

Home to School / College Transport



CODE OF CONDUCT

(Incorporating the All Wales Travel Behaviour Code)



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



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Our Commitment

The Council aims to provide the learner transport where it has a statutory responsibility to do so for pupils/students to travel to and from a relevant place as determined by the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 in accordance with the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014. The nature of the transport provided by the council will be via a mode which the council considers will be without undue stress, strain or difficulty such as would prevent pupils/students from benefiting from the education on offer. Pupils/students should be able to travel in safety and reasonable comfort. We will take such steps as we consider necessary to satisfy ourselves of the suitability of both vehicles and drivers/passenger assistants.

- Parents, schools/colleges and contractors will have access to advice and assistance during normal office hours.
- Wherever possible, passes required for travel will normally be issued within 15 working days of receipt of an approved request, other than at the start of the academic school year where each authority will distribute the passes in accordance with their own procedure.
- The Council will ensure that any special equipment, such as harnesses or seats, is provided either by the Council, operator or parent as deemed necessary.
- Routes will be planned to minimise journey times, subject to the provision of an efficient and cost effective service.
- The Council will facilitate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks at enhanced level to ensure that drivers and passenger assistants are suitable for a post which involves transporting children.
- Identification badges will be prepared and issued to approved drivers and passenger assistants, who will be expected to display them at all times.

- The safety and quality of school transport services and routes will be monitored on a regular basis.
- Vehicles used for school transport may be fitted with CCTV. The footage is confidential but may be used as evidence in cases of misconduct or misbehaviour.

In accordance with the All-Wales Travel Behaviour Code Statutory Guidance, the Council will:

- Work with the contractors, parents, pupils/students and the schools/colleges to resolve any behavioural problems which may arise on school/college transport services.
- Ensure operators and drivers/passenger assistants are familiar with the content of the Travel Behaviour Code through specific training.
- Work with schools/colleges to raise awareness of the importance of good behaviour and the consequences of failing to comply with the Travel Behaviour Code through staff and pupil Bus Safety training.
- Ensure that incidents occurring on Home to School/College Transport will be reported to the Council who provides the transport. Details below -

Pembrokeshire County Council – 01437 775222

Carmarthenshire County Council – 01267 234567

City and County of Swansea – 01792 636347 / 01792 636348

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council – 01639 686939

- Maintain a log of all reported incidents, investigate each incident in conjunction with the school and other relevant parties and take further sanctions where appropriate.

Parents' Code of Conduct

- Parents, Guardians and/or Carers are responsible for encouraging good behaviour and ensuring the Welsh Government's All-Wales Travel Behaviour Code Statutory Guidance is complied with by your child. You are therefore expected to support the Council, the schools/colleges, the operators and their staff in maintaining good behaviour.
- With regards to the prevention and dealing with bullying, we will follow specific guidance as set out in the 'Respecting Others Anti-bullying Agenda' and the 'Hate Crime Framework'.
- If your child is involved in bad behaviour on school transport you 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 is the removal of the right to receive transport. In that case the responsibility and full cost of providing transport will fall on you. Please read the Parent Guide for further information.
- It is your responsibility to ensure the safety of your children in getting to the school transport in the mornings and in getting from it in the afternoons/evenings. Appropriate supervision arrangements should therefore be made, particularly for primary pupils.
- In the mornings your child should leave home in plenty of time to get to the bus so that there is no need to rush, particularly if there are roads to be crossed.
- You should also ensure that your child is dressed appropriately.

- In the afternoons/evenings, a child who has to cross the road after getting off the bus should wait until the bus has driven off before attempting to cross so that they can see and be seen by other traffic. If meeting your child, wherever possible, you should wait at the drop off point itself, and not on the other side of the road.
- Where pupils who are taken to their drop off point in the afternoon and are usually collected by a parent/guardian, if there is no one there to collect them, the following procedure will be put in place –
 - i. The driver will wait a maximum of 5 minutes for the parent/guardian to arrive. If there is still no one to collect the child, they will advise the Council's Transport Unit and their Transport Operator of the situation but in the meantime will keep the pupil(s) on the vehicle and operate the service on its scheduled route so as not to delay other pupils on board.
 - ii. On completion of the route, the driver will phone the Council's Transport Unit and their Transport Operator for further instructions. In the event of being unable to contact the parent/guardian for further instructions, the Transport Unit will contact Social Services duty officer and/or the police for further instructions.
- A primary pupil will normally only be set down at his/her designated stop in the afternoon. Should there be any change to the normal arrangements, for whatever reason, you should inform the driver or the passenger assistant (if one is provided).
- Please advise the Council's Transport Unit of any medical conditions that your child has that may affect his/her transport.

- In cases of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, there may be temporary alterations to the transport provided. In some circumstances it may not be possible to operate a route at all, or to serve only part of the route.
- If a school/college transport route does not operate in the morning due to inclement weather conditions but you choose to take your child(ren) to school yourself, then you will be required to make arrangements to collect your child(ren) at the end of the school/college day.
- Please notify the Council's Transport Unit immediately of any changes to your circumstances such as a change of address. If the bus pass is no longer required, it must be returned immediately to the Transport Unit. The continual use of a bus pass when it is no longer valid could be considered fraudulent.
- Travel passes are valuable and replacements will be charged for. Lost passes should be reported immediately to the Council's Transport Unit, who will advise you how to obtain a replacement.
- If you have any suggestions on how the Code of Conduct may be improved, please direct your feedback to the Council who provides the transport.



PARENT GUIDE

For most learners their journeys between home and school pass without incident or concern. Unfortunately some journeys are marred by poor, disruptive and unacceptable behaviours that can impact on learners and the wider public. This can be a real threat to safety and can have tragic consequences.

