Transport Policy

St. Francis' College

September 2026

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Introduction

The 'College' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Prep Department and Senior School which includes Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Prep (Key Stages 1 and 2), and Senior School (Key Stages 3-5).

The Transport Policy provides guidance on the use of vehicles, driver responsibility, vehicle safety, journey planning, and the management of transport-related risks. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all employees' priorities safety, complies with legislation, support the organisation's operational needs.

Policy

In order to widen the availability of St. Francis' College to pupils in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, a coach and minibus service operates, collecting and returning pupils from and to bus stops/home. Part of this service maybe contracted to private transport firms, currently Tiny's Taxis if required. The use of this service is at pupils' (and parents'/legal guardians') own risk. Other than the driver, no adult supervision is provided by the College and the drivers and respective coach firms have responsibility for the passengers in their vehicles, whereas the minibuses are College minibuses, driven by College staff. The college uses Student Safe software to ensure that the parents are able to book students onto the correct stops and allows parents live tracking of the route.

It follows that in order to help the College maintain a high level of service; certain rules must be in place governing the behavior and responsibilities of those pupils using the service. The intention is for pupils to travel safely and to enjoy the journey in the company of their peers.

Conditions of Use

- Pupils are only permitted to travel on their designated coach, unless prior consent has been given by their parents and this has been communicated to the Operations Manager, or, if unavailable, to the Deputy Head

- Once on the appropriate coach, pupils must not get off prior to departure.

- Seats are not normally assigned to individual pupils, and no pupil should consider any seat as 'theirs'. If pupils are unable to choose seats sensibly or argue over them, they may be instructed by an adult to sit in a specific seat and must comply without argument. To maintain acceptable behaviour on the coach, the College reserves the right to assign specific seats to individual pupils if necessary. Additionally, the first pupil to board and the last to leave a minibus must sit in one of the main passenger seats, not in the front passenger seat. Special dispensation can be made on a case by case basis example travel sickness.

- Coach registers are taken by the driver to enable any casual use to be billed and to determine in the afternoons who has departed from College by coach. At this time, once taken, the afternoon registers are handed to the members of Administration Team overseeing the departure of the coaches and taken to main Reception so that, should it be necessary, the names of those on each coach will be available. At the same time new pro forma registers are issued to the drivers for the following morning and afternoon runs.

- Each morning at College, Prep pupils are asked by their Form Teachers whether they will be taking the coach home that afternoon. This information is passed to the Prep administrative staff, who then send a list to the main Reception. Admin staff use this list to complete the coach

registers before the afternoon departure. Prep staff then use the register to ensure pupils board the correct coach. Senior pupils are responsible for managing their own coach arrangements.

- The coaches and minibuses leave promptly at 4.15pm, for departure of the homeward journey. Pupils must be seated and ready to go at this time. Pupils must therefore go straight to their coach immediately after College finishes. In fairness to other pupils who are on time, the coaches will not wait for late pupils.

- On the coach pupils must behave in a way that does not jeopardise their own safety, the safety of others on the coach or the safety of other road users and pedestrians. Pupils must behave in a way that upholds the image and reputation of the College. The 'College Rules' apply on the coaches, except for the rules around College uniform when an after-College activity such as dance finishes too close to 4.15p.m to give time to change into uniform. Similar behaviour is expected of pupils whilst waiting for the coaches to arrive or depart. Boisterous behaviour is not permitted on the coach and noise levels must be kept down in order that the driver is not distracted during the journey.

- Pupils should be polite to the driver and other adults involved in the coach service and must comply with the instructions of the driver and other adults regarding safety and behaviour.

- Passengers must sit properly on the seats and wear a seat belt. The coach will not depart unless all passengers are seated and wearing a seat belt. Seat belts must not be undone, nor must passengers leave their seats during a journey until the coach has reached their stop. When the coach approaches the stop at which a pupil(s) intends to get off, their seat belt must not be released until the coach has parked.

- All belongings must be securely stored in a way that does not obstruct the aisle or emergency exit(s). When leaving the coach, pupils should take all their possessions and any rubbish with them.

- Obstruction of the windows with, for example, stickers or decorations is not permitted.

- Pupils must not leave the coach other than at their normal final destination (the College in the morning or usual stop in the afternoon) unless prior consent has been provided by their parents, notified to the Senior School or Prep Department Administrator as appropriate.

- Should a coach be delayed by traffic or any other reason beyond the control of the pupils and arrive at the College too late for registration, then the pupils should sign the 'late book' in the normal way and state the delay as the reason.

