

# Home to School Transport

Important information for parents, carers  
and pupils about COVID-19 measures

September 2020

**The COVID-19 situation means that the way your child travels to school in September will need to change.**

If it is possible for your child to be able to travel to school safely by walking, cycling or by car, we would encourage them to do so. Where this is not possible, school transport will continue to be provided for pupils entitled to it and for those that pay to use it where available following the latest Government guidance.

In order to minimise the risk of COVID-19 it is important that your child follows the Government's guidance wherever possible when travelling. Please discuss with your child before they return to school in September and explain what may be different to ensure they understand what to expect.

Wherever possible, children should sit with others from within their school bubble when travelling to and from school and avoid mixing with others not in their year group bubble.

Operators are working hard to ensure that preventative measures are in place to ensure maximum safety, such as the removal of face to face seating and reduced numbers of pupils on some services.

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## Pupils who pay a fare

Many pupils are not entitled to a Derbyshire County Council free bus pass. Some of them choose to pay a fare or purchase a spare seat on different types of services.

The Government's guidance is very clear that these pupils should be encouraged to find alternative ways of getting to school and not use public transport. Alternatives could include walking, cycling or car sharing.

However, it is not always possible for Derbyshire children to stop using public transport, so if your child is transported on a commercial service, they must adhere to the Government advice about travelling on public transport as they will be mixing with members of the public.

On public services where pupils are transported, operators will minimise the number of passengers from the general public to enable social distancing or operators will close the service to the general public.

In line with national guidance, the following control measures will be in place on all dedicated school transport services.

## What we will do

- Derbyshire County Council will issue updated safety guidance about home to school transport to all coach and bus operators
- The county council will issue the expectations on home to school transport to all schools and colleges before September
- Transport operators will have an enhanced cleaning programme in place
- Transport operators will provide hand sanitiser in the vehicles at the entrance of the bus if practical and safe to do so
- Windows will be open to improve ventilation, weather dependent
- Drivers are not required to wear a face covering but may choose to do so dependent upon their own company risk assessments
- Drivers will not refuse entry to any pupil who is not wearing a face covering as they may be exempt. They will not ask for medical evidence, instead they will raise any concerns with school staff or the School Transport Teams at Derbyshire County Council
- There are challenges around school opening times including the limited number of vehicles and drivers available and the rural locations of many of Derbyshire's pupils. Therefore all routes will operate in September 2020 as normal pre-COVID 19 timetables – there will be no staggered arrival or departure arrangements for any school or setting

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- Drivers will be required to do what they reasonably can in terms of promoting COVID-19 safety measures on their vehicles, however they will not be expected to enforce seating plans or the wearing of face coverings, as they have to concentrate on the road
  - Drivers will report any safety concerns to the school or to their manager so that appropriate action can be taken.

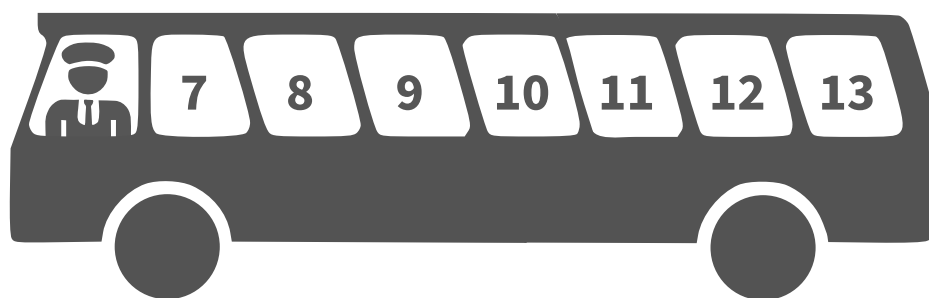
## What will be expected of your child

- Your child must not travel if
  - They are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms
  - They are self-isolating as a result of COVID-19 symptoms or sharing a household or bubble with somebody with symptoms
  - They are clinically extremely vulnerable and live in an area where additional public health measures mean they have been advised to resume shielding
  - They have been advised by the NHS test and trace service that they should self-isolate
- If your child is over the age of 11, they must wear a face covering while they wait for the transport, when boarding, during the journey and when they get off the vehicle. There are a number of children who may have legitimate reasons not to wear a face covering. These might include children or young people who have a physical or mental condition or impairment, or a disability that means they cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering; if doing so would cause severe distress, or if travelling with, or providing help to, someone who relies on lip reading to communicate. Further information can be found at:

**[www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#exemptions-face-coverings](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#exemptions-face-coverings)**

- If possible, your child should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise their hands both before the journey and as soon as possible after the journey when they get into school or home
- Where possible, your child should be encouraged to have their own sanitiser as well as some tissues in case they need to cough or sneeze (if they don't have tissues but need to sneeze or cough, they should do this into the crook of their elbow, to protect the other passengers in the vehicles)
- Where possible, your child should sit with children or young people from within their year group "bubble" to reduce year groups from mixing
- Pupils should board the vehicle in ascending year groups. The eldest should board first and sit from the back and the youngest should board last and sit towards the front

- In an effort to keep year group bubbles from mixing, as pupils load at each stop, they should sit with those from their year group in repeating patterns as follows:



Bus Driver	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
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- Your child should sit facing forwards and not turn around to talk to their friends
- Your child should not shout, talk loudly or sing, as this may help spread the virus
- Where possible, your child should sit in the same seat each day
- Where possible, your child should avoid touching anything other than their own possessions
- In order to reduce the need for handling money, pupils who do not have a free bus pass and pay a fare to travel on dedicated school bus services, will be required to pay a £1.00 standard charge. The correct fare should be given and placed into a container. No change will be given
- Fares charged on public services are set by the operator and may be higher than those charged on dedicated school bus services.

## And finally

This is a challenging time for everyone. Every effort will be made to resolve issues as they arise and to adapt services in accordance with any changes to Government advice. Everyone's co-operation would be greatly appreciated.

This guide is for parents and pupils at mainstream schools and colleges. A separate guide is available for parents and pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities.

This is the latest information at the time of going to print and is based on Government advice. We regularly update our website at [derbyshire.gov.uk/septschooltransport](https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/septschooltransport) with the latest information for parents.

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