

11.2 What to do in the event of an accident:

- Make the scene as safe as possible
- Switch on hazard lights
- Do not move injured passengers unless they are in further danger
- Call the emergency services, telling them if any passengers have special needs
- The driver must stay at the scene of the accident until emergency services have taken all necessary details

11.3 By law every Minibus should carry the following equipment

- One foam, water or halon-type fire extinguisher (BS approved) or two fire extinguishers if passengers in wheelchairs are being transported
- PCV approved First Aid Kit

11.4 It is recommended that the following additional equipment should be carried on the Minibus:

- Pen and Paper
- Details of your organisation with dedicated contacts
- Insurance details
- An emergency warning triangle
- A high visibility coat
- A torch

11.5 The Head of Establishment may consider it advisable for the establishment to be a member of a breakdown/recovery service, particularly if vehicles are used for long journeys and/or taken abroad. The County Council is a member of AA Fleet Rescue as a 'pay as you use' member. Membership can be arranged if you subscribe to DCC's Minibus Safety Scheme, which is available through Dorset Works Organisation's Vehicle Maintenance. However, this membership does not cover your vehicle when travelling abroad and establishments will need to make separate arrangements.

12. JOURNEYS ABROAD

12.1 Drivers must be aware of the procedure to be followed when taking a Minibus abroad. Attention is drawn to the EU Rules and AETR Rules for international journeys. Advice can be obtained from the Vehicle Operator & Services Agency Road Freight Office.

12.2 You must ensure that the necessary insurance and other documents depending on the requirements of countries to be visited have been obtained prior to the journey.

12.3 A Minibus must be fitted with a Tachograph and the driver must be trained in its use for international journeys to or through EU Member States.

12.4 The travel documentation required when taking a Minibus abroad varies according to the service being carried out and the countries visited. Most Minibus journeys tend to fall into the category known as an occasional closed door tour, where the vehicle makes a round trip back to its starting point carrying the same group of passengers throughout.

12.5 If you are travelling abroad you should contact VoSA – International Road Freight Office (IRFO) to check if your journey will require prior authorisation. They will, if necessary, seek approval for the particular journey from each of the countries through which the vehicle will be travelling and issue an International Passenger Transport Authorisation (IPTA). The address and contact details are available at the back of these guidance notes. Here is a check list of documents you will need when taking a Minibus abroad:-

Driver / Passenger documentation:

- Full driving licence including Category D1 for each driver
- International Driving Permit or translation of licence (for some countries)
- Letter of authority to drive the vehicle from the Registered Keeper
- Full passport for each person in the vehicle. Check expiry dates – some countries require passports to be valid for at least 6 months after return date.

- European Health Insurance Card (formerly the E111) for each person in the vehicle

Vehicle documentation:

- Vehicle Registration Document (V5) **not a copy**, or a Vehicle Hire Certificate (formVE103)
- Tachograph charts for each day of the trip, plus spares in case some get damaged or dirty.
- Own account certificate if using your own vehicle or a Waybill if using a hired, loaned or borrowed vehicle
- Insurance Certificate and/or Green Card (international motor insurance certificate)
- Breakdown/recovery insurance
- The European Accident Form (available from insurers)
- A GB plate should be affixed to the rear of the vehicle.
- A warning triangle and spare bulbs are legally required in most EU countries. It is the drivers' responsibility to check that the Emergency Breakdown Equipment is sufficient to comply with Laws of the Country's that you are visiting.

Documents should never be left unattended in the vehicle

12.6 A minibus with 10 to 17 seats including the driver is subject to the following:

- For international journeys either the EC or AETR Drivers' Hours rules must be followed from the beginning of the journey in the UK.
- Countries outside the EU may have different laws and it is best to contact the Embassy or consulate of each country on the route of the journey to check.
- Both drivers and the employers or operator of the trip are responsible for ensuring that they comply with the driver's hours rules.

13. INSPECTION, REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

13.1 Operation of the vehicle must comply with manufacturers servicing requirements. A system of planned maintenance showing regular safety inspections must also be in place with a system for recording defects and any remedial action taken.

