

## **Behaviour Policy**

The safety and comfort of all passengers is the prime consideration of a bus driver and most children on school buses also want to get to and from school safely and with no fuss. Unfortunately, a minority do not take responsibility for maintaining good standards of behaviour and, on a moving bus, this can have serious consequences.

Where all partners involved in making travel arrangements are aware of and committed to their entitlements and responsibilities, an effective framework will be in place to ensure that home to school travel is safe and secure for the District's children and young people.

This Policy demonstrates how the LEA, Schools, Metro, Bus Operators, Drivers, Escorts, Bus Monitors, Parent/Carer's and Pupils work together to provide a safe, comfortable and stress free travel to and from school.

The Policy sets out:

- The legal responsibility for the behaviour of children.
- Advice to parent/carers on how they can support safe travel.
- What is expected of children to minimise any risks when travelling.
- Guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of all partners.
- Consequences and sanctions when expected standards of behaviour are not met.

### **1. Legal Responsibility.**

The legal responsibility for the safety and behaviour of children travelling between home and school is that of the parent/carer and, when on the bus, the law states that the children themselves must act in a reasonable manner. In addition, the organisation running the transport should provide a safe environment, which is why if an 'incident' does occur on the bus, the driver is permitted and expected to take whatever action they consider appropriate – this may mean taking the children back to school or to a Police Station.

### **2. Advice to Parent/Carers.**

There are a number of ways to help bus drivers to ensure the journey to school is safe for children.

- Children should know how to behave on the way to the bus stop, while waiting for the bus and when travelling on the bus. The information contained in the section "What is expected when travelling" will help

children to learn the safety rules. Please make sure your children read it and understand it. If you have young children you might like to read it with them.

- Please ensure that young children are taken to the bus stop in plenty of time. Ideally they should be supervised until the bus arrives. They should board the bus in an orderly manner and have their fare and/ or pass ready.
- Please try to make sure young children are met when getting off the bus in the afternoon and wait at the stop, not on the other side of the road. Please remember this is a crucial safety time; children often forget safety rules when they get off the bus and run to meet those waiting for them.
- Make sure your children know what you want them to do if the bus is late or if you are late arriving to meet them.
- Teach your children about safe and sensible behaviour. You may be held responsible for vandalism or damage caused by your child on a bus.

You may also become involved if:

- Your child carries onto the bus, drugs, solvents, volatile and or inflammatory substances, offensive weapons.
  - Your child smokes on a bus.
  - Your child throws missiles from a vehicle.
  - Your child defrauds the bus companies of money by paying the wrong fare, or not carrying a pass or permit when one is needed.
- If your child does cause damage or creates trouble on a bus they could:
    - Have their Bus Pass or Ticket withdrawn.
    - Be banned from the bus.
    - Be prosecuted by the police.
    - Be required to pay for any damage they have caused.
  - Encourage your children to stand only when there are no seats available or to let an elderly person sit down. There are places on a bus where passengers may not stand, especially alongside the driver, on the stairs and upstairs. Ensure your child knows the importance of not standing in these areas.
  - Incidents have occurred where clothing has got caught in bus doors. Please make you're your child knows to take care with loose belts, straps, bags and coats when boarding and leaving the bus.
  - Certain types of vehicles operating schools transport are required by law to be fitted with seatbelts. Where a seatbelt is provided, please encourage your child to act responsibly and wear it. Many vehicles used as school buses, however, do not fall within the scope of this legislation and will continue to operate without seatbelts being provided.

- Please ensure that bus passes are not left in the pockets of clothes which are going to be washed.
- If your child's bus does not run, or is regularly late, or if you have any comments about the service, please contact Metro.
- If bad weather occurs overnight you may decide not to send your child to school. In some areas, particularly those that are quite isolated, the bus might not be able to operate. They may also have problems operating around estates. However, in most cases they are able to run on the main roads. If it snows heavily when your child is at school please be reassured that drivers will do everything possible to get your children home. Please be patient. Local radio will advertise on traffic difficulties, school closures and weather conditions.

