

## Lancashire County Council

### School Transport Policy and Guidance As of 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022

#### Covid -19 Guidance to Schools

**Please note: Government guidance changes as the pandemic progresses and the information below is based on the current guidance and may be updated.**

Please note the distinction between dedicated school transport and wider public transport:

- Dedicated school transport - services that are used only to carry students to school, mostly contracted by the county council.
- Wider public transport services - services which are used by students as well as by the general public. These generally operate on a commercial basis by privately owned companies.

The advice for these two types of transport may vary. This guidance is primarily aimed at dedicated school transport which has been contracted by the county council.

There is no longer a legal requirement for people with COVID-19 infection to self-isolate. However, if a student has any of the main symptoms of COVID-19 or a positive test result, the [public health advice is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people](#). This includes, where possible, avoiding use of dedicated school transport or public transport to reduce the risk of further transmitting COVID-19.

#### **Face coverings**

- On dedicated school transport there is no legal requirement to wear a face covering. However, the government suggests that people (aged 11 and over) continue to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces where they may come into contact with other people you do not normally meet.
- Face coverings may help students to feel more confident about using home to school transport, and parents to feel more confident about their child using home to school transport. Guidance on how to wear and make face coverings can be found via the following link [Face coverings: when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- There is no legal requirement for bus drivers wear face coverings whilst working although the county council will make recommendations and the operators will take this into consideration when completing their risk assessment.

### **Shared services and duplicates**

- Most duplicate/additional dedicated school transport services that were put in place during the 2020/21 academic year have now ceased to operate. The remaining LCC duplicated services will cease after the Easter holiday.
- Where dedicated school transport is shared with students attending different schools, students should try to sit together based on the school that they are attending.

### **Hygiene**

- Bus operators have risk assessments in place to ensure safe services for their passengers as well as their staff. These risk assessments are regularly monitored and reviewed. Operators will be conducting cleaning regimes to ensure hygiene standards are met and windows/air vents left open for ventilation.
- Students should be reminded that personal hygiene is very important. One of the key messages from Public Health England is that we should all be washing or sanitising our hands regularly. If you are using hand sanitising gel it should have an alcohol base of a minimum 60%. Hands should be washed before and after journeys. Please refer to the attached - Public Health England "Best Practice: How to hand wash step by step images" and "Best Practice: How to hand- rub step by step images" for more information.
- It is recommended that students travel with their own sanitising hand gel as this is unlikely to be available on board.
- Students should be encouraged to carry tissues on home to school transport. The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach is very important.
- Students should refrain from eating or drinking on board.
- Students should try to talk at low levels and refrain from shouting.

### **School bus fares/passes**

- All students should be reminded that they are required to show a valid pass/season ticket or pay their fare.
- It is imperative that students only use the service that is printed on their pass/season ticket and abide by the terms and conditions printed on the back of the pass.
- Showing a photograph on a phone of a student's pass/season ticket is not acceptable.
- Students are encouraged to have the correct fare to minimise cash handling and also to help the driver. Please see below for current fare prices.

	Single	Return
Journeys up to 3miles	£1.60	£3.10
Journeys between 3-8 miles	£2.40	£4.20
Journeys over 8 miles	£2.90	£5.30

- Revenue protection procedures continue to apply - if no pass/season ticket or fare is provided this will be taken very seriously. Persistent breaches may result in a refusal to carry after notifying the parent/carer.

### **Wider public transport services**

If a student uses a wider public transport service which is used by students as well as by the general public they must follow the guidance for passengers set by government which can be found here [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer travel guidance for passengers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers) as well as bearing in mind that commercial operators are free to set their own requirements for wearing face coverings. Students should check this with the operator of the service that they are using before travelling.

### **Active travel**

- Schools and colleges should encourage parents, staff and pupils to walk or cycle to school where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- Schools may wish to; communicate directly with the pupils whose journeys are most appropriate to switch to active travel; build on existing schemes (such as the Walk to School programme and Bikeability training); implement 'safe streets' policies outside schools. For more information, please visit [Active Travel in Lancashire - Lancashire County Council](#)

### **Antisocial behaviour**

- We do not expect drivers to police pupil behaviour. The driver should be able to focus on driving the vehicle safely.
- If a student fails to comply at any point during the journey, or the driver has concerns about the conduct of a student, they are required to report this to their manager who will then report this to the county council and the school, so that appropriate action can be taken.
- This guidance has been issued to help keep students and drivers safe during the journey.
- Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring children understand how to use transport safely and children themselves are responsible for acting upon this, where they are able to.
- It is important that these guidelines are followed to keep everyone safe. Operators have been asked to advise the county council of breaches of guidelines. Persistent breaches by a student may result in a refusal to carry them.

To support students when using county council dedicated school services, please also see the supporting document titled 'Catching the School Bus'.

Thank you for your support in ensuring the safety of school transport services in Lancashire.