13.2 Best practice and VoSA guidelines suggest that safety inspections should be carried out at between 6 - 10 weekly intervals (depending on mileage and use). Inspection regimes should be monitored and intervals changed to suit the conditions and age of the vehicle. Procurement and Contracts Management recommend that Schools sign up to DCC's Minibus Safety Inspection and Maintenance Service offered by Dorset Works Vehicle Maintenance to ensure compliance. If a School chooses not to use this service the Head of Establishment must make alternative arrangements to ensure that Minibuses are properly inspected (as above) and maintained.

14. FARES

14.1 No direct or indirect charge in any form of a fare may be made to passengers, unless the Minibus is in use in accordance with a permit granted under the Transport Act 1985 (See section 19) or has Passenger Carrying entitlement.

15. SPEED LIMITS

- 15.1 The following speed limits apply to Minibuses under the Road Traffic Act, the Motor Vehicles (Variations of Speed Limits) Regulations 1984 No. 325.
- 15.2 It should be noted that the actual unladen weight of the vehicle and its use is the deciding factor.

Maximum speed (in miles per hour) while vehicle is being driven on:-	Motorway	Dual Carriageway road not being a motorway	Other Roads
Up to 8 passengers with a gross vehicle weight not over 3.5 tonnes	70	70	50
Towing	60	60	50
More than 8 passenger seats and a gross vehicle weight over 3.05 tonnes not exceeding 12m in length	70	60	50
Towing	60	60	50
Exceeding 12m in length	60	60	50

16. TRAILERS

- 16.1 The towing of a laden trailer with a fully laden Minibus is not recommended, as this is a cumbersome combination and could well exceed the maximum permissible weights. To ensure the combination does not exceed its permissible weight, check the vehicle identification plate, manufacturers driving book or contact the manufacturer/supplier. Advice is also available from Dorset Works Organisation Vehicle Maintenance.
- 16.2 To drive a Minibus with a trailer up to 750kg you will require category D1 entitlement. To tow a trailer over 750kg you must have category D1+E entitlement provided that the gross weight of the combination does not exceed 12000kg and the gross weight of the trailer does not exceed the unladen weight of the towing vehicle.

17. DRIVING TIME

- 17.1 Professional drivers are bound by stringent drivers' hours regulations which control the amount of time spent driving at work and rest. On the question of how many hours it is safe for a teacher or assistant to drive The following are a set of guidelines that you may find helpful.
- 17.2 Frequent breaks must be taken on long journeys, and in any event nobody should drive continuously for more than two hours without the journey being broken and the

driver taking a break away from the vehicle for a minimum of 30 minutes. The maximum number of hours that a driver should be behind the wheel is two hours.

- 17.3 Drivers who are to travel for 50 miles or more each way must be allowed adequate time off from their teaching duties or other work so as to be properly rested before commencing the journey. This is particularly important if a large proportion of the travelling is to take place during the late evening as this is when tiredness can become a serious problem. The rest time should not include time spent undertaking other duties associated with the care and responsibility of pupils.
- 17.4 Every effort should be made to ensure there are other insured drivers involved, to provide cover in emergencies and help avoid excessive fatigue during driving.
- 17.5 It would be a sensible precaution to ensure that there is an additional adult, who preferably can drive and who should supervise passengers since a driver's attention may easily be distracted.
- 17.6 It is advisable not to drive Minibuses unless these requirements are met and unless passengers have been made fully aware of the standards of behaviour expected of them.

18. TIREDNESS AND FATIGUE

- 18.1 Tiredness can lead to a loss of concentration and is a major cause of road accidents. If you are tired or feel ill, **DO NOT DRIVE**.
- 18.2 The following tips are recommended by RAC's Risk Management Service and will help to make your journey safer:
 - 18.2.1 Carry out any major packing of the Minibus the night before you travel: that way you will begin the journey in a more relaxed frame of mind (ensure valuables are not left on the vehicle unattended).
 - 18.2.2 Get a good night's sleep before setting off on a long trip - and make sure that you are properly awake before setting off. Research shows that young adults who have had less sleep than usual the night before a journey experience high levels of sleepiness when driving on the following day, especially in the afternoon.
 - 18.2.3 Try to avoid setting off during the "post-lunch" dip - a period of decreased alertness that strikes between 1pm and 4pm when work performance suffers, people are apt to nod off in dimly-lit meeting rooms and the likelihood of being involved in an accident increases. It is also advisable not to set off after a full and possibly fraught day at work.
 - 18.2.4 Don't drive at night if you can avoid it. Internal biological "clocks" encourage most people to be awake in the daytime and to sleep at night and they will find it difficult to concentrate and maintain alertness between midnight and 7am.
 - 18.2.5 Plan long trips carefully so that you allow plenty of stopping off points where you can relax and maybe have some food and drink. Heavy meals and certain foods, such as turkey, warm milk and bananas - induce sleep.

