



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

A PARENT / CARER GUIDE TO SEN SCHOOL TRANSPORT DURING COVID 19

Introduction

This guide has been prepared to assist parents with how we are providing school transport in line with the public health guidelines. It is of paramount importance that we all work together to achieve a safer transport provision for the students, the transport providers and the schools/academies.

This document is meant as a general guide to parents but is not exhaustive and any specific concerns in regards to the measures should be raised with a member of the transport team.

It is the responsibility of all of us to understand the need for change at the moment and to adapt our services accordingly, although this may be difficult for some of our students to understand we hope that we will have your full cooperation to make the school transport environment as safe as possible in the current circumstances.

Drivers and Passenger Assistants (where applicable)

- All staff have been issued with regular reminders not to attend the workplace if they are showing symptoms of coronavirus, these being a new continuous cough, a high temperature, shortness of breath or loss of smell or taste. We would ask that if your child or anyone in your household is showing signs of the virus that the transport service is **not** used and the appropriate government guidance is followed in relation to isolation periods.
- Drivers and passenger assistants will be allocated to a route and will not change unless there is the need to do so through sickness or injury. The teams allocated may not be your child's usual driver or passenger assistant and due to the current timescales it will not be possible to conduct individual meet and greet sessions for SEND transport.
- All drivers and passenger assistants, will be wearing a face covering.
- All drivers and passenger assistants will be wearing gloves which will be changed frequently as they assist individual passengers. Hand sanitiser will also be provided to all teams which will be kept in a safe place away from the passengers. Staff will also be observing frequent hand washing.
- Advice posters for handwashing, face coverings and disposal of tissues are displayed in work premises and within each vehicle carrying contracted school route passengers.

The Journey to and from school

- The amount of passengers permitted to travel on each vehicle, have been allocated depending on vehicle size/capacity.
- Drivers have been asked to use the quickest/shortest route to limit the journey time. This will mean that there will be changes to the time of your usual collection and drop off time. As usual we ask that a parent/carer is available at these times. Due to the current circumstances, it will not be possible to adjust these times to meet any personal commitments.
- Vehicles will be well ventilated whilst on route with windows open where possible. However, where opening windows causes issues in regards to students with challenging behaviour or those who are likely to attempt to alight the vehicle individual cases will need to be referred to client.transport@bedford.gov.uk so advice can be provided to ensure safe transport.
- Vehicles will be cleaned following every journey.
- Drivers and passenger assistants will adhere to 2 metre social distancing rule when collecting/dropping off at the clients threshold where possible. Where this is not possible for high dependency passengers the amount of direct contact with those individuals will be limited. Passengers will be escorted at 2 metres either at the side or behind, where possible.
- Where medication is transported between the passengers home and the school we do not require a signature at the present time. Transport staff will collect any medication from the home address in a bag from the threshold to ensure social distancing is observed. Please inform your transport provider if you have medication that is required to be taken to school.
- Please keep bags and luggage that is needed for the school day to a minimum and only send your child to school with essentials. Where possible we ask that passengers carry their own bags to and from the vehicle. Passengers who bring on a distraction toy or piece of equipment (earphones, ipad etc) will be able to do so, however this is not to be shared with other students and any possessions must be sanitised regularly.
- Parents will not be permitted to board the vehicle under any circumstances and must observe the social distancing guidelines when waiting to board or collect their child.
- If your child becomes poorly during the school day we will not be able to assist with taking them home so please ensure you are available to organise this should it be necessary.
- Face masks for passengers are not provided, however if it is your personal choice for your child to wear a face covering they may do so but we are unable to offer support with adjusting or maintaining the item.

We thank you for your continued support throughout this time. If you have any concerns or queries in relation to school transport services please contact us at client.transport@bedford.gov.uk