



Drivers' Policy on School Business

2025-2026

Setting out the general approach and commitment together with the arrangements Northleigh (the School) has put in place for managing health and safety whilst driving on work activities.

Legislation places a duty on the School to provide a safe working environment, which extends to driving on school business.

Driving is one of the most dangerous activities that we do. Every year, over 20,000 people are seriously injured. Driving for work is riskier than driving for private reasons. Up to a third of all road traffic accidents involve somebody who was using the road for work purposes.

Knowing and applying the rules contained in this Policy and The Highway Code could significantly reduce road incidents, and the injuries and casualties that result. Cutting the number of deaths and injuries that occur on our roads every day is a responsibility we all share.

Driving Responsibilities and Standards

Responsibilities

When driving on School business, you are an ambassador for the School. As such, you are expected to drive responsibly, showing courtesy to other road users, pedestrians and clients at all times.

Whenever driving your own vehicle on School business, ultimate responsibility will remain with you, the driver. Any offence committed will usually result in a fine and endorsement of the driver's licence.

Any offence or endorsement may also affect personal driving insurance and premiums. In addition, prosecutions may be brought against the individual.

Highway Code

All drivers are expected to drive safely and take no unnecessary risks. You must never contravene the Highway Code when driving in the course of business and the School will not put you in a position where this would be necessary.

Driving Licences

The School is required to establish a simple regime for the receipt, recording and retention of copies of the driving licenses of employees who drive for the School business. You may be asked to produce your license during periodic audits.

NB. Any driving convictions incurred must be reported to the Chair of Trustees and Head of Centre as soon as possible. This includes gaining points on your license.

The employee must have a minimum of 3 years' driving experience and be over the age of 21 years.

Insurance

The school insurance covers external educational trips and visits.

Disqualification from Driving

Staff are duty bound to inform the Chair of Trustee and Head of Centre immediately of disqualification from driving on the public highway. That person will be relieved of all driving duties with immediate effect.

Offences and Fines

Responsibility for parking offences and other road traffic offences remains the responsibility of the driver while driving on School business.

Fitness to drive

General

The driver of a motor vehicle is the most important component. Drivers need to see and react to changing conditions very quickly. Drivers need to always be alert and in control of the vehicle.

Any person who is required to drive on School business, and/or, as part of an approved activity, must declare to the Chair of Trustees and Head of Centre any medical condition which adversely affects their ability to drive safely (all information provided will be treated as confidential).

Eyesight

You must be able to satisfy the requirements of local traffic laws when driving. You must wear glasses or contact lenses every time you drive. If you need them to meet the 'standards of vision for driving'.

Drugs and Alcohol

Drivers must not drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol (including prescription drugs which may affect your ability to drive). You must also be aware of the morning after side effects associated with alcohol consumption.

You have a responsibility to inform the Chair of Trustees and Head of Centre if you are unfit to drive for the stated reasons. Driving on School business while under the influence of alcohol or drugs will lead to disciplinary action. If taking prescription medicines or drugs, check with your doctor regarding possible side effects.

Medical Conditions

Some medical conditions may make you unfit to drive. If this applies to you, you must inform the Chair of Trustees and Head of Centre and, in many cases, you will also need to notify DVLA Swansea.

If you have a medical condition that may affect your ability to drive, then you should obtain medical advice. Example of medical conditions for which the above applies, include but are not restricted to:

- Epilepsy/fits or blackouts
- Diabetes controlled by insulin or tablets
- Parkinson's disease
- Narcolepsy or sleep apnea syndrome
- Persistent alcohol/drug misuse or dependency
- Any chronic neurological condition
- A serious problem with memory
- Serious psychiatric illness or mental ill-health

Route Planning

Planning your journey in advance will make it safer and less stressful, especially where the journey is long or on unfamiliar routes. Before driving, ask whether the journey is necessary.

If the journey is necessary, the following guidance applies:

- Plan your route before you set out. Estimate how long the journey will take, and scheduled rest stops, where needed. Leave plenty of time for the journey.
- Check weather forecasts and traffic reports before you set off. Be aware of potential adverse weather conditions during the journey and consider the actual need to make the journey.
- Inform the Office Staff when you leave the site, ensuring that you have signed 'out' all personnel. On return, sign all personnel back 'in'.
- Inform the Office Staff if arrival and/or return times change, so appropriate action can be taken e.g. Parents/Guardians notified.

Care and Condition of Vehicle

The driver is responsible for ensuring the vehicle is kept clean and presentable both inside and out.

Comfort whilst Driving

Before setting off, take the time to position yourself correctly in the vehicle. Make sure the seat provides support for the small of your back. Adjust the fore and after movement of the seat so that you can reach pedals and steering wheel without stretching. The knees should be slightly bent, and the thighs supported by the seat cushion. Ensure the seat belt goes comfortably across your body. Check the interior and exterior mirrors every time you enter the vehicle to provide the best possible backward views.

Roadworthiness of the Vehicle

The Road Traffic Act states that the driver is responsible for the roadworthiness of their vehicle(s), the load being carried and the wearing of seat belts by all passengers.

