

BRIGHTON GIRLS GDST

DRIVING AT WORK POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

Driving is probably the most dangerous activity that most of us do in the course of our working lives. “It has been estimated that up to a third of all road traffic accidents involve somebody who is at work at the time. This may account for over 20 fatalities and 250 serious injuries every week”. (Driving at Work, HSE Indg382 - see Related Documents column)

Road accidents can cause a great deal of disruption to a business through lost time, work-related ill health and even death, in addition to financial costs such as repairs to vehicles, insurance claims, and increases in insurance premiums.

As health and safety law applies when employees are driving as part of their work activities (this means within their working day, not employees' usual commute between their normal place of work and home) then the risks associated with driving must be effectively managed as part of a health and safety management system. As with all risks, consideration should be given to eliminating the hazard where ever possible, and consequently the GDST requires staff to use public transport, wherever reasonably practicable. Where it is not possible or practicable to use public transport, suitable controls must be implemented to reduce the risks of an accident.

Employees who may drive as part of their job include:

- School staff who may be required to attend meetings and training events at locations other than their school, or deliver/collect goods from various locations;
- School staff who have to drive between school sites if they are not within easy walking distance;
- School staff who drive minibuses or their own vehicles to attend sports training sessions or tournaments, or as the means of transport on an educational visit;
- School staff, e.g. premises managers, caretakers, ground keepers, who drive minibuses or other school vehicles, e.g. vans, as an essential part of their job;
- Staff from Trust Office e.g. Estate's Team, Health and Safety Team, ICT Team, Internal Audit Team and others who are required to undertake site visits and/or attend meetings at GDST schools.

Promoting sound health and safety driving practices and a good safety culture at work may well spill over into private driving, which could reduce the chances of staff being injured in a crash outside work as well as during work.

2. POLICY

The GDST is committed to compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, in addition to road traffic law, to ensure that employees drive safely whilst at work through:

- Suitable and sufficient risk assessment
- Driver competency and training;
- Ensuring drivers are sufficiently fit and healthy for the task:
- Ensuring vehicles are safe and fit for purpose.

3. SCOPE

This Policy and Procedure is applicable to all GDST staff that drive a motor vehicle (e.g. car, motorbike, minibus, van etc) as part of their job.

Clearly some members of staff only drive for work very occasionally or may drive regularly but only for very short journeys, e.g. a few miles between school sites. The risk for these members of staff is different compared to those who drive regularly i.e. on several occasions a week and over longer distances. Consequently, the controls employed should be commensurate with the risk identified. In order to differentiate between the controls required for staff who drive within the GDST the following categories have been identified:

- **Occasional drivers** – those members of staff who may drive on rare occasions e.g. once or twice a term, to attend a training session or conference, to visit a school, or for an educational visit.
- **Regular short-distance drivers** – those who routinely, i.e. one or more times a week, drive short distances e.g. less than 5 miles per journey i.e. between school sites.
- **Essential drivers** – those who drive longer distances and where driving is an inherent or the sole part of their job (e.g. Trust Office Surveyors and H&S Team, and school minibus drivers employed to undertake the daily home-school transport service). Essential drivers are not always based at one specified site but are often expected to travel between sites.

There are some fundamentals, however, which must be adhered to by **ALL** drivers no matter how short the journey or how low the perceived risk, and which must be checked by their line managers or other designated person. These include ensuring:

- That the vehicle being driven is safe and well maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations by regularly (annually) checking MOT and, for Essential drivers, Service Records;

- That the driver has passed their driving test for the type of vehicle being driven and is not disqualified from driving for any reason by regularly (annually) checking their driving licence details held by the DVLA (on the DVLA website scroll down to the paragraphs 'Share your information with an employer or hire company' and 'Check someone's driving licence information'); and
- That the driver is adequately insured by regularly (annually) checking insurance certificates. This should include cover for 'business use'* for Regular and Essential Users. [* Where a member of staff makes occasional or one-off trips in their own vehicle, they will be covered by the GDST 'Occasional Business Use Insurance Policy' providing they have a valid MOT and no more than 6 endorsement points on their license. Drivers with 6 or more penalty points must be referred to insurers to confirm they will cover them and cost of any excess. Staff driving school vehicles, e.g. minibuses, will also be covered by GDST insurance policy provided they have the correct driving licence for vehicle.]

In addition to the above there are some fundamental safety 'rules' which must be adhered to by **ALL** drivers. These include:

- Not using mobile phones (including hands-free sets) or adjusting sat navs whilst driving for work.
- Ensuring they are fit to drive, e.g. by having regular eyesight tests, wearing glasses or contact lenses if required and reporting any illness, condition or medication that they are taking that may affect their ability to drive to their Line Manager and the DVLA (see the 'Reportable Health Problems' & Medicines' guidance in the related documents section at the bottom of the page), and
- Complying with road safety legislation and the Highway Code (see www.direct.gov.uk/highwaycode).

