



MINIBUS POLICY

Key document details

Equality Impact Assessment required?	Yes / No
If yes, date of EIA	
Ratified:	Spring1 2025
Approver:	CEO
Next review:	Spring1 2027

GENERAL STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Trustees of Pioneer Educational Trust recognise their responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASWA) to ensure that arrangements are in place to carry out our activities in such a way as to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare of our employees, pupils and all persons likely to be affected by our activities, including the general public where appropriate.

We will co-operate and co-ordinate with Partnerships, Contractors, Sub-Contractors, Employers, and the occupiers of premises and land where we are commissioned to work in order to pursue our Health & Safety Policy aims.

The Trustees will actively work with the Chief Executive Officer and staff to identify hazards and where these cannot be removed, ensure that they are adequately controlled.

Our aims are to:

- Provide and maintain a safe and healthy working and learning environment ensuring the welfare of all persons
- Maintain control of Health & Safety risks arising from our activities
- Comply with statutory requirements as a minimum standard of safety
- Consult with all staff on matters affecting their health, safety and welfare
- Provide and maintain safe systems, equipment and machinery
- Ensure safe handling, storage and use of substances
- Provide appropriate information, instruction and supervision for everyone
- Ensure staff are suitably trained and competent to do their work safely
- Continually develop a safety culture to remove or reduce the possibility of accidents, injuries and ill-health
- Assess risks, record significant findings and monitor safety arrangements
- Review and revise safety policies and procedures periodically and when circumstances may introduce a requirement to amend or improve arrangements
- Develop and maintain a positive Health & Safety culture through regular communication and consultation with employees and their representatives on Health & Safety matters

Our Health & Safety Management System has been developed to ensure that the above commitments can be met. All Staff, Governors and Trustees will be instrumental in its implementation.

Policy: The Trust will monitor and periodically review the 'Minibus Policy' to incorporate changes which affect it. Where statute changes, such changes will apply regardless of whether the policy wording has been updated and legal advice will be sought on interpreting the law if needed.

What is a minibus and who can drive one?

1. A minibus is a motor vehicle with between 9 and 16 passenger seats². It is described as a category D1 vehicle by the Driving Vehicle Licensing Authority.

2. Drivers who hold a full D1 (or D) PCV entitlement can drive minibuses for *hire or reward*.

3. There are, however, circumstances when a driver can drive a minibus within the UK when they hold a car (category B) licence. These circumstances vary depending on when the driver passed their car driving test. These arrangements only apply when driving the minibus in the UK not if driving abroad.

a If you passed your category B (car) driving test before 1 January 1997, you can drive a minibus that is not being used for hire or reward as these licences automatically include category D1 (101) (not for hire or reward) entitlement³. This means school staff with such a licence can drive a minibus carrying up to 16 passengers with no maximum weight restriction on the vehicle. Drivers with a D1 + E (101) (not for hire or reward) entitlement can tow a trailer over 750kg.

b If you passed your category B driving test on or after 1 January 1997, you may drive a minibus that is not being used for *hire and reward* if the following conditions are met:

- you are over 21 and have held a category B licence for at least 2 years;
- the minibus is used by a non-commercial body⁴ for social purposes,
- you receive no payment other than the recovery of your out of pocket expenses (e.g. fuel and parking costs);
- you provide the service on a voluntary basis;
- the gross vehicle weight⁵ of the minibus is not more than 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes if including any specialist equipment to carry disabled passengers); and
- you do not tow a trailer.

² The driver's seat does not count for these purposes.

³ Drivers who have renewed their licence (e.g. when a photo licence is issued) should check that this entitlement has been retained.

⁴ Maintained schools, Free Schools and academies are considered non-commercial bodies, as are independent schools holding charitable status.

⁵ The weight of the vehicle (sometimes known as the Maximum Authorised Mass or MAM) is shown on a metal or plastic plate situated in the engine shell or on a door pillar.

Minibus Purchase Policy

Pioneer Educational Trust will only purchase 'light' minibuses where the gross vehicle weight is not more than 3.5 tonnes (3500 kg) or not more than 4.25 tonnes (4250 kg) if equipment to carry disabled passengers is installed.

Drivers can normally drive a minibus on a full UK car driving licence (see below) provided it is within the above limits. The only exemption is if the entitlement to drive a minibus has subsequently been removed by the DVLA.

