

A GUIDE TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT



Parents and Pupils

Introduction

Derbyshire County Council aims to provide safe and reliable transport by working in partnership with transport providers, parents, pupils and schools. The county council provides a network of bus services to transport approximately 25,000 pupils to and from school each day. Of these, around 9,000 receive a free bus pass.

This guide has been produced to help parents, guardians and pupils. Similar guides have been produced for bus operators/drivers and schools which detail their responsibilities. Copies of these are available on the county council website at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/buses

Transport arrangements/bus passes

Pupils who are entitled to travelling assistance will normally be issued with a bus pass to travel on either a dedicated school bus or a local service bus. Bus passes are valid for one return journey to or from the school/college on Mondays to Fridays when the school/college is open.

- Bus passes are only valid on the bus service(s) stated and should be shown to the driver each day. Pupils without a pass will have to pay a fare and should obtain a ticket.
- Pupils are advised to put a photograph of themselves on the free bus pass. Those who don't will have to show their b_line card to the driver as proof of identity (secondary age pupils only).
- Bus passes should be kept in good condition. The pass will be invalid if it is lost, altered, defaced or damaged. Photocopies/scanned copies of the original pass will not be accepted.
- Replacement bus passes can be obtained from most school offices on payment of the £5.00 charge. Cheques should be made payable to Derbyshire County Council. The county council will normally issue only one replacement bus pass to the same child during the academic year.

- If you move address, you will need to re-apply for a free bus pass – even if you only move a short distance away. Forms to apply for free school transport can be obtained from the school, Area Education Office or from the Derbyshire County Council website www.derbyshire.gov.uk/buses
- Bus passes/tickets must be made available for inspection by representatives of the bus company or county council.
- Bus passes are the property of Derbyshire County Council and must be surrendered upon request.

Bus passes are re-issued each year and will be sent to your home address during the summer holiday. Bus timetable information will be sent with bus passes and can also be obtained from school.





b_line cards

The b_line1 card is a discount card for 11 to 13-year-olds that enables them to get discounts at many shops and local businesses. It is also proof that they qualify for a child fare. Students aged 14–18 (up to their 19th birthday if they are in full-time education) get a b_line2 card which offers the same discounts as well as half fare travel. The b_line card is free of charge and pupils should apply for one from their school or college. Students who attend a school or college in another county still qualify for a b_line card.

For more information contact Call Derbyshire 08 456 058 058 or visit www.derbyshire.gov.uk/b_line.

The journey to/from the bus stop

In most cases, the bus stop will not be too far away from home. However, this might not be the situation in all areas and pupils may be expected to walk up to a mile to the bus stop. The journey to and from the bus stop may contain a number of hazards to pedestrians. Walking the same route on a daily basis means that it is very easy to become complacent about the dangers it presents. In 2004, there were 497 pedestrians injured in road accidents in Derbyshire.

Please remind your child of the following to help them make the journey to and from the bus stop safer.

- Where possible, walk as part of group but remember that your safety is your own responsibility, not your friends.
- If you are wearing dark coloured clothing, please be aware that it will be difficult for drivers to see you when it's dark. Where possible wear something bright or reflective.
- Use of mobile phones, CD and MP3 players whilst walking will mean that you are not paying full attention to the road environment. If you have to use them whilst walking, please be extra vigilant and pay attention when crossing the road.
- Pedestrian crossings are there for a reason. Please use them.
- Some people think its 'cool' to mess around on the roads and show off to friends. Remember that **you** will come off worse if hit by a vehicle.

Each of us has a responsibility to ourselves to be safe on the road. Most pedestrian accidents are unnecessary and can be avoided if some of these simple precautions are taken.



Waiting for the bus

- Arrive at the bus stop in good time – the bus can't wait for you.
- If the bus is late, wait for up to 20 minutes before making alternative arrangements. Pupils and parents should have a back up plan in case the bus is very late or does not turn up.
- For your own safety and those around you, don't mess around near the road.
- When the bus is approaching, stand well back from the edge of the kerb. Signal the bus to stop by putting out your arm.

- Don't rush for the door when the bus has stopped.
- Pupils should respect the property of those who live next to, or nearby, the bus stop.