- The College cannot offer a personalised door-to-door service, and consequently prescribed routes are followed, in the same way that a public bus service does. Pupils are expected to be at their appropriate bus stops on time, and coaches will not wait for them. In the event of road obstructions or closures, coaches will complete as much of their route as possible, even if they are running late.

- Parents should appreciate that from time to time breaches of good conduct among the pupils may occur and that the pupil(s) responsible may be reported to the pupil's Head of Year who will investigate the matter and take action if necessary. If a report of bad behavior is upheld then, on the first occasion, the pupil(s) will be warned, on the second the parents will be informed and, on the third, the pupil(s) may be barred from using the coach. In this instance, parents would have to find an alternative means for their child to get to/from College. In the case of an allegation of very serious misbehaviour such as, for example, behaviour compromising the safety

of the driver and other passengers, it may be necessary to suspend a pupil from the coach pending the outcome of an investigation. Furthermore, depending on the seriousness of the offence, additional action and/or sanction, as laid out in the College's Behaviour & Discipline Policy, may apply.

- Mobile phones may be used by the students, provided that their use is respectful and does not negatively affect the safety, comfort or experience of other passengers. Mobile phone use should always be balanced with consideration for other passengers, particularly where young children are traveling.

- Parents and/or pupils wishing to raise matters relating to pupil behaviour should do so with the child's Head of House.

- Parents and/or pupils should raise other concerns about coach transport with the Operations Manager and the matter will be investigated and, if necessary, in consultation with the Deputy Head, appropriate action taken.

- An urgent enquiry about the late arrival of a coach should be raised with the College Receptionist (01462 670511); the phone system greeting then gives prompts to get through to Reception.

- Charges for the service are reviewed at least annually and will be notified separately.

Procedures for Minibus & College Vehicle Drivers

Overview

St. Francis' College currently owns and operates Eight minibuses, which are used both for school runs and for transporting pupils for other reasons (sports fixtures, educational trips etc.) As in all aspects of life at St. Francis' College, the Health and Safety of the pupils in our care is our paramount concern, and all users of the minibus should drive carefully and with this in mind. Minibus drivers should also be aware that, even when the bus is empty, they are seen by other road users as a representative of the College and should always drive considerately.

The following is intended to set out guidelines for users of the College minibuses and to lay down an appropriate course of action, for various scenarios, which may occur.

Fitness to Drive

Only drivers who have the D1 category on their driving license and who have passed the Hertfordshire Council Assessment are allowed to drive the College minibuses. A record of staff who have passed the assessment and assessment renewal dates is held by the Operations Manager. Drivers of the minibus must make the Operations Manager aware of any endorsements against their driving license. A driver who is suffering from a relevant medical condition or who has taken any medication which prohibits the operation of heavy machinery should not drive the College minibus. The College undertakes annual driving licence checks, in order to satisfy the requirements of our insurers.

Checks before Driving

Before every journey you should carry out a basic pre-drive safety check should be carried out and recorded on Fleetplanner.

- Any signs of vehicle damage
- Windscreen and windows are clean and undamaged
- Mirrors correctly adjusted and unobstructed
- Wipers and washers are working
- Fuel Level (and type of fuel)
- Dashboard fault indicator

Any defects should be reported to a member of the Site Services team **immediately.**

A weekly vehicle condition is carried out by the Site Services team.

Procedures for all Minibus Drivers:

All passengers must wear seatbelts at all times and mobile phones (including those with a Bluetooth attachment) must not be used by the driver whilst the vehicle is in motion. Drivers should only talk to passengers when necessary and ensure that their attention is on the road.

For the safety of all passengers, minibus drivers must be responsible for opening and closing the vehicle doors when passengers are boarding or departing from the minibus. Children must not open or close the minibus door themselves. Passengers should wait for the drivers' instructions before entering or exiting the vehicle.

If the bus breaks down

If the bus suffers a mechanical failure, the driver should try and get to a place of relative safety (layby, hard-shoulder or similar) if at all possible. The driver should then **briefly** inform the College reception/ Operations Manager of their location and the nature of the problem. Once the phone call has been made, the focus of the driver should then be on the welfare of the pupils. Staff at the College will take care of any other phone calls that are required (roadside assistance/police/replacement bus etc.) Passengers should be asked to leave the bus if and when it is safe to do so. Both the driver and passengers should stand away from the minibus until help arrives. Only if the bus is in a place of safety (i.e. a car park or layby well away from flowing traffic) should staff and pupils remain on the bus.

If the vehicle is involved in an accident

In the event of a serious accident, the driver should contact the emergency services immediately, if they are able to do so.