The driving licence entitlements will be routinely checked online by the school, with the permission of the driver, when they first volunteer to be added to the list of approved drivers

and every 12 months thereafter. Any change to the entitlements is a material fact that a staff volunteer or other volunteer is required to disclose, without delay, to the Head of School (HOS)/Headteacher in any case.

This can be done at:

<https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence> and <https://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information>

These internet pages require the driving licence number, driver's insurance number and the postcode of the driving licence to be entered (with the driver or the driver's permission). It is the volunteer driver's responsibility to ensure DVLA has the correct address and postcode.

General checks on driving entitlements, without the need for specific personal information, can be made at: <https://www.gov.uk/vehicles-can-drive>

Department for Transport (DfT) non-statutory advice published, jointly produced with the DfT and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), in August 2013 states that, where an employee is not paid an additional amount for driving the minibus, and where the employee's contract of employment does not mention driving as part of his or her duties, they would be considered to be driving the minibus 'voluntarily' and for no payment.

Each minibus has permits under the Section 19 standard permit scheme to operate the minibus for 'hire and reward' providing the passengers are beneficiaries (e.g. students) of the non-commercial body (i.e. the school) for which the minibus is being driven. These are displayed in the windscreens of the vehicles.

All employees are required to report to the HoS/Headteacher, without undue delay, any subsequent driving convictions or changes which may affect the school's decision to maintain their name on the current list of approved minibus drivers.

Staff can be assured that a motoring offence is not normally sufficient on its own to threaten the continuation of employment as driving is not normally a requirement of the job but it may impact on the permission to drive a school minibus or any minibus with school passengers this is a decision for the HoS/Headteacher.

Duty of Care and Training

Although persons meeting the above criteria have an entitlement to drive a minibus, additionally the following criteria must be met.

Before being authorised to drive the minibus, staff must undergo a Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MIDAS) training course and pass an assessment. The assessment and training will be carried out by the Trust MIDAS Driver Assessor Trainers.

Additionally, staff will have MIDAS refresher training every four years to ensure that they maintain the necessary level of proficiency to drive the school minibus safely.

Drivers must be medically fit and legally qualified to drive a minibus and are required to complete and sign a driver declaration form to that effect before driving the minibus. The driver declaration form will be kept on file in the HEF's office and entered on the Trust HR system.

Staff with a medical condition that needs to be declared to the insurers should advise the Head of Estates & Facilities (HEF).

It is the licence holder's responsibility to notify the HEF of any changes to the driver's licence.

Where a driver informs the school that he/she has acquired penalty points on his/her licence, the HoS/Headteacher will determine whether he/she is permitted to drive the minibus.

Only those named on the approved drivers list (a copy of which is held by the HEF and Finance office) will be eligible to drive the school minibuses.

Training can be delivered on a group or individual basis.

Insurance

The school's insurance covers staff over 21 years of age to drive any school minibus in accordance with this policy.

Driver Hours

Sleepiness reduces reaction time, alertness, concentration and decision making, all crucial driving skills. Tired drivers are much more likely to have an accident, and the crash is likely to be severe because a drowsy or sleeping driver does not usually brake or swerve before the impact. **All drivers** should take a break every 2 hours (or sooner if tired). The break should be a minimum of 15 minutes. Second and subsequent breaks may need to be longer to prevent fatigue.

After 4.5 hours of driving, the accumulated length of breaks from driving should be at least 45 minutes.

Between one working day and the next, you should have a rest period of at least 11 hours, during which you can get adequate sleep.

See summary table below:

Recommended Driver Hours for Drivers

	Driving only	Driving + Other work
Max. length of working day*	13 hours	10 hours
Of which, spent driving	9 hours	4 hours
Maximum time driving without a break from work	2 hours or sooner if tired	2 hours or sooner if tired
Minimum length of break	15 minutes	15 minutes
Daily rest period	11 hours	11 hours

* Taking account of other work undertaken before starting a journey.

Drivers should not be required to supervise children during their break, as this would not be a rest for the driver.

Seat Belts, Child Seats and Booster Cushions

The Trust minibuses must be fitted with seat belts and must be worn by all seated passengers. The driver is responsible for ensuring that all passengers wear their seat belts and that the seat belts are in good working order. The seats must face forward and seat restraints must comply with legal requirements.

