

Home to school transport protocol September 2020 (mainstream settings)



Introduction

This protocol sets out expectations and key guidance for parents/carers and their children who access Wrexham County Borough Council provided home to school transport.

The protocol reflects Welsh Government guidance. Please note that this could be affected by changes to national guidance and will be updated when appropriate.

The use of active travel modes of transport such as walking and cycling should be considered, and encouraged, by parents/carers and learners. In view of the potential for capacity constraints on the transport network that may impact a learner's ability to attend school, all sustainable modes of travel should be considered where it is safe to do so.

The protocol provides guidance on putting in place proportionate safeguards to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 on dedicated home to school transport to ensure learners can attend school/settings.

Parents and students (learners)

It is the parents' responsibility:

- (a) To ensure learners do not travel if anyone in the household is symptomatic, in which case the learner(s) shall stay isolated for the prescribed 10 days unless contacted by the Track & Trace team (in which case, 14 days)
- (b) To ensure that learners have an appropriate face covering to wear on home to school transport journeys. Face coverings are required for all journeys for those learners 11 years old and older.
- (c) To acknowledge a zero-tolerance for poor behaviour on transport (to include circumstances where a learner fails to follow instructions given).
- (d) To ensure learners wash their hands (or for younger learners that parents do that for them) or use appropriate hand sanitiser thoroughly before leaving their home or school to board their vehicle.
- (e) To remind learners to board and alight transport single file, for those over 11 years of age maintaining a 2 metre distance at all times, while waiting and queuing.
- (f) To remind learners they must ensure they follow any instructions given by their driver or school staff.

- (g) To remind learners that they will be allocated a specific seat on their vehicle and that learners must remain in that seat for their entire journey. There will need to be different arrangements for those travelling on local bus services.
- (h) To acknowledge that the consumption of food or drink is not permitted on any vehicle at any time.
- (i) To remember that the School Travel Code and behaviour framework will continue in operation and any learner that misbehaves, risks or causes damage or injury to the vehicle, driver or passengers, or in any way threatens the health & safety of other passengers or vehicle will be subject to an immediate ban from home to school transport for the learners involved.

Available seating on transport vehicles

Only those learners who have applied for, and have received confirmation that they have a place on home to school transport will be permitted to board a vehicle. All learners should present their travel pass to the driver when boarding a vehicle.

Those learners who have not applied for, or are not in receipt of, a Wrexham Council issued travel pass will not be permitted to board the vehicle or to travel.

On dedicated vehicles, learners will need to adhere to a seating plan for the entire trip. Seating wherever possible will be based on year groups.

Learners who qualify for free transport who travel on local bus services will need to follow the respective operator's instruction.

Use of face coverings

Face coverings are required for all learners over 11 years of age no matter what type of vehicle they travel on.

Some learners, however, need not wear a face covering. This includes those for whom doing so would create a medical risk, cause distress, and in some situations where a learner has additional learning needs.

Staying as safe as possible

Parents/carers should make sure that learners should take the following precautions:

- Those 11 years old or over, keep a 2m distance from people outside of their own household while waiting for their transport.
- Face away from other people when waiting for and using transport.
- Try to minimise the number of surfaces you touch.
- Wash or clean hands with appropriate sanitiser for the prescribed time before boarding transport. This should be done more thoroughly, and more often than usual.
- Carry tissues at all times in order to "catch it, bin it, kill it" to ensure good respiratory hygiene.

- Immediately upon finishing the journey, washing or sanitise hands again as soon as possible.
- Ensure that if you are symptomatic that you do not use transport or attend school.
- Ensure that you follow all instructions from drivers and staff, sitting and remaining in an allocated seat for the duration of the journey.
- Have a contingency in place should the transport not arrive (e.g. if a driver is unwell at short notice).

If your child develops symptoms at school, you will need to make arrangements for your child to be collected. Symptomatic children shall not be permitted to use transport or local bus services.

Expectations of students

Learners will board calmly and one at a time, without pushing.

Parents, in allowing their children to use home to school transport, accept and agree to the terms set out in this protocol. Parents will need to share this document with their children and discuss it with them.

On public health grounds, there shall be a zero-tolerance policy regarding behaviour and seating on learner transport, including at stops, at education locations and the boarding and alighting of passengers. Learners who do not comply with these requirements will have their transport withdrawn with immediate effect.

Learners shall comply with the requirements and instruction of school staff when on site.

Parents will need to discuss with their children a contingency should a learner at a bus stop not be picked up by the driver (e.g. if the driver has become ill and as a consequence the transport is aborted last minute) or if the child's name is not on the council's list of those who may travel. Learners should ensure that they carry with them their bus passes at all times. Only those who are eligible may use dedicated school transport.

If you have not received a bus pass or confirmatory phone call/letter specifically about your child's transport, your child will not be allocated a seat and will be unable to travel. The driver is under instruction to take only those learners on the list. This is for public health reasons. Please do not allow your child to attempt to use home to school transport if they are not on the list. If you do, and if your child is left on the roadside, you will need to ensure your child knows what to do and you should discuss this with your child.

Only those named on the driver's list shall be able to travel. We need to maintain an accurate list of learners to be able to cooperate with the Test, Trace, Protect procedures and if necessary we shall share your details with the appropriate agencies who help to stop the spread of coronavirus.

Where a child travelling on transport has symptoms, they should not use any form of transport or go to school for a 10 day period or 10 days after a positive test. If another

member of the household is symptomatic, children using school transport should not travel or go to school for 14 days.

Children who display symptoms of what parents feel is a common cold should also not use the transport provided and the household should self-isolate for the prescribed period.

All learners will need to wash their hands thoroughly in accordance with national guidance before leaving their home for the home to school transport journey, and again in the afternoon at school.

If a child becomes symptomatic at school, including during the period immediately after the final bell (i.e. before boarding a learner transport vehicle), learners shall not board the vehicle. Instead, schools will invoke their own policies for virus containment and deal with the learner without their boarding a vehicle. Parents will need to collect their child.