



Derby City Council

# Derby City Council

## Home to School Travel

### **Covid-19 Emergency - Guidance for School Transport Provision from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020**

In response to the global Coronavirus/Covid-19 pandemic emergency, apart from key worker pupils, the UK Government closed all UK schools from 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

In preparation for a phased re-opening of schools, and subject to further guidance from the UK Government, Derby City Council's school transport network will begin re-activation based on the guidance below.

Specifically, the UK Government announced on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020 that Primary School Reception Class and Year Group 1 and 6 pupils will return to school on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020, with other year groups returning later. Additionally the Government have asked secondary schools, sixth form colleges and further education colleges to offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of Year 10 and year 12 students who are due to take exams next year, alongside the full time provision they are offering to priority groups (i.e. vulnerable and critical worker children).

From September 2020 it is possible that most primary and secondary pupils will return. The Government have emphasised that these plans are conditional on progress in containing the coronavirus and may be changed.

The plans outlined below set out how provided school transport in Derby is to resume and these plans will be updated and re-circulated as the return to school programme progresses. This guidance should be read and adopted by all Council passenger transport contractors/operators. Clearly, it is intrinsically relevant to schools and parents/carers. The principles set out here are also relevant to Council contractors transporting adults (ASC).

Operators should be aware of general UK Government advice stating that we should keep our distance from people outside our households. Public Health England recommends keeping a distance of 2 metres where possible. They say that the key thing is to not be too close to other people for more than a short amount of time, as much as you can. The risk of infection increases the closer you are to another person with the virus and the amount of time you spend in close contact: you are very unlikely to be infected from just walking past another person, they add.

They also state that if you need to be near other people you should avoid physical contact, try to face away from other people, and keep the time you spend near other people as short as possible. And be aware of the surfaces you or others touch.

Operators should also note that on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 the UK Government issued updated guidance "*Coronavirus (COVID-19): transport and travel guidance*" which included links to "*Safer travel guidance for passengers*" and "*Safer travel guidance for operators*", and these

can be found at [https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-transport-and-travel-guidance?utm\\_source=061b498b-d08e-400d-a447-5b59202d8b6e&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-transport-and-travel-guidance?utm_source=061b498b-d08e-400d-a447-5b59202d8b6e&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

Further UK government advice is that staff employed by operators should avoid mixing with each other where possible and that operators should support individual workers who choose to use face coverings in situations where social distancing is not possible.

Derby City Council greatly appreciates all the support and effort from school transport operators and our other partners in these difficult times and we are always here to support you.

So, for any queries please contact the Council's Home to School Travel Team, using the contact details shown at the foot of this guidance.

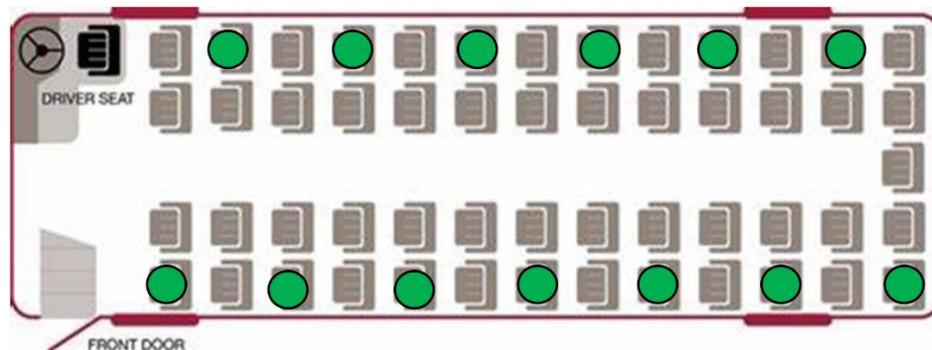
Derby City Council, Home to School Travel (H2ST)

