



## Children & Young People's Services

### Behaviour on School Transport Policy

#### Principles of the Policy

When applying for home to school transport parents are required to complete an application on behalf of their child and will be required to sign a declaration agreeing that:

- you have read and agree to abide by the conditions as set out in the Home to School Transport Policy and this policy, the guidelines and the home to school transport behaviour leaflet;
- that the student agrees to this application being made;
- you give permission for us to check the information provided on the application form and in any supporting documents with your school, college or medical practitioner;
- you will inform us immediately of any change of address and that you understand if you have provided any information that is incorrect or incomplete, we will withdraw your travel assistance immediately, all costs may need to be repaid.

Should any information made available to us by you be deemed to be inaccurate we reserve the right to remove the provision of free travel and to seek reasonable compensation for the cost of any travel that has been provided.

**Data Protection** - We comply with all relevant statutory obligations with regard to personal information processed by us and this will be handled in accordance with our privacy statement which can be accessed at [www.durham.gov.uk/dataprivacy](http://www.durham.gov.uk/dataprivacy) By signing the declaration you

- understand that we may check the details provided on this application against other council records to confirm that the student and you are resident at the address supplied;
- understand that we may share information with other agencies where it is necessary to do so and where the law allows; and
- may be investigated and we may take action against you (including court action) if there has been a fraudulent application as Durham County Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers.

We are fully committed to providing and maintaining safe home to school transport arrangements for children and young people in County Durham.

At the heart of this policy is a commitment to ensuring that home to school transport for young people in Durham is as safe and secure as is possible, and that the policy operates to the advantage of all of the children and students who are eligible to use the transport to their schools,

We are also mindful of our responsibilities towards the community, other road users, bystanders and where transport is shared, the general public.

The policy is underpinned by the following key principles: School staff, children, parents, operators, drivers, passenger assistants, governors and the Local Authority (LA) should work in partnership.

All children who have a right to school transport should be able to travel in a safe, secure and non-oppressive environment.

All partners in school transport (children, parents/carers, drivers, operators, passenger assistants, school staff, governors and the LA) need to be aware of their role, rights and responsibilities and be fully committed to these.

## **Rights and Responsibilities of the Partners**

All partners in school transport - parents, children, schools, governors, the Transport Behaviour Officers (TBOs) (on behalf of the LA), operators, drivers and passenger assistants have entitlements, described below, in relation to that provision. However, those entitlements can only be met where they and the other partners fully comply with their responsibilities. It is important to ensure, therefore, that there are consequences and/or sanctions which can be applied where one or more partner fails to meet their responsibility, to ensure that no entitlements are affected, and that school transport meets the needs of all “users”.

Where there is felt to be a cause for complaint in connection with the LA's, school's, operator's, driver's or passenger assistant's failure to meet responsibilities the TBO's must be advised in writing via email to [schooltransportteam@durham.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransportteam@durham.gov.uk).

This policy also gives parents a right to have a review of the decision made by the school to a TBO regarding the short and long-term withdrawal of a child's transport.

## **Sanctions/Consequences**

- a sanction should only be applied after investigation of an incident;
- where a sanction has been applied parents / carers have access to an appropriate form of review;
- all long term sanctions which include removal of transport should be subject to regular review;
- sanctions should be fair and appropriate to the seriousness of the incident(s) / behaviour(s) which led to their application;
- the procedure by which a sanction is applied should ensure that the child is informed by the school about the reasons for it; the parent / carer should also be informed by the school;
- the Transport Behaviour Officers must approve all cases where transport is to be removed;
- the most serious sanctions will not be applied until all other sanctions have been tried and have demonstrably failed, unless the incident is so serious that it would be appropriate to apply a more serious sanction immediately\*, including withdrawal of a bus pass on a fixed term or permanent basis;

- where a child/student's behaviour on transport is causing concern, he / she will be advised of the consequences of a failure to improve behaviour by the school; the parent / carer should also be kept informed by the school;
- there should be the highest possible degree of predictability in the application of sanctions, and those children who breach their responsibilities should be clearly aware of the consequences of such breaches.
- It is anticipated that each school may wish to incorporate behaviour on transport into its behaviour policy remit;
- the Transport Behaviour Officers will place a high priority on publicising to all partners, clearly and accessibly, their relevant entitlements and responsibilities, and outline to them the consequences of failures to comply with their responsibilities;
- in the most serious of cases, transport privileges will be withdrawn on a permanent basis without a substitution of alternative arrangements.

