



Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
LEARNING SERVICES

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School / College Transport



A guide for Parents/ Guardians and Learners

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INTRODUCTION

This guide has been produced to provide parents and learners with useful information about school/college transport in Ceredigion. It also incorporates the Welsh Government's Travel Behaviour Code.

The Code is compulsory for all learners up to the age of 19 years (or over 19 if they started their course before reaching 19).

Learners must comply with the Code whilst travelling to and from their place of learning. This will include journeys between institutions during the day, not just at the beginning and end of the day.

In law it is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to ensure that their children attend school and make suitable travel arrangements for them. However where learners attend and live more than the specified walking distance from the school that serves the area, the Council will assist with school travel by making available free school transport for all or part of the journey. It is a Statutory duty to provide transport for learners aged 5-16.

This guide sets out

- The responsibilities of the Council, Transport Contractors, Schools, Parents and Learners
- Ways in which parents/guardians and learners can help ensure that the journey to/from school is safe and reliable.

1. CARE, WELFARE AND BEHAVIOUR OF LEARNERS ON SCHOOL/COLLEGE TRANSPORT

What are the responsibilities of the Council?

The Council has a responsibility to provide safe school/college transport.

The LA/school/college is responsible for taking such disciplinary measures as may be necessary to maintain acceptable behaviour on school/college transport. The school/college and/or the LA have the right to suspend or withdraw a learner's free transport if necessary in order to maintain discipline and the safety of others.

What are the responsibilities of the Contractor?

The transport operator is responsible for taking reasonable care of learners on the transport vehicle. This includes the safe operation of the vehicle on the road, supervising boarding and alighting and reporting misbehaviour to the LA/school/college. Learners will not be put off the vehicle, but the driver will report incidents to the school/college/LA to enable the Headteacher/LA to take appropriate action. Guidelines issued to the drivers emphasise their prime responsibility towards the safety of the vehicle on the road, but also asks for their co-operation in identifying and reporting misbehaviour. A driver is not responsible for discipline, but may:

- Instruct learners how to behave;
- Ask for a name and address, and withdraw a bus pass as proof of identity;
- Report misbehaviour to the LA/school/college for further action;

- Turn the bus and return to the school for serious misbehaviour to be dealt with where this is reasonable;
- Drive to a police station or call for police assistance.

In the event of vandalism to the bus the operator is also entitled to expect financial compensation from the learner concerned or the parents/guardians, and could report the matter to the police.

What are my responsibilities as a Parent/Guardian and/or Carer?

Parents, Guardians and/or Carers are

- responsible for encouraging good behaviour and ensuring the Welsh Government's Travel Behaviour Code is complied with by their children
- expected to support the Council, the schools/colleges, the operators and their staff in maintaining good behaviour.

If a learner is involved in bad behaviour on school transport parents, guardians and/or carers will be involved in the disciplinary process at the earliest opportunity.

It should be clearly understood in cases of bad behaviour that the ultimate sanction will be the removal of the right to receive transport. In such a case the responsibility and full cost of providing transport will fall on the parents, guardians and/or carers.

2. GETTING TO/FROM PICK-UP POINTS

Parents/Guardians are responsible for getting their children safely from home to the transport pick-up point in the morning, and back home in the afternoon from the transport drop-off point. Young children should be accompanied until parents are confident that they can manage safely without supervision. Parents are also responsible for the supervision of their children as necessary at the pick-up point.

The pick up and drop off point will be at designated stops.

- Learners should leave home in good time so that there is no need to rush. Remember that transport runs to a timetable and will not wait for learners who are not there on time;
- Use the pavement if there is one. Where there is no pavement, walk facing on-coming traffic;
- Wear something bright in the dark or bad weather so that motorists can see you;
- Dress warmly in case there is an unexpected wait;
- Wait for the bus where you can be clearly seen and on the same side of the road as the door of the bus.
- Stand well clear of the edge of the road whilst waiting for the bus, especially as the bus arrives;
- Pupils must not push and shove to get onto the bus first - someone could be pushed under the wheels!
- Let other passengers off before boarding (if applicable);
- Have bus passes ready to show the driver;
- Use the bus to which they have been allocated. A bus driver is entitled to refuse to take pupils who are not allocated to his vehicle;

- Never run alongside the bus whilst it is moving;
- If the bus does not come within 15 minutes of the scheduled time it may be assumed that it is not coming due to road conditions or a breakdown;
- Parents/Guardians should always ensure that unaccompanied learners can return home or make their own way safely to another house if the transport should fail to operate;
- After leaving the vehicle, wait until it has moved away before crossing the road.

3. LEARNERS - THE TRAVEL CODE

Your safety is very important. You must behave responsibly and safely when travelling to and from school or college, whether you go there by bus, train, taxi, bicycle, walking or any other way. If you get a bus to school or college, you must also follow the rules in the School/College Bus Travel Behaviour Code.

If you do not follow this Code, for your own safety and other people's, local authorities, schools and colleges can take action against you. This might involve taking away your right to school / college transport and even excluding you from school.