On the bus

- If you have a free bus pass always have it ready and show it to the driver. If you don't have your pass with you, the driver will expect you to pay the bus fare.
- If you pay a bus fare, have your money ready. Where possible, have the correct change and take your ticket before finding a seat.
- Find a seat quickly and remain in it during the journey.
- If seatbelts are available, make sure that you wear it throughout the journey
- If you have to stand during the journey, move well down the bus. Never stand near the driver.
- Respect other passengers and the driver.
- All pupils should behave on the journey to and from school.
- Smoking is strictly forbidden on all buses and coaches.

- Pupils must only open the emergency door if there is a real emergency.
- In the event of a breakdown, follow the advice of the driver.

Behaviour on school transport

Derbyshire County Council supports a large number of school services and is committed to providing safe and reliable transport. A number of bus services now have CCTV fitted and partnerships have been established with some schools and bus operators to help deal with problems. The county council also works in partnership with the Derbyshire Community Safety Forum and will, where necessary, use the range of legislative enforcement powers available to help stop anti-social behaviour. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child understands the consequences of bad behaviour on school transport. Please take time to talk this through with your child(ren).

Dealing with misbehaviour

Step 1 – Where behaviour issues exist, the driver will speak to the pupils about their behaviour. If problems continue, details will be reported to the school and the

county council. Once a pupil has been reported, a verbal warning will normally be given by the school. Pupils may be punished within school for their misbehaviour.

Step 2 – Where a pupil is a persistent offender or commits a serious offence, a written warning will be issued as follows. Either:

- a letter will be sent home informing parents/guardians of their child's behaviour along with a warning that further misbehaviour will result in the child being banned from the bus for a temporary period, or,
- a letter will be sent home informing parents/guardians that an immediate ban from the bus has been imposed for a specified period. Pupils may also be asked to sign an acceptable behaviour contract before they are allowed to return to the bus.

Depending on the circumstances, warning letters are issued by either the school, county council or the anti-social behaviour co-ordinator.

In very serious cases, the right to travel on school transport may be indefinitely withdrawn. Parents will have a right of appeal to a panel of council members against the withdrawal of transport provision.





Parents/guardians should be aware that when bans are imposed **travelling arrangements and costs** will be a parental responsibility and the county council will **not** offer any alternative transport or assistance when a bus pass has been removed.

Serious offences may also be reported to the police, to be dealt with by way of criminal proceedings.

A serious offence can be defined as any type of behaviour which endangers the safety of other passengers, the driver and members of the public. It also includes criminal damage/vandalism to the bus.

Damage/vandalism to the bus

Parents/guardians of any pupil who damages/vandalises the bus will be liable for any costs incurred by the bus company. The county council will support the bus company and will encourage police involvement if necessary.

Reporting problems with the school bus

Initially, problems should be reported to the school office. To help with any investigations, it would help if as much information as possible can be given such as the number of the bus, date, time and details of the problem. It is advisable to make a note of the name of the bus company and their telephone number as you may need to contact them, for example, when tracing lost property.

Vehicle safety checks

The county council undertakes regular vehicle and driver checks at school and the bus operator's depot. Checks are also undertaken by VOSA (Vehicle Operator Standard Agency) and the police.



More information

If you have any enquiries regarding school transport, you can write to:

**The School Transport Team
Environmental Services Department
Derbyshire County Council
County Hall, Matlock
Derbyshire, DE4 3AG**

**Email: public.transport@derbyshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01629 580000 ext 6740, 6720, 6749, 6739
For b_line ext 7566
Fax: 01629 585740**

For calls out of normal office hours, please contact
Call Derbyshire 08 456 058 058. (Monday to Friday 8.00am
– 8.00pm. Saturday 9.30am – 4.00pm).

Enquires relating to eligibility to free travel should be made to the Student Services Section at your local Area Education Office:

For North Derbyshire contact:

Area Education Office, Kents Bank Road
Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 9HR. Tel: 01298 26121

Area Education Office, St Helena Centre
Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 7LU. Tel: 01246 204851

For South Derbyshire Contact:

Area Education Office
Library Building, Grosvenor Road
Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3JE. Tel: 01773 744741

For general public transport timetable information, please contact: **traveline 0870 608 2 608**

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille or on computer disk by calling 08 456 058 058.

You can also print off these guidelines at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/buses

