



Driver and Vehicle Policy

Hopewell School & motorvations@hopewell

Policy Date:	September 2023
Date Ratified by Governors:	September 2023
Next Review:	September 2024

All statements regarding Hopewell School should be read as covering Hopewell School and motorvations@hopewellschool.

Introduction

Hopewell school recognizes that the driving of vehicles for the transport of pupils, staff and visitors plus the movement of goods and materials is an essential part of its operation. As such, under its obligations in legislative and civil law the company requires each person engaged in driving activities to do so in a manner that poses no harm to themselves, our pupils or other road users.

To that end we believe, irrespective of blame, all road traffic incidents are preventable and all risks can be contained. Consequently, Hopewell School operates to a policy of zero accident involvement. As a vehicle driver, you are not only responsible for your own safety, you are also responsible for the safety of others who may be affected by your actions. Therefore, you are required to drive at all times, in a manner that is safe, responsible and in line with the law.

The law places responsibilities on the owner of a vehicle and the driver of that vehicle to ensure that it is used in a legal, safe and roadworthy condition, and that the driver holds a valid licence for that class of vehicle.

Breach of law

Where drivers commit motoring and parking offences on company business, they are personally liable for any fines and convictions that may result. Hopewell School reserves the right to pay such penalties on behalf of the driver and deduct the cost from salary. Any driving offence or behaviour that is deemed to endanger the young people in our care or other road users will be investigated and may as a result of the investigation subsequently result in disciplinary action being taken.

Drivers

Employees will only drive, on school business, vehicles for which they hold the appropriate license.

When driving on Hopewell School business or in company vehicles, drivers must remember that they are ambassadors for Hopewell School and must ensure that their behaviour reflects an appropriate image. Drivers are expected to be courteous at all times and must conform to the "Highway Code" and relevant legislation.

Drivers must be aware of the effects that alcohol or drugs may have on their driving abilities, taking special notice of the risk of being unfit the morning after a night of heavy consumption. Drivers must not drive under the influence of alcohol when driving on Hopewell School business.

Many prescribed and over-the-counter medications can cause drowsiness and other effects that may affect a driver's ability to control a vehicle. If taking prescribed medication then advice should be sought from a doctor, and drivers must ensure they are aware of the effects of any non-prescription drugs.

Fatigue is a major cause of crashes, especially on motorways and long trunk road journeys where monotony can make you feel sleepy. Drivers should always follow the rules on domestic driving as follows:

- A break of at least 15 minutes must be taken every 2 hours or sooner if the driver feels tired
- After 4 hours of driving then the driver must take at least a 30 minute break in addition to the 15 minute break after 2 hours
- A total of no more than 11 hours maximum can be worked and/or driven in any one 24 hour period
- The maximum time spent driving in a 24 hour period must not exceed 9 hours

Vehicles

The Head Teacher will ensure that all company vehicles are serviced, inspected, tested and maintained in accordance with the manufacturers 'recommendations and the records of which should be held on file for each vehicle. They will appoint a suitable member of staff to act as Transport Co-ordinator to discharge this duty. -

The Transport Co-ordinator, for the setting, will ensure that weekly vehicle checks are carried out as described in Appendix 1 and recorded on the record of weekly check form (Appendix 2), this includes ensuring the driver log book is completed and that current recorded mileage matches the current odometer reading.

Drivers must carry out a shorter safety check, before every journey and record the findings in the vehicle log, kept in the vehicle (Appendix 2). Defects should be reported to the Transport Co-ordinator immediately.

On the return to site, the vehicle must be cleaned, the vehicle log completed and any defects report handed over to the Transport Co-ordinator or a member of SLT.

Privately Owned Vehicles

Staff should not use their personal vehicles to transport pupils other than in exceptional circumstances and when they hold Business Insurance. A copy of their license and insurance certificate will be checked and held by the school.

Passenger Safety

The safety of pupils is the responsibility of the Trip Organiser (and driver), who will organise a seating plan as part of the risk assessment. The following procedures must be followed:

- The driver has only one role on any journey – to drive the vehicle. Drivers are not responsible for the management of pupils whilst driving and must be protected from distraction.
- Overall responsibility for the management of pupil's behavior rests with the most senior or experienced member of staff who should normally be seated in the rear of the vehicle.
- In protecting the driver, pupils should be seated according to the level of risk they present, with the lowest risk pupil seated behind the driver and the highest risk pupil seated in the rear seat on the opposite side of the vehicle to the driver.
- No pupil is allowed to travel in the front seat of any vehicle driven on Hopewell School business

without the permission of a member of SLT.

All passengers, whether staff or pupils, must be seated in the correct position in any vehicle and must wear the appropriate correctly adjusted seat belt, or restraint, as required by law. If any person in the vehicle is not wearing an appropriate seat belt the driver must pull over and stop as soon as it is safe to do so. The protocols for the transportation and supervision of pupils are based upon the individual risk assessments for the pupil and the off site visit risk assessment as set out in Hopewell School's Off-Site Visits Policy.

Where child locks are fitted they should be activated. Head restraints, where fitted, must be correctly adjusted.

Mobile Phones

When undertaking a journey on school business a fully charged mobile must be carried and, given the unpredictable nature of our pupils, it should be switched on and ready for use. However, whilst transporting young people the driver must not text, make or take calls even via a Bluetooth device. The phone must be held and used by the escorting member of staff.

Smoking

In line with smoke-free legislation, smoking is not permitted in any school vehicle.

Eating and Drinking

Drivers must not drink or eat whilst the vehicle is in motion. Where food is consumed in a school vehicle it is the driver's responsibility to ensure all packaging and spills are removed from the vehicle on return to school.

Emergency Procedures

Should the vehicle be involved in a collision or suffer a mechanical failure the driver's prime concern is the safety of the pupils in their care along with that of any accompanying staff. In either event, the driver must summon immediate assistance from the appropriate emergency service, breakdown provider and the school.

All school vehicles must carry the following:

- First aid kit
- Foam fire extinguisher
- High visibility jackets (one for each seat)
- Seat belt cutter and emergency hammer
- Torch
- Jack and wheel set
- Warning triangle
- Emergency guidance as detailed in Appendix 3

Driver Action

Bring the vehicle to a safe halt ideally at the side of the road. Activate the hazard warning lights then assess the situation, in terms of safety. If an accident has occurred, look to the treatment of any injured occupants and the need to summon other emergency assistance. The driver, in conjunction with the emergency services, should decide the best action to take in terms of the safety of passengers. In most circumstances the passengers should leave the vehicle from the side away from traffic flow and put on a high visibility jackets. They should then proceed to a place of safety away from the vehicle and moving traffic to await recovery. If the weather is severe, or there are doubts regarding the ability of staff to keep the pupils safe, a decision to stay on-board the vehicle may be taken. In such circumstances, urgent help should be requested and if possible the passengers moved to the front of the vehicle. Further actions specific to accidents and breakdowns are given in Appendix 3.

Personal Safety and Violence

If any passenger's behavior becomes sufficiently disruptive to cause distraction to the driver, then the vehicle must be stopped as soon as possible until the situation is resolved. If necessary contact should be made with the school and assistance requested.