



River Valley Charter School Van Use Policy

November 1, 2015

River Valley Charter School owns a 2016 Ford Transit 10 Passenger Van for use transporting students and adults on school business.

1. The van is to be used for school business only. No personal use for any reason is permitted at any time.
2. No alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or controlled substances are to be used or consumed by the driver or any passenger at any time immediately preceding or while operating or riding in the RVCS van.
3. The van is not allowed to be used at any time for transporting students to and from school and home as a school bus.
4. No special license other than a valid US driver's license is required to drive the van.
5. Only RVCS employees are authorized to drive the van. Any RVCS employee may drive a van provided:
 - A. The driver has a current, valid driver's license with a photocopy on file at school;
 - B. The driver has had a CORI check and a SAFIS fingerprint check and is approved as a driver.
 - C. The driver has completed a driving safety program sanctioned by the school.
 - D. The driver has followed the school procedures to drive the van at a particular time for a particular purpose.
6. No RVCS employee shall receive financial compensation specifically for their role as a van driver.
7. The van is limited to 10 passengers including the driver.
8. All passengers and the driver must wear seat belts at all times in the van. Car seats must be used for all students where required by Massachusetts law. The driver should ensure that someone in the van has a working cell phone in case of emergency. The van will be equipped with a first aid kit.
9. Cell phone use while driving the van is prohibited.
10. Drivers must operate the van in accordance with all traffic laws, ordinances and regulations. Any fines resulting from violations are the responsibility of the driver and not RVCS.
11. All authorized drivers are expected to operate the van safely and with great care. Especially when transporting passengers, the driver must make a concerted effort to provide for the safety and well-being of those aboard. When weather conditions and road hazards require special attention, the driver should request passengers to be quiet and observant. If a driver is found to have committed any unsafe acts while operating the van, driving privileges may be revoked and disciplinary action may be initiated. Intentional reckless or unsafe driving will not be tolerated.

12. No food or drink is allowed in the van. No smoking in the van. No rowdy or loud behavior is allowed in the van. No inappropriate behavior, language, or gesture directed at passersby is allowed in the van. The driver has full authority to respond to any inappropriate behavior; and the driver has full authority over the radio/CD player, HVAC, lights, and other controls.
13. Each van will have a dated travel log. Any time a van is used, the driver should make an entry in the log indicating the mileage at the beginning and end of the trip, the purpose of the trip, and the location visited, and any notes relative to the condition of the van or need for maintenance.
14. The van is to be kept clean. After each use, the driver should check to make sure all windows are shut, nothing and no one is left in the van, and the van is locked. The van should be filled with gas at any time the gauge falls to $\frac{1}{4}$ full. Receipts for gas purchases or tolls must be presented to the Business Office for reimbursement.
15. The Office Assistant will keep the keys and schedule the use of the van. The van is available during the school day, at night, and on weekends for school related purposes such as athletic events, field trips, concerts, plays, lectures, etc. The seats may not be removed in order to use the van as a cargo van.
16. All maintenance concerns or issues must be reported to the Office Assistant immediately.
17. Information regarding gasoline fill-ups and routine maintenance will be made available to drivers.
18. The van will be kept parked in the reserved space at the entrance to the school.

Some general guidelines to consider when driving a van:

- Whenever driving the van, please maintain extra vigilance.
- Vans, when loaded with cargo or passengers, are much heavier than passenger cars. Thus, acceleration and braking times are increased considerably.
- When loading a van, be sure to distribute weight evenly side to side and front to back, as this will greatly affect the vehicle's handling.
- Visibility in vans is also restricted and drivers should take caution and seek assistance when backing, changing lanes, and turning.
- The height of most vans is greater than that of most passenger vehicles and should be considered when entering low-clearance garages and similar structures.
- Because vans are tall, their center of gravity causes them to be unstable in sharp turns at moderate speed. Use extreme caution when making quick or sharp turns.