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 It is the responsibility of the Girls' Day School Trust through delegated lines of responsibility to ensure that:

- Drivers are competent (i.e. they have passed the relevant driving test and driving course where applicable, e.g. MIDAS for driving minibuses) and have the correct driving licence for the type of vehicle driven;
- Drivers only use vehicles that are insured to be driven for work purposes and that the vehicles are fit for purpose and maintained in a safe condition (whether supplied by GDST or whether private vehicles);
- Drivers know they are responsible for carrying out basic safety checks (see section 5.3 below);
- Vehicles (particularly minibuses) do not exceed their maximum load weight;

- Passengers, goods and equipment can be carried securely in the vehicles.

4.2 It is the responsibility of all drivers' line managers or other person designated by the Head to ensure that:

- They identify all drivers (Occasional, Regular Short-distance and Essential) within their area of responsibility;
- Staff within their area of responsibility are familiar with this Policy and Procedure and that they are working to the current issue of documentation. (It is recommended that Regular and Essential drivers sign a document to confirm they have read, understood and will adhere to the policy);
- Driving at work risk assessments are undertaken and recorded, and any controls required are adequately implemented. [Click here for more info on driving at work risk assessments](#)
- Driving at work risk assessments are reviewed periodically (annually) or when changes to driving practice, type of vehicle, type of journey, location etc arise;
- Drivers are able to satisfy the requirements of the Highway Code with respect to eyesight and that Essential drivers have undertaken an eye sight test at commencement of work (or in the previous two years if proof of the test can be provided) and thereafter every two years, or as specified by a registered optician. NB The cost of an eyesight test for an Essential driver should be paid for by the school;
- All drivers are provided with basic safety instructions relating to driving through the GDST Health and Safety Handbook provided on induction, or when promoted to a job that requires driving.
- Copies of the following driving documentation are obtained upon commencement of work and thereafter on an annual basis (Evidence that these have been produced should be kept):
- Driving licence (photo driving licence and details held by the DVLA)
- Insurance certificate (covering business use unless using GDST Occasional Business Use Policy),
- MOT Certificate (where personal vehicle is being used (and the vehicle is over three years old).
- Satisfactorily completed the GDST Finance Dept. 'Driver's Medical Questionnaire' (drivers of school vehicles)
- NB. In order for occasional drivers to be covered by the GDST Occasional Business use Policy their driving licence must be valid and have no more than 6 endorsement points and they must have a valid MOT for their vehicle. Drivers with 6 or more penalty points must be referred to insurers to confirm they will cover them and cost of any excess.

4.3 All drivers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they have a current driving licence for the type of vehicle being driven, and insurance which includes business use (NB occasional drivers will be covered by the GDST Occasional Business Use Policy providing that they do not have more than 6 endorsement points on their license and they have a valid MOT in place. Drivers with 6 or more penalty points must be referred to insurers to confirm they will cover them and cost of any excess);
- Ensuring that they comply with the general rules of the road (road safety legislation and the Highway Code);
- Ensuring they are familiar with the current version of this Policy and Procedure and are adhering to its requirements;
- Ensuring that they do not use a mobile phone (including hands-free sets) whilst driving;
- Ensuring that their vehicle is roadworthy and fit for purpose and that basic safety checks are carried out before travelling, e.g. lights working, correct tyre pressure, etc;
- Ensuring that their vision is adequate for driving through regular eyesight tests by a registered optician (these should be undertaken every two years, or as specified by a registered optician), and wearing glasses or contact lenses if required. NB The cost of an eyesight test for an Essential driver should be paid for by the school;
- Ensuring they are fit to drive and informing their Manager and the DVLA if they have any illness, medical condition or are taking any medication that may affect their ability to drive safely. See Driving at Work Reportable Health Problems.doc in related documents and the guidance on 'Driving under the Influence of Drugs'.

Where the driver has a vehicle provided by the GDST then the driver is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is maintained and regularly inspected so that it is safe for use at all times.

5. SAFE DRIVING PROCEDURE

5.1 Driver Rules (06/19)

The following rules must be adhered to by **ALL** drivers:

- Full compliance with all road traffic law including the wearing of seatbelts, and the use of car seats / booster seats for younger children;
- Familiarity with the most recent edition of Highway Code (see www.direct.gov.uk/highwaycode for more information);

- Possession of a valid full driving licence in accordance with the type of vehicle being driven;
- Not use hand-held or hands-free mobile phones, or adjust satellite navigation systems whilst driving (these activities will distract the driver with potentially fatal consequences). If a driver receives a call on their phone whilst driving, they should not respond to it until they have found a safe place to stop and park the vehicle. Similarly, if a driver needs to adjust their satellite navigation systems they should find a safe place to stop and park the vehicle first.
- No driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medicines that may affect their ability to drive safely. See the guidance on 'Driving under the Influence of Drugs'.
- Ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy prior to use and basic safety checks are carried out before travelling e.g. lights working, correct tread depth and pressure on tyres etc
- Staff must inform their line manager promptly of any changes in their status which may affect their ability to drive e.g. convictions (including speeding offences), health changes;
- Staff must report any accidents or significant near-misses which occur whilst they are driving for work to their line manager as soon as possible. These should be recorded using the GDST incident reporting procedure. Where possible and appropriate, steps should be taken to reduce the risk of a similar incident re-occurring.