18.2.6 Don't be embarrassed to pull over and take a short nap once you have stopped somewhere safe. Two cups of coffee followed by a 15-minute nap is the best tonic until you can get some proper sleep.

18.2.7 Plan to stop - or to swap drivers - every couple of hours. Bear in mind, though that getting out of the vehicle and walking about will only have a limited effect.
Driving should be shared whenever possible.

18.2.8 Two hours continuous driving is the maximum recommended by most Risk Management organisations. The vehicle should be well ventilated, especially if a full load of passengers is on board.

18.2.9 Be aware of the symptoms of fatigue. They include momentary lapses in concentration, shifting around in the seat, drifting over lanes and slow reactions.

18.3 The following guidelines are recommended by the Royal Society of the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and they recommend that the following driver hour's limits are not exceeded (RoSPA 2007).

	Driving Only	Driving + Other Work
Maximum length of working day	13hrs	10hrs
of which spent driving	9hrs	4hrs
Maximum time driving without a break	2hrs	2hrs
Minimum length of break	15mins	15mins
Daily rest period	11hrs	11hrs
Weekly rest period	45hrs	45hrs

19. MOBILE PHONES

19.1 New laws introduced and updated in February 2007 state that you will be acting illegally if you use a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving. Any person found guilty will face a penalty of a £60 fine and three penalty points.

19.2 The legislation makes it illegal to use your phone if you hold the phone at any point during its use. The law also applies to any interactive device such as PDA's or navigation aids. "Holding" includes cradling the phone between your ear and shoulder.

19.3 Dorset County Council acknowledges that there is no clear evidence in the existing scientific literature that the use of mobile telephones poses a long-term public health hazard. However, the possibility of a small risk cannot be ruled out. As an example, if you suffer a sensation of localised heating around the ear or suffer headaches or nausea while using a mobile telephone **STOP USING THE PHONE IMMEDIATELY** and report the details to your Doctor and to your line manager

19.4 At no time must a Hand-Held phone be used inside a vehicle when driving, other than when there is a threat of an assault or an actual assault. Please use the following tips and advice:-

- When driving do not initiate calls, search for numbers or take notes.

- Do not use mobile phones in or around hospitals or petrol station forecourts.
- When calling another mobile phone user always ask if it safe to speak.
- When driving switch of the Hand-Held phone and use the answering service.

20. MINIBUS PERMITS

- 20.1 Vehicles that carry passengers are called Passenger Carrying Vehicles (PCVs). Ordinarily, any organisation that accepts any sort of payment for providing transport to passengers must obtain a PCV Operators Licence from the relevant Traffic Commissioner. In most cases, drivers of such vehicles will also require Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) entitlement on their driving licence.
- 20.2 Under the Section 19 (Permit) scheme, non-profit making organisations can make a charge to passengers for providing transport to the people whom the organisation serves without the need to obtain a PCV Operators Licence and, in most cases, without having to comply with PCV driver licensing requirements. However, to do this, the vehicle must have a Permit. Permits cannot be used to provide services to the general public or on journeys outside the UK. Minibus permits are not recognised abroad. If a Minibus is driven abroad a full PCV driving entitlement is required. To apply for a Minibus Permit contact Dorset Passenger Transport. **Permits must be displayed at all times.** The Minibus Disc is designed for insertion in a licence holder and should be affixed to the inside of the vehicle so that it does not interfere with the driver's control of the vehicle, and it is easily readable from the outside of the vehicle.