Child restraints e.g. seatbelts, seatbelts with booster cushions, in minibuses must be used for any young person whose height is 135cms or less or aged under 12 years ONLY if the restraints are both available. If they are not available, then children aged 3 to 11 must wear adult seatbelts. Child seats are generally not suitable for the narrow seats in minibuses but booster cushions may be.

People with Key Responsibilities

This is not an exhaustive list but highlights some of the key responsibilities of staff and others associated with this policy.

Nominated Person

The member of staff responsible for the school minibuses is the nominated person who is also designated to provide introductory minibus training and to assess driver competence in-house. The HEF is responsible for ensuring an accurate and 'up to date' record is kept on the current staff list of approved drivers.

The Premises Support officer checks the vehicles regularly and records of these are kept with the HEF. However, before embarking on a journey the 'Driver' must also make a visual check of the vehicle and record details in the folder within each minibus.

Finance office

The minibus insurance will be kept by the Finance Office.

Head of Estates & Facilities

The road tax evidence, maintenance and MOT records, log books and fuel cards are held by the Head of Estates & Facilities/Premises Support Officer.

Drivers must:

If you volunteer to drive a school minibus you are personally responsible for its roadworthiness. If any defects are found by the police, it is you who will be fined, points on your licence, or even prosecuted. You would also be responsible for any road traffic offences committed. As such the following must be carried out

- Complete the visual checks as per the checklist at Appendix C
- Check all students (and the driver) are wearing safety belts
- Abandon the journey if in any doubt about the safety of the vehicle
- Report all faults or damage or injury that occur during a journey to the nominated person
- Carry an emergency telephone list in case of an emergency or breakdown
- Obtain a fuel card from the HEF or Premises support officer(s) for the longer trips
- Attach all fuel receipts and VAT receipts
- Accept responsibility for the safety of his/her passengers and the condition of the driven vehicle
- Ensure the vehicle is not overloaded (see Minibus – Loading and Safety)

At the end of the journey, the driver must ensure that:

- The Minibus should be left tidy. Eating and drinking on it should be discouraged (exceptions can be made in circumstances of long delay)
- Bin bags are to be carried and made available for rubbish

- Dirty/muddy kit (especially boots and shoes) must **not** be worn in the minibus
- Clean tracksuits and / or footwear should be taken if students are likely to get muddy
- The fuel tank is at least half full for the next user
- Report any defects or concerns to the premises support staff as soon as practicably possible

MINIBUS - LOADING AND SAFETY

The majority of minibuses, have a pre-determined specified maximum gross vehicle weight (GVW).

It is **VITAL** that this weight is not exceeded at any time. Over-loading is illegal and is also potentially unsafe. Minibuses handle significantly differently from private cars, whether laden or empty. Overloading, even by small margins, may make the vehicle more difficult to control and it will increase its braking distances. In some circumstances, this may lead to an accident.

Minibus drivers may inadvertently overload their vehicles simply by transporting a full complement of passengers.

To calculate maximum permitted additional load (passengers, luggage and equipment), subtract the kerb weight from the GVW (see below).

School	Registration	GVW (KG)	Kerb Weight (KG)	Maximum additional load (KG)
Foxborough	HX15BYZ	3996	2828	1168
Trevelyan	GU64MXY	4100	2766	1334
Trevelyan	GU64MXO	4600	3011	1589
Upton Court	HX67DTO	4005	2828	1177

For every journey, the driver **must** make an accurate estimate of the weight of the passengers, driver and additional luggage or equipment to be carried. (It may be impractical to actually weigh all the passengers and luggage).

If the vehicle's maximum gross vehicle weight will be exceeded, then the number of passengers or the amount of equipment to be carried **must be** reduced. If the minibus is meant to carry two front seat passengers, reduce this to one front passenger, before reducing the number carried in the rear of the vehicle.

If driving a minibus which is close to its maximum weight limit, remember that its braking distances will increase and reduce driving speed accordingly.

