



A world in which Autism is celebrated.

Registered Charity No. 1152188

Safeguarding Children and Young People

9a. Minibus

Policy statement

Sunbeams is aware that anyone, including charities and voluntary organisations, who operate a minibus service to carry passengers has a duty of care under health and safety law to take all reasonable precautions to ensure that it is operated safely. This policy outlines procedures to be followed to ensure duty of care is in place. All staff and volunteers listed within the minibus file are aware of and follow the procedures below.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments should be conducted at regular intervals and detailed records should be kept.

Before setting off

All staff using the bus are responsible for the safety of the service users before setting off staff must:

- Allow sufficient time for the journey
- Plan breaks, avoiding long spells of driving when children/young people may become bored and restless
- Conduct a pre-drive safety check before every journey (see appendix A)
- Ensure the vehicle is at a complete standstill, and safely parked before allowing passengers to board
- Ensure children are supervised when boarding the bus.
- Trough risk assessment plan where individual passengers will sit and with who
- Do not exceed the carrying capacity of the minibus
- Make sure seat belts are used and fastened correctly
- Keep a complete list of passengers with notes of special needs with other relevant documents where they can be readily found in event of an accident
- Check that no bags or clothing are caught in doors, that all luggage is secure
- Check for latecomers before moving off.

During the journey

While we recognise children and young people may be anxious or excited during the journey all staff should;

- Keep boisterous play to a minimum
- Try to keep children/young people occupied (if escort on board) providing something to do before boarding bus
- Enforce "No Smoking" and "No alcohol" rules
- Not allow passengers to operate doors
- Approach each stop slowly and with care
- Use hazard warning lights on school trips where children are boarding or leaving vehicle

- If serious delay during journey, inform Sunbeams so that information can be passed to parents. A mobile telephone is useful for this purpose (although must not be used whilst driving the vehicle)
- Not leave children/young people unaccompanied on the minibus
- Evacuate vehicle and move occupants to a safe place if there is a risk of fire
- Only stop on the hard shoulder and as far away from the carriageway and passing traffic as possible if you have to stop in an emergency or break down while on a motorway.

Arriving at destination

Staff should:

- Supervise children when leaving vehicle, especially if using rear exit
- Never allow children/young people to leave until vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked
- Always park so that passengers step onto the pathway and not the road
- Take care when reversing if children are nearby (Ideally if you must reverse, get adult help in directing you)
- Not leave children alone if no one has come to collect them (see policy No: 7 Uncollected child or young person)
- Report problems or incidents that occurred during the trip to the centre manager.

Advice

Parents/carers, children and young people will be provided with advice sheets see Appendix B,C and ask to confirm they understand and agree

[Planning and Leading Visits and Adventurous Activities](https://www.hse.gov.uk/roadsafety/experience.htm) (RoSPA, 2013)
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/roadsafety/experience.htm>

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| This policy was adopted on | 2 nd April 2022 |
| Policy updated | 27 th April 2026 |
| Date to be reviewed | April 2027 |
| Signed on behalf of the management committee | |
| Name of Signatory Susan Carr | |
| Role of Signatory CEO | |

| Reviewed By | Date |
|-------------|------------|
| Sue Carr | 12/07/2025 |
| Sue Carr | 26/04/2026 |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Appendix A

Before every journey the driver must carry out the 'Minibus Pre-Drive Safety Check, walking around the vehicle, to check for visible defects followed by items listed below.

Exterior check

- Oil level
- Coolant level
- Windscreen washer fluid level
- Brake fluid level
- Windscreen and windows clean and undamaged
- Lights including brake lights and indicators are clean and working.
- Tyre pressures, including spares (and inner tyres and tyres on trailer if applicable)
- Tyre tread, including spares (at least 3mm across centre). Any cuts and bulges?
- Doors open and close properly

Interior check

- Mirrors correctly adjusted, clean and unobstructed
- Position and function of all dashboard controls
- Position of driving seat so all pedals can be operated comfortably
- Pressure on brake pedal
- Lights and indicators are working
- Wipers and washers working properly
- Fuel level
- Seat belts are undamaged and working properly
- Location of wheel brace and jack
- Location and contents of first aid kit and fire extinguisher(s)
- Change for parking or telephone (mobile/phonecard)
- Luggage securely stowed; aisles and exits clear.

