

# SENDiass



## Home to School Transport from September 2020: COVID-19

The Government have released guidance in respect of transport to schools and other education settings, applicable from the Autumn term 2020. You can read the full guidance [here](#).

The guidance aims to provide information and advice to local authorities, schools/other education settings and transport operators, on how they can further minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 when transport services are being used.

Part A sets out guidelines for local authorities managing the capacity and demand of public transport, and part B provides guidance on the provision of dedicated home to school/college transport from September 2020.

For the purposes of this information sheet, we will be focusing on part B of the guidance as many children and young people with SEND access dedicated home to school transport services.



If you require information, advice or support in respect of your child or young person's SEND and their education, health, or social care

provision, you can self-refer to SENDiass4BCP by emailing [sendiass@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

(Information accurate as of 17/08/2020, 14:35)

**Key points** o Dedicated transport from home to an education setting is defined as transport provision which is exclusively used for carrying children and young people to their places of education – mainstream, special schools, colleges, or alternative provision. This dedicated transport is *not* accessed by members of the general public.



For example, it could be a taxi or a minibus.

It could also include vehicles that provide transport to members of the public at other times but are considered to be providing dedicated transport when they are exclusively carrying children and young people travelling to their education setting – for example, a school bus.

- o Most dedicated transport is arranged by local authorities but sometimes education settings and/or transport operators may also arrange dedicated transport. The guidance also applies to them.



**Public Health  
England**

The guidance has been developed with advice from Public Health England (PHE) and Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The guidance will be kept under review and updated as and

when necessary.

- Local Authorities continue to have a statutory duty to provide free home to school transport for all eligible children of compulsory school age. They also continue to have a statutory duty to publish a transport statement, which sets out what travel assistance is available to young people 16 years +.

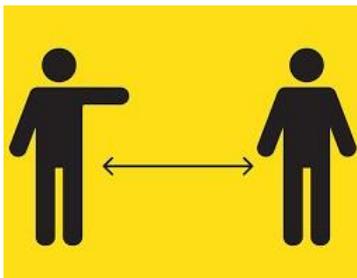


You can follow the link [here](#) to find out more information on what help is available within BCP Council for SEND home to

school transport assistance, and transport options available for young people 16+ with SEND.

- The Government is clear that although from September 2020, local authorities will not be expected to uniformly apply social distancing rules on transport, those involved in the provision of home to school transport:

*“... must do all that is reasonably practicable to maximise social distancing where possible and minimise the risk of transmission. What is practicable is likely to vary according to local circumstances.”*



Therefore, where possible, social distancing should be maximised on dedicated transport, either between individuals or “bubbles”.

- The Government have also said it is extremely important for transport providers to ensure that ventilation is maximised, for example by ensuring windows and ceiling vents are open
- Whilst it is now law for children of 11 years+ to wear a face covering on public transport, this same law does **not** apply to dedicated home to school transport.

However, the Government recommends that where possible, pupils aged 11 years + should wear a face covering if they can. Please note this advice does **not** apply to those who are exempt from wearing a face covering (you can see the list of those exempt [here](#)).

- The Government have rationalised that face coverings are not mandatory because:
  - *the overall risk to children and young people of serious illness as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low*
  - *they do not mix with the general public on those journeys*
  - *home to school transport often carries the same group of children and young people on a regular basis, and they may also be together in school or college*
  - *the predictability of home to school transport will allow for planning so that protective measures can be put in place*
- Local Authorities, schools/other education settings, and transport operators should work together to risk assess dedicated home to

school transport and identify how to effectively mitigate these risks.

- The Government guidance sets out a system of controls which LA's, education settings and transport operators are expected to adopt when assessing risk.



Children and young people must not board home to school transport if they, or a member of their household, have symptoms of COVID-19.

- Drivers and passenger assistants must not work if they, or a member of their household, have symptoms of COVID-19.

If a child or young person develops symptoms whilst at their education setting, they must not travel home on dedicated transport. The education setting should contact the parent/carer who should make arrangements for the child or young person's journey home. In the exceptional circumstance where making such arrangements is not possible, transport may be provided through your child or young person's setting.

- Pupils and transport staff who have been in contact with someone who have developed symptoms whilst at school or whilst using dedicated transport do **not** need to go home to self-isolate, **unless** one (or more) of these apply:
  1. They develop symptoms themselves

2. The individual with symptoms tests positive for COVID-19, and the pupils/transport staff were in contact with the symptomatic individual within 48 hours of them first displaying symptoms
3. They have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace



Individuals must wash their hands thoroughly for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after contact with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19.

- If an individual with symptoms has used home to school transport the vehicle must be cleaned with disinfectant.
- Children, young people, drivers, and passenger assistants must clean their hands before boarding transport and again after leaving the vehicle.
- LA's should work with transport operators to agree arrangements for cleaning vehicles. Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned after each journey where possible, and enhanced cleaning at the end of each day.
- Wherever possible, the government recommend that children and young people from different schools/settings do not travel at the same time on the same vehicle; if they do, they should be sat together in their school groups ("bubbles"). It is also advised that children and young people sit with their "bubbles" on school transport, or with the same constant group of children each day.

LA's and transport providers should also plan for organising queuing and boarding where possible.

- The Government recognise that distancing and grouping may not always be possible and that some pupils, such as pupils with SEND, may find this particularly challenging or indeed it is not possible to safeguard SEND pupils whilst maintaining a distance.
- The guidance advises that local authorities will need to take into account specific needs of children and young people when they are planning how to minimise risk
- In the event that it is not reasonably practicable to maintain distance and close contact is required, local authorities, education settings and transport operators should consider what other systems of control can be implemented to minimise risk. For example, frequently washing/sanitising hands.
- Children and young people with SEND are **not** expected to wear a face covering when using dedicated home to school transport, regardless of their age.
- Drivers and passenger assistants are also **not** expected to use PPE including face coverings...



... unless the care a child/young person usually receives on home to school transport requires PPE – in this case, use of PPE should continue.

- The law permits local authorities to meet their statutory duties of providing home to school transport in alternative ways, provided they have the parent/carers consent.

For example, some local authorities have started to ask parents to accept personal travel budgets (or mileage allowance) in order for the parent/carer to take their child or young person to and from their education setting. This is allowed with the parent/carers consent to do so.

However, local authorities should **not** expect parent carers to commit to accepting a personal travel budget for a specified period of time. For example, a parent carer may be in a position to accept a personal travel budget in September because they are furloughed, but their circumstances may change. In such an event, the local authority should not expect you to continue taking your child to and from their education setting.



Equally, parent carers should understand that the local authority will need reasonable notice to arrange for suitable home to school transport to take place.

- If your child or young person normally travels on dedicated home to school transport, local authorities should **not** provide a personal travel budget if it means a child or young person then needs to travel on public transport instead.

- If your child or young person needs a passenger assistant on home to school transport, the local authority can ask you to travel with them in place of a passenger assistant. Please note that the parent/carers consent **is** required for this arrangement to meet the LA's statutory duty. Parents should not have a role in supervising any other children in the vehicle.



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you can self-refer to SENDiass4BCP by emailing

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