EXAMPLE

Minibus kerb weight	2257kg
1 x Driver (approx. 75kg)	75kg
16 x passengers @ approx. 70kg each	1120kg
Luggage for 16 passengers @ 3kg each	48kg
Total	3500kg (Verify this weight is less than the GVW)

SPEED LIMITS

The speed limit for a small bus is:

- 70mph on a motorway; however, the newer minibuses have a speed limiter so the bus cannot exceed 62 mph;
- 60mph on a dual carriageway;
- 50mph on other roads unless stated otherwise (i.e. 30mph).

Drivers should note that the **National Speed Limit** does not apply to minibuses. You should travel no faster than 50mph on any A or B road.

MAINTENANCE OF THE VEHICLE

All vehicles must have:

- An MOT if over 1-year-old (13 or more passenger seats);
- A valid certificate of insurance;
- A fire extinguisher complying with BS 5423;
- A First Aid kit;
- A logbook in which the date, the starting and finishing mileages and confirmation that the driver has completed the daily/pre-use checks is recorded;
- A Section 19 permit disc on display in the windscreen (where applicable);
- Breakdown cover details

The nominated person (Premises support officer) should ensure that:

- Regular checks are carried out on the vehicle; at least monthly and findings recorded and kept in the HEF's office. Any action required must be reported to the HEF and the necessary work organised.
- Annual maintenance including MOT and servicing to be planned and dates blocked out on the calendar by the reception staff
- All of the above must be recorded.

Procedures for Booking and Using the Minibus

1. Member of staff/volunteer to email the MINIBUS email address with their request giving date, time and reason for use. The visit for which the minibuses has been requested must have been authorised via the appropriate trip form
2. Reception staff will check availability of the school minibuses and allocate it if available
3. Reception staff will email the requestor to confirm the school bus has been booked with details of minibuses booked or to confirm the school bus is not available
4. If a member of staff requires the use of multiple buses, they need to check the availability of the other buses within the Trust with *their* reception staff. Their reception staff will liaise with the reception staff of the other schools to check availability. The reception staff will email the requestor to confirm which buses are available and have been booked.
5. It is the responsibility of the member of staff organising the visit to ensure that all the drivers and buses are in the correct places at the beginning of the visit and back to the relevant school at the end of the visit.
6. The staff member who has requested the minibuses must inform the reception ASAP if the visit has been cancelled.

7. On the day of use, the member of staff will collect the keys from reception and carry out the checks as per the folder held in the minibus; Appendix A.
8. Details of the mileage and any damage are to be noted in the binder for the whole journey.
9. On return to school, the minibus is returned to the reception or premises support staff if reception is closed.
10. Any incidents are to be brought to the attention of the caretaker immediately and the accident/incident form completed; Appendix B.

BREAKDOWN AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

An emergency situation can arise at any time i.e. minibus breaks down, minibus involved in an accident, driver or passenger taken ill etc. In such a situation, you should telephone the emergency services, the relevant school and the insurance company and quote the policy number as per the information sheet within the folder in each minibus (Appendix E)

You should also contact:

- The emergency contact named on the trip form and school where necessary
- School procedure will then allow for Parents/Guardians to be informed of the situation.

The emergency contact person provided by the school should also be called immediately should the driver or any of the passenger(s) be taken ill.

Appendix A

PIONEER EDUCATIONAL TRUST

MINIBUS USE

SCHOOL:

VRN:

NAME OF DRIVER.....

DESTINATION.....

DATE AND TIME OF LEAVING.....

DATE AND TIME OF RETURN.....

NUMBER OF PASSENGERS.....

MILEAGE READING BEFORE LEAVING.....

MILEAGE READING ON RETURN.....

TOTAL MILES OF JOURNEY.....

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM WITH THE KEYS AND REPORT

ANY INCIDENT TO CARETAKER ON DUTY.

CARETAKER TO SIGN AND DATE ON RETURN.

Appendix B

Pioneer Educational Trust

Accident/Incident Report Form

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED FOLLOWING AN ACCIDENT/INCIDENT

Minibus VRM:

Drivers Name.....

Date of accident/incident.....

Time of accident/incident.....

Number of persons on board

Location of accident/incident:
.....

Details of accident/incident:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Did you or your passengers suffer any injuries?

.....

Was anyone taken to hospital?.....

Which hospital?.....

What damage was caused to the minibus

.....
.....
.....

OTHER DRIVER

His/her Name.....