Brake checks

- Check brakes before loading passengers. With engine running, check handbrake is working properly and brake pedal is firm when pushed
- Conduct a moving brake test, off the road, if possible.
- If faults that might affect the vehicle's or passengers' safety are found, the vehicle must not be used until they are all remedied.

Appendix B

Advice for parents and guardians

Although the normal place for picking up or dropping off will be Sunbeams Community Hub, Keyword House, Viking Road, Great Yarmouth, NR31 0NU but there may be occasions where you are required to meet elsewhere.

Teaching road safety is one of the most important duties of a parent including teaching children to behave properly when they use the minibus.

Please read these guidelines before allowing your child to make a minibus journey.

Pick up and drop off points

- Be punctual: make sure your child is ready at the correct time. It is your responsibility to
- ensure that your child gets to and from the minibus safely.
- Children are excited when they have just come back from a minibus outing and traffic will be the last thing on their mind
- Safe crossing places: make sure that your child knows and understands what safe crossing places/areas are, and how to use them.
- Use the Green Cross Code. Make sure your child knows and understands how
- to use the Code.
- Young children should not be allowed to cross the road unaccompanied.
- Meet your child: make sure that you, or another carer are at the pre-arranged meeting point when your child returns home, and have the telephone number of other parents, the centre or other relevant contact person to pass on messages if required
- Safe route: Make sure that both you and your child know the safest route home after leaving the minibus, and always use it.

On the minibus

- Behaviour: teach your child/young person to act sensibly on or around minibuses. Make sure your child/young person knows that boisterous and other poor behaviour is dangerous as it may distract the driver's attention and lead to an accident. Children/young people need to listen to the driver's and escort's (if applicable) instructions and carry them out.
- Contact details: make sure that the person responsible for the minibus has up-to-date information about your child, including contact details for emergencies.
- Medical details: if your child has any special requirements, make sure the person responsible for the minibus has all relevant medical information
- Other details: advise the driver (and escort) if there is a particular difficulty with your child on the day of the trip, e.g. is upset. Consider whether your child should go on the journey in such circumstances
- Damage: any vandalism caused by your child whilst on a journey is your responsibility. Persistent offenders may not be accepted on future journeys. Damage to a minibus could endanger your own, or someone else's child
- Concerns: report any worries you may have to a responsible person, such as the Keyworker, driver, or escort.

Appendix C

Advice for children on minibuses

Here are some helpful hints to keep you, and others, safe while on a minibus journey:

- Arrive on time, and wait for the minibus away from the road
- Don't push or rush towards the minibus when it arrives
- Find a seat quickly and quietly without pushing. You may have already been allocated a seat
- Stay seated when the minibus is moving and wear your seat belt
- Avoid kneeling in your seat as this is dangerous
- Make sure your bags do not block gangways and exits, or take up seats
- Only speak to the driver when he or she is not driving, or in an emergency. Distracting the
- driver can be very dangerous
- Never throw things or play about in the minibus; never ever throw things out of the minibus window as you could cause other drivers to have an accident
- Wait until the minibus has stopped completely before getting up to leave
- Take your belongings with you when you leave the minibus, except in an emergency when you should leave them behind
- Take care if returning to the minibus after getting off as the driver may be pulling away
- If you have to cross the road after getting off the minibus, wait for it to move away first. Use the Green Cross Code
- Go to the toilet before you get on the minibus. If you need to use the toilet or you feel unwell during the journey, tell your keyworker, the escort.

The Green Cross Code

1. First find a safe place to cross, then stop. It is safer to cross at subways, footbridges, pedestrian islands, zebra and pelican crossings
2. If you can't find one of these, choose a place where you can see clearly along the road in all directions
3. Stand on the pavement near the kerb
4. Look all around for traffic and listen. Traffic may be coming from any direction. Sometimes you can hear traffic before you can see it
5. If traffic is coming, let it pass. Look all around again
6. When there is no traffic near, walk straight across the road. Do not cross unless there is a safe gap and you are sure that you have plenty of time to get across. If in doubt, don't cross. Always walk across, don't run
7. Keep looking and listening for traffic while you cross.