21. DRIVERS HOURS

- 21.1 EU Rules apply to Minibuses equipped to carry more than 17 passengers (driver included) when being used on domestic journeys (i.e. wholly in Great Britain). Minibuses from 8 to 17 passengers inclusive are exempt from the EU Rules for these journeys. The rules include provisions regarding limits on driving hours and the recording of driver's hours.
- 21.2 Information regarding Drivers' Hours and Tachograph rules is available in booklet form (PSV 375) and can be obtained on the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency website at [http://www.vosa.gov.uk/vosacorp/repository/Drivers%20Hours%20and%20Tachograph%20Rules%20for%20Road%20Passenger%20Vehicles%20in%20the%20UK%20and%20Europe%20\(PSV%20375\).pdf](http://www.vosa.gov.uk/vosacorp/repository/Drivers%20Hours%20and%20Tachograph%20Rules%20for%20Road%20Passenger%20Vehicles%20in%20the%20UK%20and%20Europe%20(PSV%20375).pdf)

22. TRIPS

- 22.1 For every trip both within and outside of the County:
- 22.1.1 The driver should have a list of names of all pupils with the names of next of kin to be kept in the Minibus.
- 22.1.2 A duplicate list should be kept at the School.

22.1.3 An emergency contact telephone number for each pupil on the list.

22.1.4 A seating plan is advisable in the event of injury to the driver, with a copy kept in the cab and/or located in a prominent position for easy access

22.2 When a group external to the your establishment organises any visit/uses School transport/or is assisted by a member of their group who is also a member of the School staff, the responsibility for notifying the School of the arrangements rests with the group. The Head of Establishment should receive from the organisers a written statement describing:-

22.2.1 The organising body, and the name and address of the organiser acting on there behalf;

22.2.2 The nature and purpose of the visit or trip;

22.2.3 The dates and times;

22.2.4 A list of the participating Schools and/or other establishments;

22.2.5 A list of the students within their particular establishment wishing to participate and on whose behalf leave of absence is being sought;

22.2.6 Arrangements as to safety and supervision;

22.2.7 A named contact for parents in the event of an emergency.

23. INCOME

23.1 No direct or indirect charge in any form of a fare may be made to passengers as to do so would contravene the Road Traffic Legislation unless the Minibus is in use in accordance with a minibus permit granted under the Transport Act 1985 as described in section 20.

23.2 You can charge when operating under a permit to cover running costs and an allowance for depreciation. You must not make a regular surplus of income or profit.

24. SECURITY

24.1 Every effort should be made to park the vehicle in a secure compound or garage. If this is not available park the Minibus in a well lit public area.

24.2 Every effort should be made to make the vehicle secure by installing appropriate vehicle security systems. Personal belongings should never be left on the Minibus and the vehicle should be made secure when left unattended.

25 CONTACT NUMBERS

25.1 The following information is not an exhaustive list but provides a list of those individuals and organisations that will be able to provide help and guidance to ensure that you operate your Minibus safely and legally.

Useful Contacts	Contact Details
<i>Dorset Passenger Transport, Finance Officer. Advice on all minibus operational matters.</i>	Tel:(01305) 224392 Fax: 01305 225166 k.rice@dorsetcc.gov.uk
<i>Dorset County Councils Insurance and Risk Management Section. Provides advice on all insurance related issues</i>	Tel: (01305) 224137
<i>Dorset County Councils Road Safety Section. Provides advice and guidance on all driving related issues, Minibus Driving Assessments and Driver Training</i>	Tel: (01305) 224267
<i>Dorset County Councils Health Safety and Welfare Section. Provides advice on Health and Safety and Occupational Health matters.</i>	Tel: 01305 225048
<i>Dorset Works Vehicle Maintenance Charminster Depot for Minibus Inspections and Maintenance, Drivers Hours and Construction and Use Regulations Defect Reporting Books.</i>	Tel: (01305) 228172
<i>Dorset Works Vehicle Maintenance Ferndown Depot for Minibus Inspections and Maintenance, Drivers Hours and Construction and Use Regulations and Defect Reporting Books</i>	Tel: 01202 861643
<i>Vehicle Operator & Services Agency (VOSA). Advice, Guidance & Documentation for taking a Minibus Abroad and all matters related to the use of Transport.</i>	www.vosa.gov.uk
<i>Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). Advice and guidance on all aspects of driving regulations, driving licence compliance, medical fitness, categories etc.</i>	http://www.dvla.gov.uk/
<i>THINK Road Safety Website. Advice on all aspects of Road Safety.</i>	http://www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk
<i>RosPA – Advice on all aspects of road safety</i>	http://rospa.com Tel: 0121 2482000