His/her Address

.....
.....

Are they injured?.....

If they were taken to hospital, which Hospital?

Vehicle Details:

Make.....

Model.....

VRM.....

Other Driver/Person(s) Insurance Details:

Name of Insurance Company:

Insurance number:

What damage is caused to the other vehicle

.....
.....

Signed:

Date:

Appendix C

MINIBUS DRIVER CHECKLIST

Name of Driver:

Date of Journey:

Time check carried out:

	Yes	No	Defect Reported to:
Fuel level OK?			
Oil level OK?			
Windscreen wipers and washers working?			
Lights/brake lights working?			
Indicators working?			
Tyres in good condition?			
Brakes (hand and pedal) working?			
Fully stocked first aid kit? (see below)			
Fire extinguisher? (see below)			
Permit displayed?			
Seatbelts working properly?			
Other (see below)			

First Aid Kit

- 10 antiseptic wipes, foil packed
- 1 conforming disposable bandage (not less than 7.5 cm wide)
- 2 triangular bandages
- 1 packet of 24 assorted adhesive dressings
- 3 large sterile unmedicated ambulance dressings (not less than 15 x 20 cm)
- 2 sterile eye pads with attachments
- 12 assorted safety pins
- 1 pair of rustproof blunt-ended scissors
- Disposable gloves
- Mouth mask for resuscitation.

Make sure that even minor uses of a first aid kit are recorded in an accident book, and that stock is replaced after use. Check that all items are 'in date' and replace any that have passed their expiry date.

Fire Extinguisher

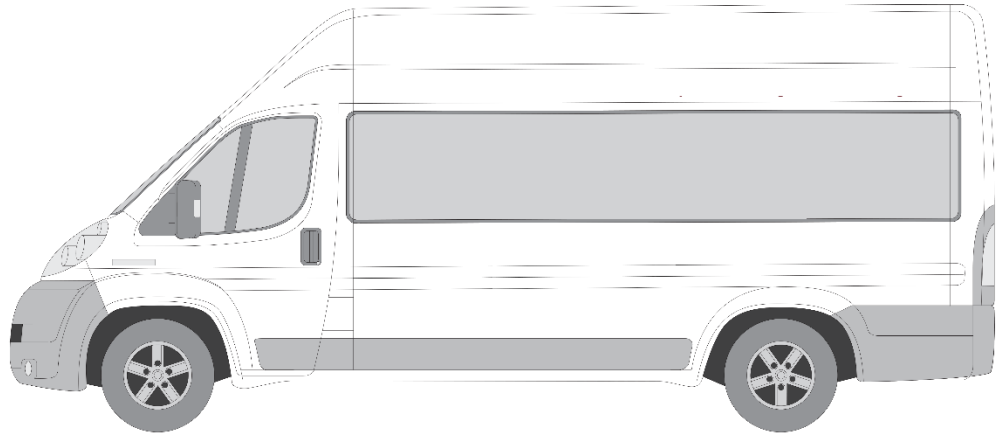
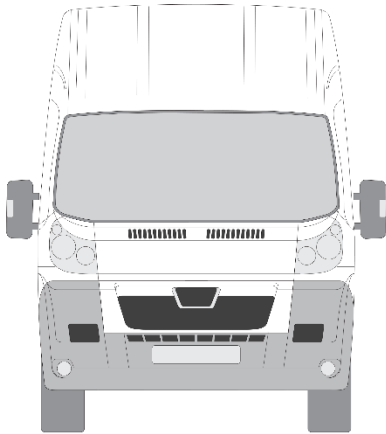
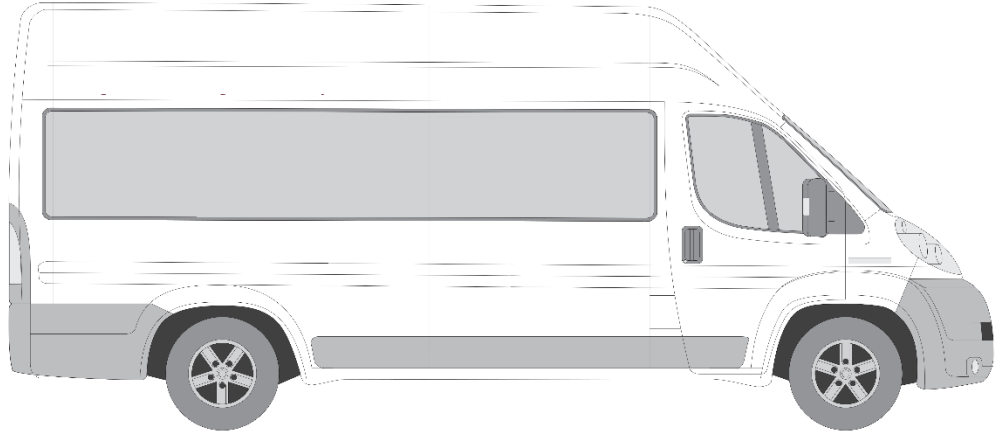
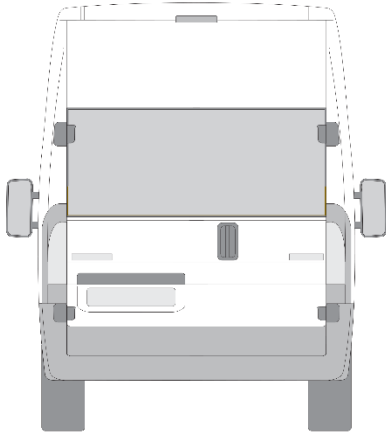
At least one fire extinguisher (two are recommended for accessible minibuses) which complies with BS 5432 (or an equivalent, e.g. BSEN 3), and has a minimum test rating of 8A or 21B, and contains foam (please note they must not contain Halon)