The driver will ensure that their vehicle(s) are properly serviced and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Employees using their own vehicles for School business must ensure they have a valid MOT (if applicable) road tax and ensure the vehicle is always maintained and in a roadworthy condition.

Recommended Pre-Use Vehicle Checks

Drivers of vehicles must carry out regular checks as listed.

- Tyers are undamaged (no cuts or bulges), are at the correct pressure and have enough treaddepth.
- There are no signs of vehicle damage.
- Oil, coolant and windscreen wash levels are correct (check when cold).
- Brakes are in good working order.
- Lights and indicators are working.
- Windscreen and windows are not damaged.
- Washers and wipers are working.
- Mirrors are correctly positioned.

Loading and Unloading at Locations

All opportunities should be taken to unload in a safe location. An ideal location for exiting a vehicle is a car park or driveway.

You must also consider where the vehicle is parked during unloading and not stop on the road in a dangerous position, such as on an unsighted bend or opposite another vehicle.

Ensure a safe area is found for the loading and unloading of students and passengers. All passengers, and your safety is of paramount importance. If you feel it is unsafe to unload, then continue to locate a safe place to do so.

Aggressive Behaviour

Try to ensure you are calm whilst driving. Plan time into journeys in case you are delayed by traffic; this can help to relieve the pressure you feel when running late. Be tolerant towards others –shouting at another driver after their mistake or poor driving will not change anything.

First Aid

First Aid kit and student contact lists must be carried in each vehicle. First aid kits are checked regularly by the appointed person. However, it is still the responsibility of the driver to ensure its present and correct.

High Visual

Ensure you have a hi viz vest in your vehicle when driving on School business.

Speed Limits

Make sure you know the speed limit of the roads you are using and always stay within the speed limit (including variable limits and temporary limits at roadworks) even if you think the limit is too low.

Smoking, Vaping and e-Cigs

Smoking, vaping and the use of e-cigs are prohibited within drivers' own vehicles, whilst driving on School business.

Mobile Phones

It is very useful to have a mobile telephone when making journeys.

However, it is essential that drivers do not make or receive calls while they are driving. The mobile phone should only be used by the driver when stopped in a safe place.

Drivers may be stopped by the police and be fined or prosecuted for breaking this legislation. The School is not liable for drivers' actions. You should also be aware that if you have an accident whilst driving you may be prosecuted for driving without due care and attention.

Seat Belts

It is a legal requirement that seat belts are worn by drivers and all vehicle occupants. It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that seat belts are always worn whilst the vehicle is being driven.

Reversing

Whenever you are reversing take extreme care.

Recognising Fatigue

Falling asleep at the wheel is most likely to occur when:

- On long journeys on monotonous roads, for example motorways
- Between 2am and 6am.

Road Traffic Accident (RTAs)

Drivers of owned vehicle(s) involved in any form of road traffic accident/collision must stop at the scene or as close as is safe to determine the extent of any injuries to individuals involved and damage to both vehicles and should:

- Contact the emergency services if anyone requires medical assistance.
- Under no circumstances apologise, admit blame or accept liability.
- Record as far as possible the details of the RTA, including exchanging details with other relevant parties.
- Contact rescue services or recovery services, as appropriate.
- You must report the accident as soon as possible to the Chair of Trustees and Head of Centre.

Ensure that you collect the following information at the scene:

- Details of other vehicle(s) (vehicle registration, make and model).
- Name, address and contact details of other driver(s).
- Name and address of any witnesses.
- Name of other parties' insurer and their policy number.
- Description of incident (location, speed, weather conditions, visibility, causative factors if known, etc.).
- If you have a camera or mobile phone capable of taking pictures (time dated) of the accident scene, do so before any of the vehicles are moved.
- Take pictures of the damage to your vehicle from all angles, damage to other vehicles, pictures of the intersection, roadway, road signs, in general take pictures of all aspects of the accident and the surrounding scene.

Contact the police:

- If there are injuries;
- There is a disagreement over the accident;
- If you damage property;

- If you feel unsafe;
- To get the incident reference number.

Winter Driving Precautions

During winter additional driving hazards must be considered. These include adverse weather (rain, snow, frost, standing water) and longer hours of darkness. Following the advice given below will help to ensure your safety when driving on School business in these conditions:

- Make sure you have plenty of fuel.
- Allow extra time for the journey and reduce speed.
- Increase the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front – in ice and snow stopping distances are ten times larger.
- In reduced visibility such as driving in rain or fog, use dipped headlights and rear fog lights. Use the windscreen wipers to keep the windscreen clear, even in fog.
- Remember to turn fog lights off when no longer required as they can distract other road users in normal visibility.
- Remember snow is visible but ice, especially black ice, is often invisible.
- Avoid sudden braking or harsh acceleration.
- Keep all windows and mirrors clean, clear of snow and ice and free of mist. Keep lights and indicators clean.
- If you are planning a long journey advise someone of your destination and approximate expected arrival time. If you have one, carry a mobile phone with you, ensuring it is fully charged. Remember not to use it while driving.
- If you feel unsafe or uncomfortable driving in adverse weather conditions, consider whether your journey is necessary at that time or whether it can be postponed. Consider whether an alternative method of transport would be better.

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