



Integrated Passenger Transport Unit

A Guide for
Parents/Carers/Adults

February 2018

INTRODUCTION

The Integrated Passenger Transport Unit (IPTU) works closely with Children and Young People Services and Adult Social Care to provide a personalised transport service for Children Services, Young Adults with Special Educational Needs and Adults.

The IPTU staff are here to help and have the right to work without fear of abusive or aggressive behaviour.

Personal, abusive and aggressive comments or gestures to IPTU staff will not be tolerated.

WHAT WE DO

Under guidance from Children and Young People Services and Adult Social Care, we make arrangements to transport adults/child/foster child as appropriate. It generally takes between five and ten working days to organise transport, but it may take longer due to special arrangements such as a tail lift vehicle.

Prior to transport arrangements commencing you will be contacted by a member of the team, who will inform you of the company and details of collection/return location and times.

PARENTAL/CARER RESPONSIBILITY (SEN/LAC)

In order for transport provisions to run effectively, the co-operation of parents and carers is essential.

You can help us by;

- If your child is taken ill or needs collecting during school hours it will be your responsibility to arrange collection. Transport will not be provided by the IPTU.
- Taking your child/foster child to and from the vehicle. It is not the drivers/escorts responsibility.
- Ensure that a responsible adult is at home to receive your child/foster child.
- If a responsible adult is not at home to receive your child/foster child the IPTU reserves the right to suspend transport and it will only be reinstated once confirmation is received from the parent/carer a responsible adult will be at home.
- Transport will only be provided to and from the address registered with the IPTU, children cannot be left with neighbours/family members/siblings without prior authorisation.
- If you feel that your child/foster child is capable of some independence and you allow them house keys to let themselves into your home, the IPTU will require from you written authorisation of this arrangement in order that the details can officially be passed to the transport company.
- Please ensure the IPTU have your contact telephone numbers and these numbers are updated as necessary.
- Making sure that your child/foster child understands the standard of behaviour that is expected when travelling to and from school.
- Advising the IPTU Team of any personal needs which your child/foster child may have. This information will be treated in strictest confidence.

- Advising the IPTU of any changes/cancellations. You must not contact the Driver/Escort/Company directly. IPTU record all calls on the Transport Log to ensure companies are paid the correct costs.
- Any inappropriate language, abusive or threatening behaviour to transport staff/IPTU staff will not be tolerated. Any threatening behaviour may jeopardize your child/foster child's transport provision.
- Passing on medicines or messages for school/college to the escort/driver for safe transit. Any such items must be in a sealed envelope and clearly marked with your child's/foster child's name and any instruction. Medicines **must not** be put in your child's/foster child's bag for them to take to school/college.
- Upon receipt of any medicines dinner money etc you will be asked to sign the Transfer Record Sheet for Passengers Personal Items by the Driver/Escort.
- All bags must be clearly visible with your child/foster child's name including any clothing which can/may be removed during the journey i.e coat, cardigan etc
- Ensuring your child/foster child is ready at the schedule time. If pupils/students are not ready, the vehicle will carry on its route, to ensure that the other pupils/students arrive at their destination on time. It will then be the parent/carers responsibility to ensure that their child/foster child are taken to school and to contact the IPTU to request a return journey.
- If your child/foster child transported in a wheelchair, any changes to the wheelchair i.e new wheelchair please advise the IPTU immediately with details of the new wheelchair. Companies have been advised not to transport your child/foster child if changes have been made and the IPTU have not been notified.

YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOUR ON THE VEHICLE – CODE OF CONDUCT

For reasons of health and safety:

- Your child/foster child must remain seated and wear a seat belt whilst aboard the vehicle.
- Your child/foster child are expected to behave at all times in a way that causes no danger or distress to staff or other passengers on the vehicle.
- Violent, abusive or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Your child/foster child must abide by the no smoking policy.

If the Code of Conduct is breached then the IPTU reserves the right to stop providing transport, either on a temporary or permanent basis.

If your child's/foster child's transport is stopped it will become your responsibility to transport your child/foster child to and from school.

Also, should any damage to the vehicle be caused by your child/foster child, you will be held responsible for any costs incurred in repairing or cleaning the vehicle.

ADULTS LIVING INDEPENDENTLY – CODE OF CONDUCT

- Advising the IPTU Team of any personal needs which you may have. This information will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- Inappropriate language, abusive or threatening behaviour towards transport staff/IPTU staff will not be tolerated. Any threatening behaviours may jeopardize your transport provision.
- You must remain seated and wear a seat belt whilst on board the vehicle.
- You must abide by the no smoking policy.
- Please ensure that the IPTU have your emergency contact numbers and that these numbers are updated as necessary.
- You must behave at all times in a way that does not cause or distress to staff or other passengers on board the vehicle.

- If the Code of Conduct is breached then the IPTU reserves the right to stop providing transport, either on a temporary or permanent basis. It will then become your responsibility to make your own transport arrangements.
- Any damage to the vehicle, you will be held responsible for any costs incurred in repairing or cleaning the vehicle.
- Advising the IPTU of any changes/cancellations. You must not contact the Driver/Escort/Company directly. IPTU record all calls on the Transport Log to ensure companies are paid the correct costs.
- Any changes to the wheelchair i.e new wheelchair please advise the IPTU immediately with details of the new wheelchair. Companies have been advised not to provide transport if changes have been made and the IPTU have not been notified.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Transport arrangements, such as collection/return times may change when other passengers join or leave the route. Unfortunately collection and return times cannot be arranged to meet personal circumstances.
- On occasions the company may change, you will be informed if this happens.

