

## Use of School Vehicles During Covid-19



This document has been produced based on DfE school transport guidance: [Transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-educationautumn-term-2020](#)

As school fully opens to all students, we have updated our guidance on the use of school vehicles. The use of school vehicles to transport one or more passengers is permissible on a fully risk assessed 'safe' basis.

The following guidance must be followed.

### Social Distancing

- Social distancing guidance which applies to passengers on public transport will not apply on dedicated school transport from the autumn term. The government believe this appropriate because:
  - the overall risk to students and young people from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low.
  - they do not mix with the general public on those journeys.
  - school vehicles carry only groups of students and young people from our school
  - the predictability, which public transport does not afford, allows for planning and protective measures to be put in place.
- Wherever possible, pupils will be transported within their class groups to reduce mixing. However, form some visits, this will not be possible. The guidance for schools acknowledges that reducing mixing will still bring benefits even if implemented partially, and that schools may need to allow mixing into wider groups in certain circumstances including on transport. Siblings may also be in different groups.
- Risk assessments must always include a seating plan and students must be spaced out as much as possible.
- The front middle seat adjacent to the driver in vehicles where it exists must not be used.
- The seat adjacent to staff who are passengers should wherever possible not be used.

### Face Coverings

- It is now the law that people age 11 and over must wear a face covering on public transport. This law does not apply to school transport. However, PHE recommend that people aged 11 and over wear a face covering when travelling on dedicated school transport from the start of the autumn term.
- In line with this, we will encourage all pupils to wear face coverings on school vehicles.

- Staff including drivers may wear face coverings if they wish to do so, although guidance indicates that PPE is not normally needed on school transport.
- This does not apply to those who are exempt from wearing a face covering on public transport (see DfT guidance on face masks & exemptions).
- Students will also need to carry their own plastic/freezer bag that they can put their face covering in to reduce contamination risk and to ensure that it remains as sterile as possible.
- Face coverings should not be worn by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young students, or those whose special educational needs or disabilities are a barrier) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

### Boarding Vehicles

- Students will be supervised and expected to board transport one by one in an orderly manner.
- When being transported, students should sit in their class groups as far as possible, and seated to maintain the maximum social distancing that is possible.
- Seats immediately alongside staff may be out of use.

### Behaviour

- The school's expectations of pupils' behaviour apply whilst on visits and on transport.

### Seatbelts and Car Seats

- Independent use of seatbelts and car seats will be encouraged but staff will support as required.

### Good Hygiene

- Students, drivers and staff should clean their hands, before boarding vehicles and when returning to school.
- PPE and cleaning materials are available in boxes for each vehicle. These must be taken on all journeys. Staff must advise reception if items are used from the box so that they can ensure the boxes are replenished.
- Coughs/sneezes – students/staff to be given guidance on good management of coughs and sneezes, in line with the “catch it, bin it, kill it” approach.
- A sealable waste bag is included in the cleaning/PPE box. Any waste must be cleaned from vehicles and disposed of at the end of the journey.

### Cleaning

To help reduce possible spread of the virus amongst passengers and staff on vehicles, staff must clean key areas following vehicle use. Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly with sanitising

wipes (70% alcohol +) or suitable disinfectant spray (certified to kill the Covid virus). Focus especially on areas of the vehicle which receive the most regular contact:

- door handles (exterior and interior)
- handrails/grab handles
- headrests/armrests
- seat backs
- seatbelts (tongue/buckle/webbing)
- driver controls (e.g. steering wheel, gearstick, handbrake, indicators, push buttons etc.)

When cleaning a vehicle, there are a few things to bear in mind: Using too much water/liquid can make interior fabrics damp, which will increase the likelihood that germs will collect and thrive. This can be overcome by being careful with the amount of water/disinfectant being used and maintaining good ventilation during cleaning and journeys

- Be careful, if using disinfectant spray, not to breathe-in any of the spray. Keep the vehicle ventilated
- Make sure wet floors and surfaces are dry before passengers board

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.

### Ventilation

- Ventilate vehicle with opened windows wherever possible (but be aware of need to avoid risk of children leaning out of windows etc.).
- Operate extractor systems where available – do not set to recirculate air.

### Transporting a Child with Symptoms

Any child, young person or other learner who starts displaying coronavirus symptoms while at their setting should wherever possible be collected by a member of their family or household. In exceptional circumstances, where this is not possible, and where a symptomatic child or young person or other passenger needs to be transported to their home, you school staff will contact Transport Coordination at DCC.