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

## **General Guidance to School Transport Operators re Covid-19**

1. In addition to the links above, school transport operators and transported pupils will follow issued general Government Covid-19 advice at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
2. Safety of staff, pupils and the public will be paramount.
3. Operators should be aware of advice from the UK Government on 'social distancing in the workplace during coronavirus (COVID-19): sector guidance' which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance>
4. Drivers, Passenger Assistants and pupils should not travel on transport if they are feeling unwell, particularly if they have tested positive for, or have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) which include a new, continuous cough, high temperature, or loss of taste or smell, or if they live in a household with someone showing any of these symptoms – they should self-isolate and stay at home. Testing is now available - details available on gov.uk website.
5. For staff who live in the same household as someone who is at '*High risk (clinically extremely vulnerable)*', the rest of the household should follow social distancing guidance as outlined on the government website.
6. The Government's specific Covid-19 advice for staff in the transport sector should be followed and is at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators>
7. Operators should ensure that all touch points on school transport vehicles have been cleaned to protect against Coronavirus/Covid-19 prior to and after every new journey – this includes door handles, keys, handrails, armrests, seat backs, seatbelts, driver controls, etc. [NB: operators should contact H2ST if they have any difficulties in sourcing appropriate cleaning supplies/PPE]
8. Social distancing inside vehicles means that they will carry no more than 25% of their capacity from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 – in private hire taxis, and Hackney carriages this will mean they generally operate as a single occupancy vehicle, on buses, only one seat must be used per row (green dots), with alternate nearside/offside window seats occupied, as per the diagram below; bus operators should mark seats accordingly; on taxis only the rear seat diagonally opposite the driver should be used [NB unless two siblings from the

same household are transported, when both rear seats can be occupied, subject to taxi operator agreement]



9. Schools should let the Council's Home to School Travel Team (H2ST) know which entitled pupils will require provided transport from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020, returning this information on the form provided to [schooltravel@derby.gov.uk](mailto:schooltravel@derby.gov.uk). H2ST also need to know which key worker entitled pupils from other year groups will require transport. H2ST will then contact transport operators about providing the required transport. It's appreciated that not all pupils from designated year groups may require transport. Schools also need to confirm their transport arrival/departure times at the school site, as we understand that some schools may stagger these to reduce site congestion.
10. Where the anticipated number of pupils is greater than 25% capacity, H2ST will arrange with operators that they deploy a larger vehicle - where this is not possible, operators may be asked to provide additional vehicles, or in liaison with schools, 'double trip' so long as they can clean vehicles between trips – where an operator incurs additional costs over and above Supplier Relief payments/standard contract rate payments, they need to talk to H2ST about this on a case by case basis.
11. Whilst we cannot be sure how the Covid-19 emergency will unfold, if most pupils return to school in September 2020, guidance on bus capacity and social distancing will be reviewed again.
12. Pupils waiting for buses should do so safely and 2 metres apart, and this is a parental responsibility. Boarding buses should be done one at a time and 2 metres apart - the vacant seat nearest the rear of the bus must be used first; disembarking buses should be undertaken one at a time, from the most forward seats first, with pupils staying 2 metres apart, working back in turn to the rear seats (i.e. so that pupils walking down the aisle do not pass any other seated pupils). These rules apply for both inbound and outbound journeys.
13. Where a bus has a middle door, this should be used in preference to a front bus door – middle door boarding should see pupils using front and rear seats first, to avoid pupils passing seated pupils when using the aisle.
14. Where primary school pupils have difficulty fitting seat belts themselves, the driver should offer verbal guidance and support from a safe distance – seat belts should be pre-adjusted for pupil use
15. Use social distancing where possible in a transport hub/school site where multiple vehicles may be present where loading and unloading is required – when boarding at a hub, drivers may stand off the bus 2 metres away from boarding pupils/passengers; drivers should not congregate; schools may wish to supervise on-site unloading/loading
16. Where school 'link' or 'feeder' transport is provided, operators should contact H2ST about possible revised arrangements, one of which may be to provide the transport directly to the end destination, and the reverse of this on the return journey
17. Operators should provide good vehicle ventilation when carrying passengers