WAITING TIME

You will be charged for any costs occurred relating to waiting time should the transport arrive and there is no responsible adult at home to receive your child/foster child.

THE IPTU REQUIRES OPERATORS TO:

- Provide vehicles with appropriate seat belts, wheelchair restraints, harnesses and specialist seats.

- Ensure drivers and escorts have criminal background checks and carry their identity cards at all times.
- Ensure escorts/drivers undergo appropriate training.
- Ensure drivers, escorts and operators are aware of their duties, particularly in emergency situations.
- Ensure all vehicles are equipped with mobile phones or radios for use in emergencies.

ESCORTS

Escorts may be allocated to transport contracts. It is the escort's responsibility to care for passengers during the journey to and from their destination and ensure that their safety is a priority. **It is not the escort's responsibility to take passengers to and from the vehicle.**

TRANSPORT RECORD CARDS

Transport Records Cards must be signed by the carer for the start and end of every journey undertaken by the transport company.

REVIEWING TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Transport will be regularly reviewed to assess whether any changes are needed and to check that your child/foster child/adult are still entitled to transport.

INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

If you feel your child/foster child would benefit from independent travel please contact the Independent Traveling Unit on 0121 569 4144 for further information or email the independent travel training team on Travel_Training@Sandwell.gov.uk

As your child/foster child becomes older and more independent, there is the possibility that they may be able to travel more independently.

School staff, Social Workers or the Special Education Team will work with you and child/foster child to explore the opportunity making their own way to and from school with support and training from the independent traveling unit.

After completing the travel training programme you will be issued with a **free** travel pass.

TRANSPORTING YOUR CHILD YOURSELF (SEN children only)

In certain circumstances, you may transport your child to and from school/college yourself and claim a mileage allowance. If you wish to do this, please contact the Special Needs Team for further information.

PARENTS/CARERS ACTING AS ESCORTS FOR THEIR CHILDREN

PATS Training is mandatory for escorts in paid employment. The course is aimed at anyone who has care or supervision of passengers travelling in cars, taxis minicabs, minibuses or large buses.

Parents/Carers who act as escorts on an unpaid basis would not be expected to undertake this training as a mandatory requirement, however it is strongly recommended that you receive this training. If this is not undertaken Parents/Carers will be required to sign a disclaimer indemnifying the Council against any damages as a result of this.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The Passenger Transport Unit cannot guarantee that transport will remain with an existing transport company if you change address.

On notification of a change of address it may take between five to ten working days reorganise transport.

SEVERE WEATHER

A decision to close a school is made by the Centre manager/Head Teacher and the school's Chair of governor's, therefore the centre/school should be your initial contact if you are unsure if the centre/school is open to pupils.

All Sandwell schools are advised to alert local radio stations of closure.

Birmingham LEA will make a decision centrally. For school closures in Birmingham please listen to your local radio station.

Dudley LEA use the same procedure as Sandwell: the decision to close is made by individual Head Teachers. For school closures please listen to Heart FM, Free Radio (formerly BRMB) and Beacon Radio or contact the Dudley Transport Team on 01384 814301.

The IPTU and appropriate Head's of Services may if conditions deem necessary request that all transport provision be withdrawn.

If addresses are not accessible, arrangements will be made for pick up/collection points for passengers to be taken to and collected from.

If you decide to transport your child/foster child due to no collection by the transport contractor, it will be your responsibility to collect your child/foster child for the return journey home.

Adults – if you decide to organise your own transport due to no collection by the transport contractor, it will be your responsibility to ensure arrangements are made for the return journey home.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS

The IPTU, Children and Young People Service and Adults Social Care work hard to ensure that transport needs are met and all journeys are safe. Should you have any concerns, please contact the IPTU.

WHO TO CONTACT

IPTU Contract Officers

Dee Watson

Telephone: 0121 569 5796

Jagdeep Tiwana

Telephone: 0121 569 5866

Rina Viridi

Telephone: 0121 569 4869

Karen Beaumont

Telephone: 0121 569 4870

Rob Shenstone

Telephone: 0121 569 5867

IPTU Senior Contract Officer

Jo-Ann Hodgetts

Telephone: 0121 569 4863

Email: travel_assistance@sandwell.gov.uk

IPTU Monitoring and Compliance Officer

Sabby Gakhal

Telephone: 0121 569 8161

Email: travelassistance_badge@sandwell.gov.uk

IPTU Manager

Angelina Dawson

Telephone: 0121 569 4144

The Integrated Passenger Transport Unit is based at:

Sandwell Council House,
Freeth Street,
Oldbury,
West Midlands,
B69 3DE

The Special Needs Team is based at:

Connor Education Centre,
Connor Road,
West Bromwich
West Midlands,
B71 3DJ
Telephone: 0121 569 8187/8207/8366

Independent Travel Training Unit

Freeth Street
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 3DE
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