In the event of a minor collision, the driver of the vehicle should pull over if safe to do so, or at the nearest place of safety to ensure passengers are calm and uninjured. Only after having done this should they exchange details with the other drivers involved. Drivers should take photographs of any damage to the minibus or other vehicles by means of a mobile phone etc. The driver should inform the other parties involved to contact the College on 01462 670511 in relation to the incident.

The driver should then phone either the Main Reception, Operations Manager or their Line Manager to make College staff aware of what has taken place and the current state of the minibus. If the damage to the minibus is only cosmetic i.e. surface bodywork scratch, dent or broken wing mirror etc., the minibus driver may continue on their journey as soon as possible on the permission of the Head or Head of Operations. If the damage is more severe, the driver and passengers must wait either away from, or in the bus, dependent upon where it has been parked as described above and wait for a replacement bus to be dispatched by College staff.

All drivers under Section 170 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 are required by law to stop at the scene of an accident (this includes damage to a person, vehicle, property or animal), regardless of the severity of the collision or who is to blame.

If a driver begins to feel unwell

If a driver begins to feel unwell and/or their ability to safely drive the vehicle is becoming impaired in any way, they should pull over where it is safe to do so and inform the passengers of this fact. The driver should then call the College reception, Operations Manager, or their Line Manager. College staff will formulate an appropriate plan to recover the driver and passengers (replacement driver or bus). Staff at the College will also inform relevant parties of the delay in the pupils reaching their intended destination.

Behaviour of pupils on the bus

Pupils using St. Francis' minibuses are expected to maintain the same standards of behaviour as they would whilst at College. Similarly, the same safeguarding standards apply and should there be any evidence of bullying, inappropriate use of the internet or similar issues from pupils whilst on the bus, these should be dealt with through the normal channels. If a serious altercation or fight breaks out on the minibus, the driver should pull over when it is safe to do so and stop the bus. The driver should attempt to manage the issue with the pupils where they have been appropriately trained to do so,

and should call College reception to inform them of the issue, and of any resulting delays.

Illness of a passenger on the bus

If a passenger on the bus falls ill, the driver should pull over when it is safe to do so. Dependent on the severity of the issue the driver should either call an ambulance first and then College reception or should call College reception directly and inform them of the issue. Drivers should give First Aid if they are trained and confident to do this. If a pupil has been physically sick on the bus, the bus should be evacuated if it is safe to do so and passengers should wait for a replacement bus.

Procedures specific to minibus drivers on the school run:

Documentation

Each driver is provided with a daily pick up/drop off sheet for each route, detailing pick up, drop off and location arrangements (whether they can be left alone, whether they will be collected and by whom etc.).

Registers

Pupils should be registered as they get on the bus both in the morning and afternoon school runs on the student safe app Registers taken for the afternoon run will be collected by College staff before the bus leaves.

Dropping off

Pupils should be let off the bus at the agreed drop off point, in line with the parental consent and information form which is summarised in the driver's file. To this end, pupils whose parents have not given pupils consent to leave the bus alone should only be collected by named individuals and pupils who are only allowed off at a specific stop should not leave the bus elsewhere, unless written permission has been provided in advice to the drivers, via the Operations Manager.

If a driver cannot make it into work or will be late for any reason

If a driver is unwell and cannot make it in to work or expects to be late to the extent that this will impact on the bus run, the driver should attempt to contact their line manager at the earliest possible opportunity so that alternative arrangements can be made. They should also contact the Operations Manager.

If the bus is early to a stop

If the bus is early to a stop, then the driver should wait either until the allotted time, or until the passengers expected from that stop have all got on.

If the bus expected to be late

If the bus is running significantly late for the first pick up for more than 5 minutes then the driver should pull over and call College Reception at the next available safe opportunity. College Reception or administration staff will be available from 8.00 am onwards and take responsibility for contacting parents or carers, via iSAMS.

If an expected pupil is not at the bus stop

If a pupil is expected at a particular bus stop but has not arrived at or before the designated departure time, then the bus should leave without them. Parents will be informed of the absence should the child fail to register that day without the College having been made aware.

Rules for Driving College Vehicles:

Driver Details

All drivers are required to provide a copy of their licence annually to the Estates Manager. They are further required to notify the College immediately should they be involved in any road accident (even when not driving a College vehicle), receive any notice of intended prosecution or fixed penalty notice or, have any change in circumstances relating to health. Staff are required to complete an annual Driver's Questionnaire.

Drivers must ensure they are driving to UK road rules as set out in the Road Traffic Act 1988 and UK Highway Code.