18. On-board disposable cleaning fluids/cloths/disposal gloves and a suitable secure on-board bin for disposal of any cleaning items, tissues or gloves required for cleaning, for in-journey use, should be provided
19. All staff and pupils should maintain good hand hygiene (e.g. washing hands with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser, particularly straight before and straight after journeys), avoid direct hand contact with eyes, nose and mouth, and use tissues to catch coughs and sneezes (or at least to cough/sneeze into the crook of their elbow) disposing of tissues in a bin as soon as possible
20. To maintain on-vehicle social distancing protocols, only entitled pupils whose parents have notified their school that transport will be required will be allowed to travel on the school bus/taxi;
21. Where pupils/passengers do not behave in accordance with transport guidance and/or generate an unacceptable safety risk to staff, they will be refused transport without notice
22. Face coverings are not considered Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) but an individual can choose to wear one at their own discretion, providing they follow the guidance set out in point 26.
23. At the end of their shift, drivers and Passenger Assistants (PAs) should minimise possible contamination before entering their own home – key things to do include washing with soap and water, and isolating clothes and personal effects in a box prior to cleaning
24. Agreed contractual rates will replace ‘Supplier Relief’ payments from the date of a reactivation of an individual contracted route – ‘Supplier Relief’ is currently payable until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
25. Whilst our new arrangements for providing home to school transport comply with Government guidance, where parents of pupils entitled to free school transport decide to make alternative arrangements out of personal preference, parental travelling expenses as an alternative to travelling on the school bus/taxi may be paid or not depending on the local circumstances, until the end of the Summer Term 2020 in the first instance.
26. A face covering will not be provided by Derby City Council as this is not Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). If you wish to wear a face covering whilst at work you may do so. If you choose to wear a face covering, you need to be mindful of colleagues that lip read as a method of communication. Whatever face covering you choose to wear, you should ensure that colleagues can understand what you are saying. The Council supports the social distancing and hand washing as the main fight against the virus.

Wearing a face covering is optional and is not required by the law. If workers choose to wear one, it is important to use face coverings properly and wash hands before putting them on and taking them off. Use the [guidance on face coverings](#).

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it.
- When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands.
- Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you’ve touched it.
- Continue to wash your hands regularly.
- Change and wash your face covering daily.
- If the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer’s instructions. If it’s not washable, dispose of it in your usual waste.

