

SEND Home to School Transport during Coronavirus

We have produced this information for families of children and young people who use SEND home to school transport.

This information

We understand that families may be anxious about SEND home to school transport during the Coronavirus pandemic. This note provides you with information about the key safety measures we have introduced and how this may affect your family.

It covers:

1. Safety measures
2. What is happening over the coming weeks
3. How this may affect your family
4. Next steps
5. How to contact us

We have also produced information for children and young people to explain what they can expect on SEND Transport. This includes:

- A social story with graphic diagrams

We have included the social transport story with this note. This briefing note and the social story are also available on the Council's website.

Safety measures on SEND home to school transport

We have continued to follow Government guidance to transport children and young people as safely as possible during the coronavirus pandemic¹.

We are working in the ways described below. We will continue to do this as the number of children using SEND transport increases.

¹ Please see: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings, www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings)

Seating

Passengers will be spread out to maintain suitable distancing at all times. A seating plan will be in place for all journeys. Passengers will not sit next to each other. As a minimum, they will:

- Have an empty seat to their right and left; OR
- Be seated at the end of a row, with an empty seat next to them.

There will be no face to face seating.

Drivers and Passenger Assistants

Passengers may have different drivers and passenger assistants for their travel, but we will do our best to maintain consistency wherever possible.

Drivers and Passenger assistants will be wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). This includes the wearing of face masks and gloves. Sometimes plastic shields may also be worn.

Drivers and Passenger Assistants will have their photo ID clearly visible at all times.

Passengers

We understand that the changes to the school journey will be unsettling to some children and young people. We will do our best to support them and keep things as consistent as possible. For their safety:

- Passengers will not be able to eat or drink on the minibuses
- Windows will be open for ventilation
- Handwashing will take place at school or college before children enter the classroom/teaching areas
- Social distancing will be maintained wherever possible when children are getting on and off the bus

Please discuss the social story we have produced to explain what children and young people can expect on Blackpool SEND Transport.

Cleaning

Vehicles will be cleaned after each run with further cleaning at the start and end of each shift. Cleaning materials and hand sanitizers are available on all vehicles.

If a pupil or member of staff is diagnosed with Covid-19 and they have been in the vehicle, a deep clean will be carried out and the vehicle will not be used for at least 2 hours after the clean has taken place.

The same buses will be used by the same crews wherever possible.

1. What is happening over the coming weeks

We are planning for increased numbers of passengers on SEND transport as schools open to more children, subject to Government guidance. We are working closely with our schools, Resource Units, Colleges and transport on this.

The schools, Resource Units and Colleges will let us know which children and young people will need transport on what days. If this includes your child, we will contact you with the specific details about their journey.

2. How this affects you and your child

If you are going to start using Blackpool Council's SEND transport again, please talk to your child about what the journey will be like. Please use the SEND Transport social story if useful.

Please note that pick up and drop off times may vary.

Please ensure that you are available to take your child to the vehicle when it arrives and that you are at home ready to collect your child from the vehicle when they are brought home.

If you decide that you would rather take your child to school/college by car at this time, we can reimburse you for your travel costs. This would be at 45p per mile. This could be for 1 or 2 return journeys per school day depending on individual circumstances. Please note that if you wish to do this, your child will not lose their current place on SEND transport. You will be able to take up SEND transport at a later date.

If you wish to do this, please contact us via the email address and/or telephone numbers at the end of this note.

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3. Next steps

We will continue to provide SEND home to school transport where it is practical and safe to do so and follow our own policies and Government guidance at all times.

We will also continue to work closely with schools, resource units and colleges. This includes planning the transport and travel requirements for June/July, and also for the new academic school year in September.

During the summer holidays, you will receive information from us about your child's specific journey if they will be using SEND transport in September.

5. How to make contact

If you have any queries or concerns upon receiving this information, please contact us:

E-mail:- transportdirect@blackpool.gov.uk

Telephone numbers: 01253-476174

01253-476182

01253-476668

01253-476175

If there is no answer on one of the above numbers, please try again using one of the alternative numbers.