College vehicles must not be driven by anyone other than the employee authorised by the Head or Operations Manager or the insurance on the vehicle may be invalidated. With effect from 1 September 2003, all staff wishing to drive the minibuses must pass the Hertfordshire County minibus driver assessment course (or equivalent). All persons passing the UK driving test after 1 January 1997 must have a full PCV D1 license, as must anyone driving in mainland Europe.

Permitted Use

Vehicles must only be used for official business as instructed; personal use is not permitted. Any drivers making unauthorised use of College vehicles will not be covered by insurance. Drivers must be at least 25 years of age, but not older than 70 (under the terms of the insurance policy), and hold a clean driving licence with no endorsements or convictions.

Vehicle Maintenance

All drivers are responsible for making daily checks on oil and water levels and tyre pressures before every journey. A weekly Vehicle Condition Check is carried out by the Site Services Team. A copy of the check sheet is held by the Operations Manager .

The Operation Manager holds MOT and Service Records.

The minibuses undergo a 10-weekly Vehicle Safety Check (PSV). Records are kept with the Operations Manager.

Fines

Drivers are responsible for payment of all fines incurred (as the driver) whilst they are in charge of College vehicles and responsible under their own driving licence for any speeding convictions, endorsements or convictions obtained.

Fuel

Drivers must ensure they are aware of current College procedures for the re-fueling of vehicles. If in doubt, please speak with the Operations Manager before using the vehicle.

Mileage

All drivers of College vehicles must keep accurate daily mileage records. If unsure how to record mileage speak with a member of the Site Services Team.

Breaks whilst driving on school trips:

GB Domestic Rules regarding drivers breaks apply. After 5 hours 30 minutes of driving you must take a break of at least 30 minutes for rest and refreshment. Or, within any period of 8 hours 30 minutes, you must take at least 45 minutes in breaks. You must also have a break of at least 30 minutes at the end of this period, unless it's the end of the working day. Further information can be sourced at https://www.gov.uk/drivers-hours/gb-domestic-rules

Theft of Vehicle

In the event of a College vehicle being stolen, the driver in charge at the time must immediately notify both the Police and the College.

Security

Drivers must at all times ensure that the vehicle is securely locked when left unattended. Vehicles must be returned to the College premises unless any other arrangements are authorised by the Head or the Head of Operations.

Safety Equipment

The minibuses should have the following tools and equipment:

A Fire Extinguisher
An Emergency hammer
A First Aid box
A Torch
A Disposable Camera
A Tyre Gauge

If any equipment is found missing or defective please report this to the Estates Manager immediately.

Seat Belts

All drivers are responsible for ensuring seat belts are used as required by Law. The driver must check that all passengers seat belts are in placed before driving off.

Drinking, Driving and Smoking

Drivers are not permitted to consume any alcoholic beverages during working hours. They are also reminded that they should not drive College vehicles if their blood alcohol level is still above the legal limit as a result of alcohol consumed outside of working hours. All UK Road laws regarding drink and drug driving applies.

Smoking or vaping is strictly prohibited in the minibuses or whilst waiting nearby the vehicles for passengers to board.

Accident Reporting

All accidents when driving a College vehicle must be reported to the Operations Manager or Head, within 24 hours with full details to enable an insurance claim form to be completed. As a reminder, drivers should, following an accident, make a note of:

- Full details of any Third Party vehicle and drivers involved in the accident.
- Names and addresses of any witnesses.
- Details of any Police Officer at the scene.
- Exact time and location of the accident.

Mobile Phones

The use of mobile phones is not permitted whilst driving College vehicles.

Training

Vehicle familiarity and awareness training can be booked with the Estates Manager. Sessions would cover:

- Refuelling
- Locking system
- Drivers log requirements
- Location of fire extinguisher and First Aid Kit
- Breakdown & recovery details

Maintenance Goods Vehicle

A goods vehicle is available for use by the Site Services Team and other appointed staff to transport luggage or equipment for Duke of Edinburgh trips.

All drivers must hold a valid full UK Driving licence. A copy of the licence must be seen by the Estates Manager.

For safety the luggage section has been fitted with strapping - this must be used when transporting goods of any kind.

Passengers may accompany the driver in the front cabin, but passengers must **never** be transported in the luggage section.

Staff wishing to use the vehicle for College related business should contact the Estates Manager. It may not be used for personal business.

Drivers must ensure they are driving to UK road rules as set out in the Road Traffic Act 1988 and UK Highway Code. Drivers will be responsible for payment of all fines incurred (as the driver) whilst they are in charge of College vehicles and responsible under their own driving licence for any speeding convictions, endorsements or convictions occurred.

Smoking or vaping is not permitted whilst driving the vehicle

Version Control

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