## **Additional Covid-19 Guidance for Adult Social Care/Special Education Needs Disability Transport**

27. Government guidance for specialist schools and special post-16 establishments is to work towards a phased return of more children and young people without a focus on specific year groups and informed by risk assessments. It is particularly important that H2ST is informed by schools which pupils are returning and requiring provided transport. It should be noted that given the social distancing restrictions on transport discussed elsewhere in this guidance, delivering the required transport maybe difficult or not possible; close liaison between schools and H2ST is critical.
28. Where there are vehicle capacity problems, larger or extra vehicles may offer some solution, but their supply is limited; also, 'double tripping' is unlikely to be viable on longer distance routes.
29. Where taxi transport is provided for one pupil with a Passenger Assistant, it will be difficult to maintain social distancing protocols, in these circumstances, alternative arrangements will be made where possible or PPE may be required.
30. The Passenger Assistant (PA) should be allocated one of the seats in the seating plan outlined below and not sit beside a pupil/passenger. If there is a specific physical, behavioural or medical need the PA should sit close to, but not next to the relevant pupil/passenger. The PA may need to intervene if there is a specific in-journey incident. Appropriate PPE should be worn.
31. At pick up points, where staff receive passengers from their parents/carers, social distancing guidance must be adhered to and PPE, alcohol hand sanitiser and cleaning deployed appropriately straight before and after passenger handover has occurred; keep a maximum distance from and minimum time with parents/carers - there should be no physical contact with their doors, gates or parent/carer property or belongings.
32. An additional risk assessment should be carried out where circumstances change or where there are additional issues present.
33. For pupils/passengers who may require rescue medication an individual risk assessment should be completed.
34. If the PA needs to fasten a passenger's seat belt/harness, this should be done with minimal physical contact, turning your head away where possible. PPE would not normally be required.
35. When applying or removing fluid resistant face masks or other PPE, it is important that the wearer's hands are washed/cleansed before and after each use.
36. If drivers or PAs have to manoeuvre wheelchairs, they should clean the wheelchair handles and brake levers prior to pushing the wheelchair. Likewise, if installing car seats or booster seats, clean the hard surface areas (e.g. outer shell, buckles) before installing in the vehicle and clean them after use – for these tasks PPE should only be worn for cleaning if required due to the nature of the products used as per usual practice.
37. Proper planning and the use of appropriate PPE will be needed for wheelchair users and those with disabilities where handling and sustained contact may be required for getting on and off vehicles, as in the ambulance procedure.
38. Transport will only be provided if it is the only option for the pupil's/passenger's needs and is the right mode of transport for the person being transported.
39. Any unnecessary moving and handling or close sustained contact with the pupil/passenger will be avoided.
40. If pupils or passengers present an unacceptable safety risk to staff or other pupils/passengers, the Council reserves the right to withdraw transport without notice.
41. Seating arrangements should be in accordance with the principles outlined above, and specifically for smaller minibus type vehicles from June 2020, the following diagrams

indicate how seating arrangements should be provided, with the yellow dots indicating the only seats to be occupied:



42. The UK Government have issued advice in respect of 'COVID-19: infection prevention and control (IPC)' and operators and staff should be aware of this. It can be found at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control>
43. Operators should also be aware of 'Guidance for Ambulance Trusts' at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-ambulance-trusts/covid-19-guidance-for-ambulance-trusts>

### Local Bus Services (public bus) Covid-19 Guidance

44. Whilst the general principles above will apply, the Government have provided specific guidance for the use of public transport and this should be adhered to. The guidance can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#public-transport>

### Community Transport Groups

45. The general principles above apply to community transport but if Groups have any queries, they should contact H2ST.

### Home to School Taxi Transport - method statement

This document has been created in conjunction with Public Health England, and The Council.

#### Reduce:

The following guidance is recommended:

46. No child should be attending school if they or any members of the household is displaying symptoms or confirmed with Covid-19.
47. The escort or driver must not enter the house – unless previously agreed as part of the transport plan. Under these circumstance a separate pre work risk assessment must be completed.

48. When collecting the child/ren ensure you (the escort) is undertaking a **dynamic risk assessment**, i.e. worker to wear short sleeves, not wear jewellery (other than wedding band), remove wristwatch.
49. Ensure hands are washed before the visit. Use hand sanitiser where if washing hands with soap and water is not available or possible. You should have been issued with sanitiser
50. Ensure 2 metre distancing from others in the house where possible
51. If a car seat or booster is required, the child can be placed in a car seat, as this is only a brief intervention, perhaps ensuring the worker's head is turned away whilst doing so.
52. Sit in the car/taxi in a way that avoids sitting face to face. Open windows where possible
53. The same procedure would apply to taking the child out of the taxi.
54. Worker to wash hands with soap and water as soon after the event as possible. Use sanitiser as an interim

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements**

55. If possible, on journeys less than 15 minutes try to avoid wearing a mask, as this could cause additional anxiety for the child/ren.
56. Masks should be worn when in close contact when you are unable to maintain 2 metres social distance and contact is for longer periods i.e. 15 minutes.
57. Where behaviour may be unpredictable e.g. spitting refer to the council PPE guidelines for additional PPE requirements.

### **Review**

58. Check back in with manager to say visit has gone okay etc. to ensure compliance with lone working procedures.

*Derby City Council, Home to School Travel, School Organisation and Provision, People Services Directorate, The Council House, Corporation Street, Derby, DE1 2FS*

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