**\*Immediate removal of transport privileges will be implemented if a child/student is:**

- Carrying a blade or other sharp instrument that can be used to damage the bus;
- Smoking or carrying a lighter/matches onto the bus;
- Using an electronic cigarette;
- Carrying or taking drugs;
- Damaging the vehicle;
- Opening the emergency door;
- Touching the controls of the vehicle;
- Physically violent to the driver or passenger assistant.

**Factors which need to be considered in Applying Sanctions**

- the seriousness of the incident / behaviour, and its impact on others;
- the frequency of such incidents / behaviours by the child/student.

Consideration should also be given to the:

- age and understanding of the child/student;
- any Special Educational Needs the child may have;
- the degree of peer or other pressure;
- whether the incident / behaviour was perpetrated alone, or as a part of a group
- the intention of the child;
- the child's emotional state;
- the child's behavioural history on school transport;
- the circumstances preceding the incident;
- the impact of the behaviour on others and / or property;
- the interventions / strategies used by the school and / or others to manage / change the child's behaviour.

## **Conclusion**

The Policy will be supported by Guidelines (Appendix 1), developed by us in partnership with schools and operators. The Guidelines will spell out clearly, and in detail, the expectations placed upon each partner, and will be communicated widely.

We believe that where all partners are aware of their rights and responsibilities; are committed to meeting such and work together, then an effective framework will be in place to ensure that home to school transport in Durham is safe and secure for all our children and young people.

## The Local Authority

Entitlement To:	Responsibilities For:	Consequences / Sanctions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from other partners in school transport in implementing,</li> <li>• Maintaining and reviewing the Behaviour on School Transport Policy and Guidelines.</li> <li>• Information from other partners about serious behaviour problems on school transport, for monitoring purposes.</li> <li>• Information from school's nominated person on withdrawal of travel (short term).</li> <li>• Consultation / agreement on withdrawal of travelling privileges (long term).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting other partners in school transport in relation to the Policy and Guidelines.</li> <li>• Maintaining data on serious behaviour problems on school transport.</li> <li>• Ensuring contract compliance.</li> <li>• Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the Policy and Guidelines and attendant practices and procedures.</li> <li>• Ensuring that all behaviour problems on school transport are properly addressed.</li> <li>• Ensuring that children/students are provided with a safe, secure, non-threatening and civilised environment on school transport. • Communication of details about Policy and Guidelines to parents, schools, operators and other relevant parties.</li> </ul>	Via email: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints from schools.</li> <li>• Complaints from operators.</li> <li>• Complaints from parents and children/students</li> <li>• Request for a review of the decision from parents.</li> </ul>

## Schools

Entitlement To:	Responsibilities For:	Consequences / Sanctions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from other partners in school transport in relation to the Policy and Guidelines,</li> <li>• School transport being provided for its children/ students in compliance with the Conditions of Contract;</li> <li>• Be consulted by the Transport Behaviour Officers (TBO's) in the process of evaluating and reviewing the Policy and Guidelines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting other partners in relation to behaviour on school transport issues.</li> <li>• Nominating a key person in school who will act as a contact in relation to school behaviour on transport issues.</li> <li>• Logging reported incidents in school and informing the TBO's and operators, where appropriate, of relevant incidents, and to investigate such problems, as appropriate.</li> <li>• Liaising with the TBO's and operators to ensure the smooth organisation and running of school transport.</li> <li>• Assisting in developing the understanding of children/students (and parents where appropriate) in relation to behaviour on school transport issues.</li> <li>• Informing the TBO's of withdrawal of travelling privileges from a student (short term).</li> <li>• Consult with the TBO's and gaining agreement prior to any long term withdrawal of a child/student's travelling privilege.</li> <li>• Incorporating behaviour on school transport within the school's behaviour policy.</li> <li>• Investigating complaints about behaviour on transport.</li> <li>• Making arrangements for the managed and safe boarding and alighting of children/students.</li> </ul>	Via email: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints from the Transport Behaviour Officers.</li> <li>• Complaints from operators.</li> <li>• Complaints from parents and children/students</li> </ul>

