

# **Guidance for Drivers and Escorts for the safe transport of children and young people**

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## **1. Introduction**

Nottinghamshire County Council is committed to offering an excellent service to young people travelling on home to school/college and short breaks transport.

The following information is intended to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all those involved in the movement of young people between home/short breaks provision and school/college on organised transport.

## **2. Duties and Responsibilities**

Drivers and Escorts have a duty to ensure that young people are transported safely between the pickup and destination as detailed in the timetable and any supplementary information issued by Nottinghamshire County Council.

Where a vehicle has a driver and escort their duties and responsibilities will differ. Where there is no escort in the vehicle a driver may be required to carry out some of the duties normally assigned to the escort.

An escort's duty is to accompany a child who has additional support needs, on and off school/college transport, providing adequate care and supervision and ensuring that a high degree of health and safety is maintained at all times. They are required to:

- Greet each young person when getting on and off the vehicle and provide assistance where required
- Establish a good relationship with young people and their carers
- Ensure that each young person is securely seated, and that seat belts / restraints and

harnesses are correctly fitted before the vehicle moves.

- Ensure the safety, security, dignity and comfort of all young people being transported, demonstrating sensitivity when communicating with young people who have a variety of needs.
- Ensure good conduct from all young people so that the driver is not distracted.
- Ensure the vehicle stops completely for young people to board safely at each appointed stop.
- Ensure that young people leave the vehicle safely at their destination, with their belongings, and are handed over to the appointed adult(s).
- Ensure that all medications and communications from carers are passed to appointed adult(s) at school/college in accordance with the school/college protocol and vice versa in the afternoon
- Escorts must not leave the vehicle until all pupils have been discharged
- Ensure that all users conveyed on the vehicle in the morning are accounted for before leaving in the afternoon

In addition to the above it is the driver and escort's responsibility for securing a wheelchair inside a vehicle with appropriate restraints.

### **3. General Guidelines and Procedures**

- Transport is provided between the pupil's home/short breaks provision and school/college, variation to this journey is not permissible without authorisation from Nottinghamshire County

### Council's Transport and Travel Services (TTS) Team

- Shared escorts must normally sit in the back of the vehicle with the young people in order to exercise reasonable care and control. Where it has been agreed in advance by Nottinghamshire County Council an escort may be required to sit in the front of the vehicle.
- Escorts assigned to a particular young person for behaviour or medical needs will need to be seated adjacent or next to the young person
- Parents are not permitted to travel on the transport, unless they are acting as the escort and this has been agreed by Nottinghamshire County Council
- No unauthorised passengers are allowed to travel on Nottinghamshire County Council transport contracts.
- No food or drink must be consumed on the vehicle while young people are being transported
- No food or drink must be offered to pupils, as this might be contrary to dietary requirements
- It is not permitted to smoke or vape in any vehicle, and escorts / drivers may not get out of a vehicle to smoke or vape whilst on a transport run.

## **4. Communication**

- Drivers and escorts must introduce themselves to carers and young people on the first day of a new contract
- Escorts may be asked to deliver items such as letters, money or medication to school or to a carer. Items must be clearly marked with the

child's name, and the name of the person to whom they are to be delivered.

- Drivers and escorts must treat all matters concerning the young person with complete confidentiality; no matters concerning young people should be discussed amongst escorts/drivers or with people outside school.
- Drivers and escorts must treat all young people fairly, and be polite, friendly and positive in their manner at all times.

## **5. Appearance**

- Wear company identity badge when on duty
- Wear reflective waistcoat when on duty
- Wear appropriate clothing when on duty. Due to the nature of the work and the young people we transport clothing should not be revealing or floaty. The crew should wear appropriate, sturdy and enclosed footwear.

## **6. Contact details**

- Escorts and drivers must carry contact details for the Transport Team, school/college and parents / carers of each young person.

## **7. Pick up and drop off arrangements**

- Young people must be collected from and handed over to a responsible named adult at the beginning and end of the school day.
- No young person should be discharged from a vehicle or permitted to leave at an unauthorised stop.