Your Responsibility

- Always respect others, including other learners, drivers and the public.
- Always respect vehicles and property.
- Always be polite.
- Never drop litter.
- Always obey the law.

Your Safety

- Always behave well when travelling.
- Always follow the driver's instructions when travelling.
- You must not distract drivers.
- Always cross the road safely and sensibly.
- Always travel by a safe route.

Your Rights

- To be safe when travelling.
- To be treated fairly and with respect.
- To tell someone if somebody or something is causing you problems.
- Not to be bullied or picked on.

Please tell a teacher/lecturer, parent or driver about any bad behaviour or bullying you see

School/College Bus Travel Behaviour Code

- o When at the bus stop, always wait sensibly, off the road.
- o Make an agreement with your parents what to do if the bus does not arrive or if you miss it.
- o When the bus arrives, wait for it to stop. Never push or rush for the door.
- o Show your bus pass (if you have been given one) when you get on the bus, **otherwise you may be charged.**
- o On a designated school/college bus stay in your seat for the whole journey.
- o On a public bus find a seat if one is available.
- o Never block the aisle with your bag or other belongings.
- o Take a seat, and fasten the seat belts (which are provided on all designated school/college buses). **The use of seat belts on designated school buses is now a legal requirement.**
- o You must not distract the driver when he or she is driving.
- o Never eat or drink on the bus.
- o Never throw anything in or from the bus.
- o Never damage or vandalise any part of the bus.
- o Never operate the bus doors or exits, except in an emergency.
- o Always follow the instructions of the driver or passenger assistant at all times.
- o If there is an accident, stay on the bus until you are told to leave. If it is unsafe to stay on the bus then leave by the safest exit.
- o Never try and get on or off the bus until it has stopped.
- o Always get off the bus sensibly, taking all your belongings with you.
- o Never cross the road in front of or close behind the bus.

4. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The Council and schools/colleges are responsible for taking disciplinary action with regard to behaviour of learners on school/college transport.

The Council may withdraw travel arrangements made for a learner if it is satisfied that the learner has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct.

Before the Council makes a decision to withdraw school transport the following procedure will be followed:

- The parent/guardian of the learner involved will be given the opportunity to make representations on their behalf and those representations will be considered by the Council.
- The head teacher of the relevant school/college at which the learner is registered will be consulted about the decision to withdraw school/college transport and given at least 24 hours notice of the decision before the withdrawal takes effect.
- The parent/guardian of the learner involved will be given at least 24 hours notice of the decision before the withdrawal takes effect. In cases of serious misbehaviour, alternative arrangements may be put in place immediately.

The Council and schools/colleges will use a progressive range of nominal sanctions. The Council and schools/colleges will involve parents/guardians where disciplinary sanctions have been applied. If misbehaviour is very serious or persists after a warning the Council and schools/colleges will also recommend the withdrawal of free transport for a period of time. If free education transport has been withdrawn parents will become responsible for making travel arrangements themselves to ensure that the learner continues to attend (unless the learner has also been excluded from school).

The Council and schools/colleges will take a firm line and will not tolerate misbehaviour on education transport as it puts the health and safety of all those travelling at risk.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for the conduct and behaviour of their children in school, on school/college transport and in the street. It is expected that parents will support disciplinary measures taken by the Council and schools/colleges. You should note that exclusion of your child from school/college transport does not change your responsibilities to ensure that your child attends school.

Any act of criminal damage may result in Police action being taken and the parents of the culprit will be liable for the cost of any repairs required.

5. SUPERVISION

On the bus, the driver is an adult presence in case of emergency. Where one transport route is scheduled to connect with another, drivers are instructed to wait for the connection so that learners are not left unsupervised at the connection point.

Where required in the interests of safety, the school will provide appropriate supervision of learners between the bus and school buildings.

6. USE OF BUS PASSES

Bus passes are issued for a specific route (as indicated on the pass) and therefore bus drivers have been instructed NOT TO ALLOW learners who do not have the correct pass onto their bus.

Parents will appreciate that in the event of an emergency it is imperative that access to the names of the learners' allocated passes for each bus is readily available.

7. COMPLAINTS

Any learner who is concerned about any aspect of the operation e.g. misbehaviour, bullying, action taken by the driver etc of the school/college bus that they use, should let the school/LA know about the problem (this can be done in confidence).

Schools/colleges must ensure that problems of unreliability, breakdowns, poor timekeeping and unsatisfactory vehicles are reported promptly to the Corporate Passenger Transport Unit so that each operator's performance can be monitored and corrective action taken where necessary.

Parents are also encouraged to report any such problems directly to the Corporate Passenger Transport Unit.

8. CONTACTS

Request for transport

Queries regarding entitlement to school/college transport

Bus pass requests

Complaints regarding learner behaviour

Complaints regarding drivers

Complaints in relation to vehicles used for school/college transport

Complaints/queries regarding Car Escorts

School/College Transport Timetables

Vehicle capacity

**Corporate Passenger
Transport Unit
(01970 633555)
hpw@ceredigion.gov.uk**