The following additional rules should be adhered to by all drivers undertaking longer journeys:

- Plan the journey so as to avoid excessive driving hours and the risk of fatigue;
- A rest-break from driving should be taken approximately every two hours during long journeys;
- Avoid driving when tired, e.g. long distances at the end of a working day; between midnight and 6:00am; or if taking medicines that cause drowsiness;
- Be prepared to postpone the journey if the weather or traffic conditions are poor.

5.2 Driver Training

All drivers shall receive basic training on work-related road safety as part of their induction training. All drivers shall be informed of the following:

1. Requirements of the Driving at Work Procedure and Policy (Regular and Essential drivers should sign a document to confirm they have read, understood and will adhere to the policy);
2. Procedure in the event of a breakdown or accident – Procedures in Event of a Breakdown or Accident.doc in related documents

3. Procedure for reporting an accident or significant near-miss driving incident to school / Trust Office;
4. Procedures for safe journey planning – see section 5.4 of the this policy;
5. Any further controls required arising from the driving risk assessment.

5.3 Vehicle Maintenance

All vehicles used must be fit for their intended purpose and be maintained in a safe condition. The minimum maintenance requirements for private vehicles are outlined below:

Servicing

All vehicles must be serviced regularly by a competent mechanic in line with the manufacturer's instructions and as a minimum on an annual basis. Documentary evidence that this has taken place should be provided by 'Essential' drivers.

MOT Certificate

In line with current legislation all vehicles over three years old must hold a current MOT Certificate (NB Minibuses need them after one year).

Vehicles owned by the GDST must be serviced and repaired by the relevant approved dealers at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer. Records of repairs and services must be kept with the vehicle or by the school/Trust Office in an easily accessible location.

Pre-Use Vehicle Safety Checks

Before every journey make sure everything is working correctly e.g. lights, windscreen wipers etc and ensure tyres are at the correct pressure with adequate tread. Ensure that there is adequate fuel in the car for the proposed journey and that all fluid levels e.g. oil, water etc are adequate.

Safety Equipment for Essential Drivers

The following safety equipment must be carried in all vehicles used for work purposes by Essential Drivers:

- Warning triangle
- Travel first aid kit (for recommended contents see Oracle-H&S-First Aid para 7.2 iii Travelling First Aid Kits)
- High visibility waistcoat
- Contact details for breakdown recovery service

The above safety equipment will be provided/paid for by the school.

It is also recommended that the following items are carried in all vehicles used for work by Essential Drivers:

- Blanket
- Waterproof coat
- Refreshments e.g. water and snack in case of breakdown in severe weather conditions (e.g. high or low temperatures).

5.4 Planning the Journey – Essential Drivers and Occasional / Regular Drivers Undertaking Longer Journeys

All drivers must consider their journey route and timing in advance. Where possible motorways should be used as these are considered to be the safest roads.

Where a journey is planned at the end of a working day, e.g. after a day of teaching, serious consideration should be given to the length of the journey and the effect of fatigue on the safety of the driver and passengers. Symptoms of fatigue include:

- feeling sleepy
- irritable and impatient
- excessive yawning
- having difficulty concentrating
- day dreaming
- driving over the centre line / drifting in your lane on motorways/dual carriageways
- reacting slowly
- 'microsleeps'

Sufficient time shall be allowed to meet appointments ensuring that drivers allow a 15-minute break period for approximately every 2 hours driving. Wherever possible drivers should not plan to drive more than 4 hours a day and should allow for an overnight stay, wherever possible, if this limit is to be significantly exceeded.

Where travelling in excess of four hours is deemed necessary, then adequate planning must be undertaken to ensure that the drivers do not suffer from fatigue. This may include ensuring that there are sufficient breaks within the journey and an adequate break between arrival at the destination and the journey back. The planning may also include trying to avoid travelling at peak traffic times, if possible.

Where the journey is disrupted and lengthened due to unplanned road works, accidents or diversions then the driver must ensure that they assess the situation at the time and ensure that adequate additional rest breaks are taken, as required.

Journeys should be re-assessed and possibly rescheduled for a later date in the event of bad weather and/or poor driving conditions. Drivers should check the weather forecast prior to commencing their journey.