- Escorts stay on-board the vehicle at collection and drop off points. It is the carer's responsibility to see the young person onto and off the vehicle
- Escorts should not enter a young person's home whilst doing a run
- If the vehicle transports young people who can walk and other(s) who are wheelchair users, the walkers should be escorted from the vehicle to the school/college premises first. Wheelchair users must not be left unattended outside the vehicle.

## **8. Additional pick up and drop off arrangements for Short Breaks**

- All vehicles providing transport from school/college to short breaks care are required to carry details of named staff who will greet the young person at the short breaks provision
- Where short breaks care is provided by a contract carer and not at a residential children's home the vehicle must also carry photo identification of the contract carer(s)
- The named staff of the children's home and contract carers must present identification to the escort every time they greet a young person going to the provision
- Escorts must check all documentation and personal identification of named staff and contract carers before a young person is left in their care
- Escorts must not divulge personal details of the young person including their name until documentation and identification has been checked

- If there are discrepancies with the information presented the escort must report this to TTS immediately and wait for instruction before releasing the young person into the care of the short break's provider

## **9. Vehicle Register**

- In the morning the vehicle register of travellers on the vehicle must be handed personally to the member of staff nominated by the school/college.
- In the afternoon the school/college's nominated member of staff will return the register to the escort. They will inform the escort of any young people not travelling who travelled in the morning and any additional young people who did not travel in the morning but who are now travelling
- The record of attendance card must be completed by the escort before handing it to the nominated member of staff
- Escorts will ensure that emergency numbers for parents are recorded in the register

## **10. Parent/carers responsibility**

- It is the parent/carers' responsibility to bring their children to the pickup point in the morning and to collect them from the drop off point in the evening
- If a young person is not at a pick-up point at the appointed time in the morning the vehicle should proceed on its way

## **11. Health and Safety Issues**

- If a young person's behaviour is unsafe, the escort must advise the driver to stop the vehicle



safely, and then contact the company office / the transport team and school/college

- Drivers and escorts should not place themselves at risk. Rather than risking injury from an aggressive or uncooperative young person, the escort should adopt an encouraging and reassuring tone and wait for assistance
- Young People should not be turned off the vehicle between the normal boarding and alighting points
- Escorts and drivers must be familiar with the vehicle's emergency evacuation procedure and the location and use of first aid equipment and fire extinguishers
- All accidents or incidents involving escorts, drivers or young people **MUST** be reported to TTS and school/college at the earliest opportunity (including physical injuries such as bites, scratches, damage to property etc.).
- Incident reports may be requested from the escort and driver
- Wheelchair users must have their wheelchairs positioned and secured in the transport by a crew member who is trained to ensure that this is done correctly

## **12. Medical Issues**

- In the case of a medical concern, then the escort is to advise the driver to stop the vehicle safely, and the escort is to take whatever action has been agreed for that child in the child's care plan (if they have one)
- Drivers and escorts are not permitted to administer any medication on transport unless this

is specifically stated in the young person's care plan and they are fully trained to administer

- In the event of a medical emergency the driver /escort must phone 999 then notify the school and TTS of the situation
- If a young person has a seizure, the escort must reassure the child and try to prevent injury. It is advisable to note the time. Under no circumstances should the escort restrain the child or put anything in the child's mouth.
- If the seizure lasts beyond the time specified on the young person's health care plan (if available) or one seizure is followed by another, then the escort / driver must phone 999 to obtain urgent medical attention for the child
- A young person with diabetes may on occasion require food and / or drink during transportation in order to raise blood sugar levels. This is only permitted if this is detailed in the child's care plan.
- If a young person begins to choke whilst on transport, the escort must ask the driver to stop, whilst they administer first aid. The driver should contact emergency services immediately if the problem is not resolved
- An escort may be asked to transport medication for a child to and from school/college. The medication may be retained in the child's bag, or in an escort's bag (if the child does not have one) for the duration of the journey The escort must be vigilant that other children on the transport do not gain access to the medication

### **13. Adverse weather conditions**

In the event of severe weather conditions:

- The contractor must make every endeavour to do the transport run taking into account the road and weather conditions and the safety of the journey
- Where a contractor is unable to do a journey, they must contact TTS as soon as a decision has been made. The driver/escort should also inform the school/college of the situation
- TTS will inform contractors as soon as they are aware of school closures due to bad weather. If the vehicle has already got passengers on board, TTS will advise on where the young people should be delivered
- School closures are usually posted on local news websites and announced on local radio. Operators/crew must check with TTS before they suspend the transport run based on this information
- Parents/carers have responsibility for making a decision regarding their child's attendance at school/college if the weather is severe and therefore may refuse transport even when the transport is running, and the school/college is open

#### **14. Accident, breakdown, failure of transport to arrive, or cancellation of journey**

- If the young person is not at the pick-up point at the appointed time, the vehicle will normally wait for a short period (up to 5 minutes) before continuing its journey
- If there is not a responsible adult available to receive the pupil at their drop off point, then the young person must remain on the vehicle for the

remainder of the journey, and the escort must contact TTS who will chase

- If a responsible adult is not available by the end of the school/college run, the operator/crew must seek guidance from TTS on how to proceed
- If a vehicle breaks down with young people aboard, then the escort and young people must remain on the vehicle whilst the driver contacts the taxi/bus company (unless safety would be compromised). Young People should not alight until a relief vehicle arrives, then the escort must ensure a safe transfer
- In the event of the vehicle being involved in a road traffic accident and the emergency services are called, the escort must reassure the pupils as much as possible and stay with them. The driver must notify TTS and his own company. The escort must contact the school. All details will require recording on appropriate incident forms

## **15. Changes to contracted journeys**

Contracted journeys may be changed due to the following:

- Additional young people joining the vehicle or leaving the route for that vehicle
- Moving escorts to other journeys due to meeting young's needs or the creation of more efficient routing for transport
- A young person may be temporarily removed from transport due to extreme behaviours which render transportation of the young person unsafe. This should be an interim measure until meetings, risk assessment and protocol determine a solution. The school in collaboration with other parties will

make the decision if a young person's transport must become the responsibility of the parents / carer. This is not a decision for the driver/escort or contractor

## **16. Child protection**

- All escorts must have completed a one-day Emergency First Aid at work course and hold a certificate which is less than 3 years old during the lifetime of the contract. Drivers may require to have attained this qualification also if the contract dictates they should.
- Additional first aid training and medical intervention training may be required for individual young people as dictated in the supporting documentation and care plan for them.
- Drivers and escorts must hold an **enhanced** DBS certificate which is **less than 3 years old**, with appropriate list checks to cover the role performed. Contractors must ensure that the DBS certificates are renewed on their 3-year anniversary and copies sent to TTS Contracts and Commissioning Team.
- Escorts should not get overly involved with pupils and their families beyond being friendly and supportive. At all times escorts should be aware of their own behaviour and language in order that their actions may not be misinterpreted or misunderstood
- The wellbeing of young people is everyone's responsibility. If there are concerns about the

wellbeing of a young person these should be identified to TTS and school/college immediately to ensure support is offered at the earliest opportunity

## **17. Mobile Phones, Social Media and On-Line Gaming**

Many of the young people using our transport services have a personal mobile phone, use social media and play on-line games through various platforms. Under no circumstances should a driver or escort contact the young person either by phone, through social media platforms or through on-line gaming. Contractors, drivers and escorts must also maintain a professional relationship with families and as such we advise that communication should be limited to a professional nature.

Some young people on transport use electronic devices as a way of coping with the journey, this is only allowed when this has been agreed by TTS, school/college and family. However, young people are not permitted under any circumstances to do the following on the vehicle:

- Make phone calls
- Send messages (all platforms)
- Use social media
- Take photos
- Record – both audio and visual

Escorts must ensure that devices are not used for the above and intervene where there is an abuse of an electronic device. All incidents must be reported.

## **18. Protecting personal information**

Transport Operators must ensure that there are appropriate security measures and procedures in place to protect the personal data of the young people they transport.

Transport Operators must also ensure that information is only kept for as long as required and ensure that information and data no longer required is disposed of in accordance with their GPDR Privacy Statement.

Drivers and Escorts must adhere to the procedures that have been put in place by their employer and ensure that any personal data they hold and use is protected and disposed of correctly.



**INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**SEND TRANSPORT**

**TO: THE HEAD TEACHER**

**SCHOOL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF INCIDENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ESCORT'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTRACTOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ROUTE NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_





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