## Operators, Drivers and Passenger Assistants

Entitlement To:	Responsibilities For:	Consequences / Sanctions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from other partners in school transport in implementing the Policy and Guidelines.</li> <li>• Be consulted by the TBO's in evaluating and reviewing the Policy and Guidelines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting other partners in relation to the Policy and Guidelines.</li> <li>• Reporting relevant incidents and concerns to the school, TBO's or other relevant body (e.g. Police), as appropriate.</li> <li>• Providing safe and secure transport at all times by ensuring that staff are adequately trained and licensed, and that vehicles are adequately maintained and licensed.</li> <li>• Aiming to achieve consistency in dealings with children/students.</li> <li>• Liaising with schools and the TBO's to ensure the smooth organisation and management of school transport.</li> <li>• Nominating a named person to take a lead on behaviour on transport issues.</li> <li>• Delivering a service in accordance with the terms of the contract.</li> <li>• Monitoring the conduct of children/students whilst on the vehicle and maintaining appropriate levels of behaviour.</li> </ul>	<p>Via email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints from parents and / or children / students.</li> <li>• Complaints from schools.</li> <li>• Complaints from the Local Authority.</li> <li>• Loss of good reputation.</li> <li>• Report to the Vehicle Inspectorate.</li> <li>• Withdrawal of Contract.</li> </ul>

## Parents/Carers (also see children/students)

Entitlement To:	Responsibilities For:	Consequences / Sanctions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be made aware of our and their Policy and Guidelines on School Transport.</li> <li>• Be involved and consulted where there are problems on school transport and to share in the solution.</li> <li>• Be listened to where they have concerns and where appropriate, register complaints.</li> <li>• Be assured that transport in a safe, secure, non-threatening and civilised environment will be provided.</li> <li>• Be made aware of the details of home to school transport arrangements.</li> <li>• To support, assistance and co-operation from other partners in school transport.</li> <li>• Be made aware of the consequences of their child's poor behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the TBO's, schools and operators in applying our Policy and Guidelines.</li> <li>• Supporting a positive resolution where there are problems on school transport which include their child(ren), e.g. attending school meetings, etc.</li> <li>• Paying for the making good of damage caused by vandalism / criminal activity which involves their child(ren).</li> <li>• Ensuring that their child(ren) conduct themselves in accordance with the expectations of the school and our Policy and Guidelines. This may include meeting with the school to discuss problems and in some cases, entering into a voluntary agreement between them, the school and the child, to manage the situation positively.</li> <li>• Acting as a good role model to their child(ren) and encourage good positive behaviour.</li> <li>• Ensuring that their child(ren) always have their bus pass available for use on school transport.</li> </ul>	<p>Via email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charge for replacement pass.</li> <li>• Charge for the making good of damage caused through acts of vandalism.</li> <li>• Short and long term withdrawal of transport with no reimbursement or alternative provision being made.</li> <li>• The potential for the refusal of travel if no pass is carried.</li> </ul>

## Children/students (see Parents/Carers)

Entitlement To:	Responsibilities For:	Consequences / Sanctions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from other partners in relation to the implementation of the aims of Policy.</li> <li>• A safe, secure, non-threatening and civilised environment on school transport.</li> <li>• Have their views and concerns listened to and addressed, as appropriate.</li> <li>• Be treated consistently and fairly.</li> <li>• Be made aware of the Policy and their school's and TBO's expectations of the behaviour and conduct expected on transport and the sanctions which may be applied where these expectations are not met.</li> <li>• A good 'service' on the school transport provided by the Local Authority.</li> <li>• Be made aware of the seriousness of their behaviour where there are problems, and the possible consequences arising from such.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducting themselves at all times in a safe, orderly, courteous and responsible manner.</li> <li>• Respecting the rights and feelings of others, including other passengers, drivers and escorts, bystanders and other road users.</li> <li>• Complying with the guidelines issued to children/students by the TBO's and any such issued by the school.</li> <li>• Assisting schools and the TBO's in any investigations related to behaviour on transport problems.</li> <li>• To carry and show bus passes at all times when using school transport.</li> </ul>	<p>Via email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letters of complaint to parents / carers from school and / or TBOs.</li> <li>• The range of normal school based sanctions, which may include exclusion, detention, withdrawal of privilege, etc.</li> <li>• Voluntary agreements / contracts between parent, school and children/students.</li> <li>• Short and long term withdrawal of transport with no reimbursement or alternative provision made.</li> <li>• The potential of loss of travel if no pass is carried.</li> <li>• Possible Police action in appropriate cases.</li> <li>• The loss of transport privileges on a permanent basis in the most serious of cases.</li> </ul>