### **3. What Is Expected When Travelling?**

Pupils should follow these simple rules to ensure the journey to school is safe and trouble free.

- Before the bus comes:
  - Always arrive at the bus stop in good time and make sure you have your bus pass and/ or fare with you.
  - Wait on the pavement, well away from the road.
  - Don't play about near the road while you wait for the bus.
  - Don't chew, fold or deface your bus pass.
- When the bus arrives:
  - If you are at the front of the queue put your arm out to signal for the bus to stop.
  - Wait for the bus to stop before trying to get on.
  - Do not push or rush for the door, even when the bus has stopped.
  - Make sure you get on the correct bus, especially if you have a Boarding Card for a particular service number.
- Getting on the bus:
  - Show your bus pass or pay your fare then find a seat quickly and quietly without pushing. Bags should not be put on the seats.
  - Only stand if there are no seats left.
  - Listen to the driver and do as they say.
- Travelling on the bus:
  - Stay in your seat all the time when the bus is moving, unless you have to stand.
  - If the bus is fitted with seatbelts, please make sure that you wear yours.
  - Do not stand next to the driver, on the stairs or upstairs.
  - Do not talk to the driver while the bus is being driven.

- Misbehaving on the bus can be dangerous and may cause an accident. You could also be banned from the bus, made to pay for any damage or prosecuted by the police.
  - Do not eat or drink or smoke on the bus.
  - Bags should be placed on the floor, not on the seat, it is very important that you don't block the bus gangway with your bags.
  - Do not do anything that compromises the safety of the bus and other passengers.
  - Please consider other passengers at all times.
- Getting off the bus:
    - Tell the driver when the bus is approaching your stop or ring the bell once. Do not get off the bus until it has stopped.
    - Do not use the emergency exit except in emergency.
    - If you travel on a bus which is not allowed to carry standing passengers, please don't leave your seat until the bus has stopped.
    - Take care that your coat, scarf or bag is not caught in the door as you get off.
    - Make sure you take everything with you when you get off.
  - When you've got off the bus;
    - Do not go back to the bus after you have got off. If you think you have left something behind you will need to contact the bus company.
    - Do not cross the road close behind or in front of the bus. You need to be able to see clearly both ways. Where possible, use a pedestrian crossing.
    - When walking to or from the bus stop remember the Green Cross Code. Whenever you can, use a pedestrian crossing or a school crossing patrol.

#### **4. Consequences and Sanctions**

It is important that there are predictable consequences which will arise, or sanctions that can be taken, where any of the partners fails to meet their responsibilities. However, there are particularly important principles which must underpin the use of any sanctions, and factors which must be taken into consideration when applying sanctions to pupils.

#### **The Use of Sanctions**

##### Notification

- The Local Authority 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.
- There is the highest possible degree of predictability in the application of sanctions, and that those pupils who breach their responsibilities are clearly aware of the consequences of such breaches;

- Where a pupil's behaviour on transport is causing concern, they will be advised of the consequences of a failure to improve behaviour. The parent/carer should also be kept informed.

### Sanctions

- Sanctions should be fair and appropriate to the seriousness of the incident(s)/behaviour(s) which led to the application;
- The procedure by which a sanction is applied should ensure that the pupil is informed about the reasons for its imposition. The parent/carer should also be informed;
- 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;
- All long term sanctions should be subject to regular review;
- The Local Authority should be informed where long term sanctions are applied;

### Factors which need to be considered in the applying of sanctions

- The seriousness of the incident/behaviour, and its impact on others;
- The frequency of such incidents/behaviours by the pupil;
- Consideration should be also given to the:
  - Age and understanding of the pupil,
  - Any Special Educational Needs the pupil 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 pupil,
  - The pupil's emotional history on school transport,
  - The antecedents to the situation,
  - The impact of the behaviour on others and/or property,
  - The interventions/strategies used by the school and/or others to manage/change the pupil's behaviour.

### **Appeal**

- Where a sanction has been applied parents/carers have access to an appropriate form of complaint, representation or appeal procedure