

# Home to School/College Transport

# CODE OF CONDUCT



Council's Transport Unit:

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Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



WLGA • CLILC

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# Our Commitment

The Council aims to provide the learner transport where it has a statutory responsibility to do so for pupils/students to travel to and from a relevant place as determined by the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 in accordance with the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014. The nature of the transport provided by the council will be via a mode which the council considers will be without undue stress, strain or difficulty such as would prevent pupils/students from benefiting from the education on offer. Pupils/students should be able to travel in safety and reasonable comfort. We will take such steps as we consider necessary to satisfy ourselves of the suitability of both vehicles and drivers/passenger assistants.

- Parents, schools/colleges and contractors will have access to advice and assistance during normal office hours.
- Wherever possible, passes required for travel will normally be issued within 15 working days of receipt of an approved request, other than at the start of the academic school year where each authority will distribute the passes in accordance with their own procedure.
- The Council will ensure that any special equipment, such as harnesses or seats, is provided either by the Council, Operator or Parent as deemed necessary.
- Routes will be planned to minimise journey times, subject to the provision of an efficient and cost effective service.
- The Council will facilitate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks at enhanced level to ensure that drivers and passenger assistants are suitable for a post which involves transporting children.
- Identification badges will be prepared and issued to approved drivers and passenger assistants, who will be expected to display them at all times.

- The safety and quality of school transport services and routes will be monitored on a regular basis.
- Vehicles used for school transport may be fitted with CCTV. The footage is confidential but may be used as evidence in cases of misconduct or misbehaviour.

**In accordance with the All-Wales Travel Behaviour Code Statutory Guidance, we will:**

- Work with the contractors, parents, pupils/students and the schools/colleges to resolve any behavioural problems which may arise on school/college transport services.
- Ensure operators and drivers/passenger assistants are familiar with the content of the Travel Behaviour Code through specific training.
- Work with schools/colleges to raise awareness of the importance of good behaviour and the consequences of failing to comply with the Travel Behaviour Code through staff and pupil Bus Safety training.
- Expect incidents occurring on Home to School/College Transport to be reported to the relevant Transport Unit.
- Maintain a log of all reported incidents, investigate each incident in conjunction with the school and other relevant parties and take further sanctions where appropriate.

# Parents' Code of Conduct

- Parents, Guardians and/or Carers are responsible for encouraging good behaviour and ensuring the Welsh Government's Travel Behaviour Code is complied with by your child. You are therefore expected to support the Council, the schools/colleges, the operators and their staff in maintaining good behaviour.
- With regards to the prevention and dealing with Bullying, we will follow specific guidance as set out in the 'Respecting Others Anti-bullying Agenda' and 'The Hate Crime Framework'.
- If your child is involved in bad behaviour on school transport you will be involved in the disciplinary process at the earliest opportunity.
- It should be clearly understood in cases of bad behaviour that the ultimate sanction is the removal of the right to receive transport. In that case the responsibility and full cost of providing transport will fall on you. Please read the Parent Guide for further information.
- It is your responsibility to ensure the safety of your children in getting to the school transport in the mornings and in getting from it in the afternoon/evenings. Appropriate supervision arrangements should therefore be made, particularly for primary pupils.
- In the mornings your child should leave home in plenty of time to get to the bus so that there is no need to rush, particularly if there are roads to be crossed.
- You should also ensure that your child is dressed appropriately.
- In the afternoon/evenings, a child who has to cross the road after getting off the bus should wait until the bus has driven off before attempting to cross so that they can see and be seen by other traffic. If meeting your child, wherever possible, you should wait at the drop off point itself, and not on the other side of the road.
- A primary pupil will normally only be set down at his/her designated stop in the afternoon. Should there be any change to the normal arrangements, for whatever reason, you should inform the driver or the passenger assistant (if one is provided).

- Where pupils who are taken to their drop off point in the afternoon and are usually collected by a parent/guardian, if there is no one there to collect them, the following procedure will be put in place –
  - i. The driver will wait a maximum of 5 minutes for the parent/guardian to arrive. If there is still no one to collect the child, they will advise the Council’s Transport Unit and their Transport Operator of the situation but in the meantime will keep the pupil(s) on the vehicle and operate the service on its scheduled route so as not to delay other pupils on board.
  - ii. On completion of the route, the driver will phone the Council’s Transport Unit and their Transport Operator for further instructions. In the event of being unable to contact the parent/guardian for further instructions, the driver will contact the police on 101.
- Please advise the Council’s Transport Unit of any medical conditions that your child has that may affect his/her transport.
- In cases of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, there may be temporary alterations to the transport provided. In some circumstances it may not be possible to operate a route at all, or to serve only part of the route.
- If a school/college transport route does not operate in the morning due to inclement weather conditions but you choose to take your child(ren) to school yourself, then you will be required to make arrangements to collect your child(ren) at the end of the school/college day.
- Please notify the Council’s Transport Unit immediately of any changes to your circumstances such as a change of address. If the bus pass is no longer required, it must be returned immediately to the Council. The continual use of a bus pass when it is no longer valid could be considered fraudulent.
- Travel passes are valuable and replacements will be charged for. Lost passes should be reported immediately to the Council’s Transport Unit, who will advise you how to obtain a replacement.
- If you have any suggestions on how the Code of Conduct may be improved, please direct your feedback to the Council who provides the transport.