Other Equipment

It is recommended that the following should also be carried:

- Pen and paper
- A high-visibility coat complying with BS EN 471 or BS EN ISO 20471
- An emergency warning triangle or a flashing beacon (not fitted to the vehicle)
- A working torch

Appendix D
Pioneer Educational Trust
Minibus Inspection



Description of
Damage:

Print Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Appendix E

BREAKDOWN AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In an emergency situation please follow these procedures:

1. Call the emergency services on 999 and ask for the Police, (and the ambulance *if* required)
2. Call the school contact e.g. Head of School/Headteacher or Deputy

School:
Name:
3. The insurance company **QBE on 0800 389 1708** quoting policy number **Y120369FLT0117A**
4. The emergency contact named on the trip form
5. School procedure will then allow for Parents/Guardians to be informed of the situation by the person designated by the school

Appendix F

PIONEER EDUCATIONAL TRUST MINIBUS DRIVERS REGISTRATION FORM

Confidential

Personal Details

Full Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Driving Licence No.

Date Driving Test passed:

Driving Details

If you answer 'yes' to any of the following questions, please give details in the space provided

Have you ever been disqualified from driving? YES / NO

Have you ever been convicted of any driving offences? YES / NO

Do you have any endorsements on your driving license? YES / NO

Have you ever had a motor insurance policy declined, cancelled or been refused renewal, or had any special conditions 'imposed'? YES / NO

Have you been involved as a driver in a collision in the last five years, regardless of fault? YES / NO

Have you currently, or have any history of, any conditions or disability which may affect your ability to drive safely now or in the future? If in doubt, declare any condition or disability.

YES / NO

Are you currently taking any medication which may affect your ability to drive? YES / NO

Date Trust MIDAS Minibus Assessment passed (retests must be taken every four years)

MIDAS Date of Expiry:

I give permission for the Trust to access my licence details from the DVLA online portal

YES / NO

I have provided a photocopy of my Driving Licence

YES / NO

Please read and sign the following declaration:

I declare that the details given are correct and that within my knowledge, there is no other material fact that I should disclose. I agree to exercise all due care for the safety of my passengers and security of the vehicle whilst it is in my charge. I also undertake to inform of any collision or accident that occurs whilst I am responsible for the vehicle. I understand that it is an offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988 to knowingly make a false statement to obtain insurance cover.

I undertake to advise of any subsequent illness, condition or event that might affect my suitability as a driver, including any subsequent refusal of motor insurance or any driving convictions/endorsements. I understand that failure to do so and any false declaration made above may render the insurance cover for the vehicle invalid and that I may then be held personally responsible to pay costs or damages. I understand that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

I confirm I have read the minibuss policy.

Signature of Driver: _____ Date: _____