

Home to School Transport and Covid-19

Guidance for parents

May 2020

As many schools are preparing to reopen, we wanted to let you know what we are doing to make students' journeys to and from school as safe as possible and to reassure you that we, and the operators we work with, have put in place the measures recommended by the Government to protect all those choosing to travel on school transport.

The Government guidelines currently advise that people should avoid using public transport where possible. Instead try to walk, cycle, or drive. If you do travel, thinking carefully about the times, routes and ways you travel will mean we will all have more space to stay safe. Please see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

At TSS, we take safeguarding very seriously and put passenger safety at the centre of our services. But we also need to make sure that our staff and contractors remain safe too, so we have been working closely with all our transport providers to plan our return to service and make sure that our transport is as safe as possible for all those on board.

As you will be aware, social distancing is likely to be with us for a while, so we all need to adapt and change to a new set of behaviours. Below we have set out what we are doing to provide safe transport and what we expect of our passengers, parents and carers.

Before considering transport to school, check that your child is not displaying any of the symptoms of the coronavirus.

Do not leave home if you or someone you live with has any of the following:

- A high temperature
- A new continuous cough
- A loss of, or change to, their smell or taste



Check the [NHS website](#) if you have symptoms or need a test

Safe transport relies on us all playing our parts

What you can expect from us:

- Our drivers and passenger assistants will be wearing appropriate PPE, using hand sanitizers on board and will be washing their hands frequently when facilities are available
- We have asked that vehicles be thoroughly cleaned after each journey, ready for the next

- We will, where possible, have the same staff delivering your child's transport every day
- Drivers/passenger assistants will give clear instructions to passengers on boarding and alighting
- Social distancing rules will be followed as far as it is practicable to do so – for example, if a student travels in a wheelchair which needs to be secured, this will be done as carefully as possible but cannot be done from 2 metres away
- Where a student is collected from a home address and will need to wear a seatbelt, ideally a member from the child's household should assist with this if the child cannot fasten the seatbelt themselves. However, we will assist if there is no one to help the child. It will remain the legal responsibility of drivers to ensure that seat belts are worn properly but normally a visual check will be sufficient. Students living in the same household will be able to sit together as before Covid-19, and the appropriate space will be made around them
- Buses will be well ventilated and will travel with windows open
- Due to social distancing, there will be fewer passengers travelling on each bus – this may mean providing additional buses to cover journeys or 'staggering' services slightly to make sure that everyone is able to travel
- Our Operations team will stay in close contact to ensure that all arrangements for your child are communicated and will deal with any queries.
- If your child becomes unwell while travelling, we will contact you straight away. There maybe a requirement to collect your child.

What we expect from students:

- Before travelling, ensure that your child has washed their hands for at least 20 seconds or has sanitised them
- Students are recommended to wear a face covering while using public transport. (N.B. Children under 2 years old are not recommended to wear face coverings.)
- Passengers must listen carefully to instructions from staff and behave responsibly
- When travelling, your child should observe social distancing, keeping 2 metres away from others where possible, and try to face away from other passengers. All physical contact with others should be avoided
- Where seatbelts are worn, students should attempt to fasten their seatbelts themselves, but staff will assist if they are unable to do this and there is no one from their household to assist.
- Minimal baggage should accompany students
- Once at the destination, they should follow local guidance and wash their hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise their hands as soon as possible.

Please note: Any children not adhering to the social distancing guidelines or advice from the driver may face a temporary ban on transport as we have a duty of care to the other passengers on the vehicle. Please see our [Transport Behaviour Policy](#).

We also expect parents and carers to educate children in the new behaviours required to ensure that everyone travels as safely as possible:

- Ensure that your child is given guidance on good management of coughs and sneezes - see the [Catch it, bin it, kill it](#) guidance.
- Make sure that your child can safely remove any face coverings and gloves they are wearing and that they also have appropriate PPE to wear on return journeys Any PPE to be disposed should be done by following local guidance?

- If your child starts displaying coronavirus symptoms while at their setting, they should be collected by a member of their family or household as soon as possible and TSS should be informed immediately by phoning 01270 317485 in order to track and trace other service users who may have come into contact with a potentially infectious person
- Where a student is collected from a home address and needs to wear a seatbelt, ideally a member from the child's household should assist with this if the child cannot fasten the seatbelt themselves. Where possible, students should be taught to fasten their own seatbelts to help maintain social-distancing on board transport, but staff will assist if required.
- **Getting onto the bus to go to school** - students must follow instructions given to them by drivers and staff. Passengers are likely to be asked to occupy rearmost seats first while conforming to social distancing and drivers, where safe and appropriate, will vacate their seats to before passengers board
- **Getting onto the bus to return home** - every effort will be made to load passengers in reverse of drop off order (ie last drop off on first, etc).

If you are driving your children to school:

- Ensure your child has washed their hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitised them before going to school
- Where people from different households need to use a vehicle at the same time, good ventilation (keeping the car windows open) and facing away from each other may help to reduce the risk of transmission
- Make sure you have contacted your school for any special details of drop off/pick up areas or times.
- To reduce the risk of transmission, please refrain from gathering with other parents once at school.

Please contact TSS by email at schooltransport@transportservicesolutions.co.uk if your child no longer requires home to school transport.