

Code of Conduct

All passengers have a right to travel safely. Poor behaviour is never acceptable and our aim is to raise standards of behaviour on all contracted passenger transport services (including home to school transport).

All parties subject to these guidelines are expected to fulfil their role as described and to promote good behaviour on the home to school journey. This approach will help to create a positive image of passenger transport and will encourage improved attitudes and behaviour. School children are potential future passengers on passenger transport and a good experience of school transport at an early age may encourage future use as a fare-paying passenger.

Guidelines for Passengers/School Pupils and Parent/Carers.

You are responsible for your own conduct when travelling on passenger transport. Parent/carers have a key role to ensure their child is aware of the importance of appropriate behaviour on school transport. It is vitally important to have the full support of parent/ carers in order to maintain good behaviour. Therefore, parent/carers are requested to take time to read through this document with their child. Acceptance of the travel pass provided by the Council indicates acceptance of the behaviour policy.

- It is your responsibility to ensure that your child is at the departure point five minutes before the transport is due and that young children are looked after until the transport arrives;
- Ensure that young children are met when the transport returns from school;
- Make sure your child has their travel pass with them - operators will make checks;
- Make sure your child knows what to do if the transport is late, or does not arrive;
- Ensure your child knows to behave appropriately on school transport;
- Co-operate with school, the Council and the operator if your child is misbehaving on school transport;
- Immediately notify the transport team of any changes in your circumstances. If your child's travel pass is no longer required please return it to the Commissioning Procurement and Contract Management Team;
- Unless exempt, make sure that your child wears a face covering during the COVID-19 pandemic, where regulations require this, when travelling on school transport;

- Lost or damaged travel passes are required to be replaced at a cost of £12.50.

Pupils

- Carry your travel pass at all times;
- Find a seat and remain seated whilst the bus is moving;
- Use the seatbelt where provided;
- Do as the driver/escort asks you;
- Do not distract the driver as this could cause danger;
- Behave in an orderly manner;
- Be polite to other passengers;
- Enter and leave by the correct door;
Unless exempt, wear a face covering during the COVID-19 pandemic, where regulations require this, when travelling on school transport.

Take care of your travel pass; it will cost £12.50 to replace.

Guidelines for schools

In securing good behaviour on school transport, schools' policies for discipline and management of pupil behaviour have a significant impact. Whilst the degree of control a school can exercise on home to school transport is limited, it is reasonable to suggest that schools have a general responsibility for the behaviour of their pupils where it is obvious that a child or young person is travelling to or from school.

- Provide adequate supervision at vehicle set down and pick up points and inform operators of any special parking arrangements at your school;
- Wherever possible make sure that private vehicles do not obstruct contracted vehicles set down and pick up points;
- Assist in developing the understanding of pupils (and parent/carers where appropriate) in relation to behaviour on school transport issues;
- Investigate all incidents of poor or unacceptable behaviour;
- Nominate a key member of staff to act as contact in relation to behaviour on school transport issues;
- To support the Local Authority and operators in seeking improvements to pupil behaviour on transport;
- Unless exempt, make sure that children wear a face covering during the COVID-19 pandemic, where regulations require this, when travelling on school transport.

General Transport Enquiries

T: 01228 226428

westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

Behaviour on home to school/college transport

Revised April 2023



Introduction

The home to school journey is a statutory requirement for children of compulsory school age living further than the statutory walking distance from the appropriate school for their home address. In Cumbria this is interpreted as:

- A child under 8 years of age attending his/her catchment or nearest school and living further than two miles from school; or
- A child over 8 years of age attending his/her catchment or nearest school and living further than three miles from school.

The Council's Commissioning Transport Team provides home to school transport through a range of contracted services. The contracts are for journeys from home to school and return during term time only.

Operators are required to provide vehicles to meet contract specifications and to provide a safe and reliable journey to and from school.

Schools, pupils and parent/carers are expected to work together to help the Council and its operators to fulfil these roles. This includes the promotion of good behaviour.

The behaviour of the majority of pupils on home to school transport is generally good and does not cause concern. However, as is the case in the school setting, from time to time the behaviour of the minority of pupils is unacceptable. The difference is that whilst the responsibility for the management of behaviour in school is clear, the responsibility during the journey to and from school on school transport is less easily defined.

If the behaviour of pupils is to be positively influenced then the responsibility for behaviour on home to school transport has to be seen as shared and this emphasises the need for partnership. There is a responsibility on the Council, schools, operators, drivers, parent/carers and pupils to make the partnership work.

Instances of good behaviour will be recognised by the Local Authority when the operator conveys this information. This will take the form of a letter of commendation to the child, his/her parent/carer and the school.

This leaflet includes the Behaviour Policy and contains a Code of Conduct for schools, parent/carers and pupils. The policy has equal application to any passenger travelling on a contracted or local bus service.

Behaviour policy

The way you behave says a lot about you. School pupils and college students travelling on contracted transport represent their family, their school/college and the Council and it is important to understand poor behaviour reflects badly on everyone concerned.

This also relates to the Council's transport operators and it is implicit when an operator accepts a contract with the Council that they understand their role in portraying a positive image of transport in Cumbria.

The Council and schools/colleges are committed to work in partnership with operators, parent/carers and pupils to resolve difficulties involving the transport provided.

The Policy is designed to offer good advice on how to behave in a manner that brings credit to you and the groups you represent.

- No smoking including electronic cigarettes.
- No swearing or verbal aggression.
- No bullying - No fighting - No spitting - No vandalism;
- Students who have a right to travel on school buses also have a responsibility to behave well;
- Sit one person per seat and do not change seats during the journey;
- Do not shout or disturb the driver - respect that they have a responsible job. (It is a criminal offence to distract the driver);
- Do not throw things inside the bus or out of the windows;
- Respect the rights of other passengers to travel without fear of bullying or any other form of distress;
- Carry out any reasonable instruction given by the driver.

Westmorland and Furness Council, schools and operators commit to report and investigate all instances of poor behaviour and to take appropriate disciplinary action, where necessary. This may include:

- Official Warnings;
- Allocation of a designated seat;

- Suspension from school transport for an appropriate period of time;
- Payment for any damage caused.

Criminal damage or behaviour will be reported to the Police.

Suspension from School Transport (including Local Bus Services)

Whilst it is important to promote a positive approach to the home to school journey, it is also important to recognise that there will be incidents that warrant temporary suspension from the transport provided. In such circumstances parent/carers are expected to ensure that their child attends school to receive their compulsory education. Circumstances warranting temporary suspension may include a number of the items listed above.

Escalation

- 1 Operators, pupils or parent/carers to make the school aware of a problem;
- 2 The school will seek to provide a local solution;
- 3 Repeated problems or issues that cannot be resolved locally must be reported to the Commissioning Transport Team;
- 4 The Commissioning Transport Team will write to the relevant party informing them of the issue and the expected course of action.

Suspension

- 5 Failure of the pupil to meet the action required, or repeated incidences will result in a further letter informing the parent/carer/pupil of a one-week suspension;
- 6 Continued failure of pupils to adhere to reasonable requests for improved behaviour will result in longer term suspension from transport as follows:
 - Remainder of the current half term;
 - Remainder of the current term;
 - Remainder of the academic year.

It is hoped that these sanctions will not be necessary BUT it is important that parent/carers, pupils and operators have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the consequences of failure to meet reasonable standards of conduct. For any period of suspension, it remains the responsibility of the parent/carer to get their child to/from school.