# PARENT GUIDE

**For most learners their journeys between home and school pass without incident or concern. Unfortunately some journeys are marred by poor, disruptive and unacceptable behaviours that can impact on learners and the wider public. This can be a real threat to safety and can have tragic consequences.**

The Travel Behaviour Code ('the Code') is a statutory code that sets out the standards of behaviour required of learners and consequently promotes the safeguarding of learners.

The Code applies to all learners up to the age of 19 years and applies to all types of travel to and from school or college, whether or not travel arrangements are made by a local authority. This includes contract buses, public buses, public trains, walking, taxis, scooters and motorbikes, cycling and journeys in cars. It also includes journeys between schools during the day, not just at the beginning and end of the day.



The Code should form part of a school's behaviour policies and any misbehaviour on the journey to and from school can be dealt with under individual school behaviour policies or by enforcement of the Code or, in very serious cases, by the police.

Parents of learners should ensure their children are aware of and understand the Code. Parents and learners need to be aware of the implications if a learner does not adhere to the Code.

**A local authority can withdraw an individual's entitlement to free transport, or their school could impose a disciplinary penalty on the learner. In the event that transport is withdrawn, it is the responsibility of the learner's parents to arrange suitable transport to and from the place of learning.**

It is also important that parents are aware of how to report incidents of poor behaviour that impact the safety and well-being of their child – for example, in cases where bullying occurs.

Parents may be asked to sign Travel Behaviour Contracts. These contracts are between learners, parents, transport operators and local authorities. They are designed to foster a sense of shared responsibility for ensuring safety and to improve safety on the home to school journey on dedicated learner transport. They set out what behaviour is expected of everybody, including their roles and responsibilities.

Parents and learners in receipt of dedicated learner transport from the local authority sign the contract to state they will comply with the Code and the Contract and that failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of transport. Local authorities and transport operators, in turn, sign the contracts to confirm the actions they will take to ensure safety on the home to school journey.



## **Parents have a number of roles**

- Help their children understand the Code
- Help their children report incidents
- Encourage their children to comply with the Code in order to ensure school transport is safe for all
- Be aware of the sanctions if the Code is breached, including the removal of transport to and from school and other measures that a school may take if the school's behaviour policy is breached
- Parents are responsible in law for the learner's continued attendance at school if transport is withdrawn
- Co-operate with education institutions, transport operators and local authorities
- Adhere to signed Travel Behaviour Contracts
- Ensure the learner understands the requirement to wear a seatbelt

## **Sanctions**

If a reported incident has been investigated and it has been determined that a learner has breached the Code, the local authority may withdraw the transport it provides. Before a decision to withdraw travel arrangements is made, the learner and the parents of the learner will be given the opportunity to make representations, which must be considered by the local authority. Parents should contact the local authority to find out the process for making a representation as each local authority may have a different process.

Where the learner is a registered pupil at a maintained or non-maintained school or a pupil referral unit, the local authority must consult with the school about the decision to withdraw travel arrangements. The head teacher must be given written notice of the decision to withdraw learner transport at least 24 hours before the withdrawal takes effect specifying the period for which travel arrangements are to be withdrawn and the reasons for withdrawal.

The local authority must give written notice of the withdrawal of travel arrangements to the learner's parents at least 24 hours before the withdrawal takes effect specifying the period for which travel arrangements are to be withdrawn and the reasons for withdrawal.

The local authority should continue to provide transport until the period of the withdrawal begins. However, there may be occasions when it is inappropriate for the learner to continue to travel to their place of learning in their normal way, particularly if they pose a risk of harm to others. In such cases, the local authority must make suitable alternative transport arrangements.

The period of withdrawal must not exceed 10 consecutive school days, including where these are at the end and beginning of different school terms. The period of withdrawal must not result in the learner having travel arrangements withdrawn for more than 30 days in the school year in which the withdrawal takes effect.

The local authority and school may decide that it is more appropriate for sanctions to be imposed under the school's behaviour policy. A learner should not generally have sanctions imposed on them for an incident on learner transport under both the Code and the school's behaviour policy.

When considering whether the learner's parents can reasonably make alternative arrangements, it should be acknowledged that the withdrawal of learner travel would generally inconvenience parents and learners. Inconvenience of itself is not considered a sufficient reason for not withdrawing transport.

There is no statutory appeals process for the withdrawal of transport by the local authority. However, local authorities' complaints procedures and education institutions' disciplinary policies should be made available to learners and parents.



# **SCHOOL BUS TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR CODE**

## **TO BE SAFE**

- When the bus arrives, wait for it to stop before boarding
- Get on and off the bus carefully – pushing or rushing can cause accidents
- Always wear your seat belt and stay in your seat for the whole journey – it could save your life
- On a school bus, stay in your seat for the whole journey
- On a public bus, find a seat if one is available
- Store your bag or other belongings safely and out of anyone's way
- Let the driver drive without distraction during the journey
- Take care of the bus
- Never spit or smoke
- Never be rude to other learners or the driver
- Never interfere with driver controls or safety equipment
- Never throw anything in or from the bus
- Only operate the bus doors or exits in an emergency and don't get off the bus until it has stopped
- Always follow the instructions of the driver or passenger assistant
- If there is an accident, stay on the bus until you are told to leave – but leave the bus by the safest exit if it is unsafe to stay on the bus
- When crossing the road find a safe place where you can be seen by all other drivers
- Please tell a teacher, parent or driver about any bad behaviour you see