The Travel Behaviour Code ('the Code') is a statutory code that sets out the standards of behaviour required of learners and consequently promotes the safeguarding of learners.

The Code applies to all learners up to the age of 19 years and applies to all types of travel to and from school or college, whether or not travel arrangements are made by a local authority. This includes contract buses, public buses, public trains, walking, taxis, scooters and motorbikes, cycling and journeys in cars. It also includes journeys between schools during the day, not just at the beginning and end of the day.

The Code should form part of a school's behaviour policies and any misbehaviour on the journey to and from school can be dealt with under individual school behaviour policies or by enforcement of the Code or, in very serious cases, by the police.

Parents of learners should ensure their children are aware of and understand the Code. Parents and learners need to be aware of the implications if a learner does not adhere to the Code.

A local authority can withdraw an individual's entitlement to free transport, or their school could impose a disciplinary penalty on the learner. In the event that transport is withdrawn, it is the responsibility of the learner's parents to arrange suitable transport to and from the place of learning.

It is also important that parents are aware of how to report incidents of poor behaviour that impact the safety and well-being of their child – for example, in cases where bullying occurs.

Parents may be asked to sign Travel Behaviour Contracts. These contracts are between learners, parents, transport operators and local authorities. They are designed to foster a sense of shared responsibility for ensuring safety and to improve safety on the home to school journey on dedicated learner transport. They set out what behaviour is expected of everybody, including their roles and responsibilities.

Parents and learners in receipt of dedicated learner transport from the local authority sign the contract to state they will comply with the Code and the Contract and that failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of transport. Local authorities and transport operators, in turn, sign the contracts to confirm the actions they will take to ensure safety on the home to school journey.

Parents have a number of roles

- Help their children understand the Code
- Help their children report incidents
- Encourage their children to comply with the Code in order to ensure school transport is safe for all
- Be aware of the sanctions if the Code is breached, including the removal of transport to and from school and other measures that a school may take if the school's behaviour policy is breached
- Parents are responsible in law for the learner's continued attendance at school if transport is withdrawn
- Co-operate with education institutions, transport operators and local authorities
- Adhere to signed Travel Behaviour Contracts
- Ensure the learner understands the requirement to wear a seatbelt

Sanctions

If a reported incident has been investigated and it has been determined that a learner has breached the Code, the local authority may withdraw the transport it provides. Before a decision to withdraw travel arrangements is made, the learner and the parents of the learner will be given the opportunity to make representations, which must be considered by the local authority. Parents should contact the local authority to find out the process for making a representation as each local authority may have a different process.

Where the learner is a registered pupil at a maintained or non maintained school or a pupil referral unit, the local authority must consult with the school about the decision to withdraw travel arrangements. The head teacher must be given written notice of the decision to withdraw learner transport at least 24 hours before the withdrawal takes effect specifying the period for which travel arrangements are to be withdrawn and the reasons for withdrawal.

The local authority must give written notice of the withdrawal of travel arrangements to the learner's parents at least 24 hours before the withdrawal takes effect specifying the period for which travel arrangements are to be withdrawn and the reasons for withdrawal.

The local authority should continue to provide transport until the period of the withdrawal begins. However, there may be occasions when it is inappropriate for the learner to continue to travel to their place of learning in their normal way, particularly if they pose a risk of harm to others. In such cases, the local authority must make suitable alternative transport arrangements.

The period of withdrawal must not exceed 10 consecutive school days, including where these are at the end and beginning of different school terms. The period of withdrawal must not result in the learner having travel arrangements withdrawn for more than 30 days in the school year in which the withdrawal takes effect.

The local authority and school may decide that it is more appropriate for sanctions to be imposed under the school's behaviour policy. A learner should not generally have sanctions imposed on them for an incident on learner transport under both the Code and the school's behaviour policy.

When considering whether the learner's parents can reasonably make alternative arrangements, it should be acknowledged that the withdrawal of learner travel would generally inconvenience parents and learners. Inconvenience of itself is not considered a sufficient reason for not withdrawing transport.

There is no statutory appeals process for the withdrawal of transport by the local authority. However, local authorities' complaints procedures and education institutions' disciplinary policies should be made available to learners and parents.



SCHOOL BUS TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR CODE

TO BE SAFE

- When the bus arrives, wait for it to stop before boarding
- Get on and off the bus carefully – pushing or rushing can cause accidents
- Always wear your seat belt and stay in your seat for the whole journey – it could save your life
- On a school bus, stay in your seat for the whole journey
- On a public bus, find a seat if one is available
- Store your bag or other belongings safely and out of anyone's way
- Let the driver drive without distraction during the journey
- Take care of the bus
- Never spit or smoke
- Never be rude to other learners or the driver
- Never interfere with driver controls or safety equipment
- Never throw anything in or from the bus
- Only operate the bus doors or exits in an emergency and don't get off the bus until it has stopped
- Always follow the instructions of the driver or passenger assistant
- If there is an accident, stay on the bus until you are told to leave – but leave the bus by the safest exit if it is unsafe to stay on the bus
- When crossing the road find a safe place where you can be seen by all other drivers
- Please tell a teacher, parent or driver about any bad behaviour you see

Disciplinary Procedures

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

In accordance with the All-Wales Travel Behaviour Code, when dealing with Bullying issues, the well-being of learners should be safeguarded in accordance with The Respecting Others Anti-bullying Agenda and The Hate Crime Framework.

The Council may withdraw travel arrangements made for a pupil/student if it is satisfied that the pupil/student 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 pupil/student 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 pupil/student is registered will be consulted about the decision to withdraw school transport and given at least 24 hours notice of the decision before the withdrawal takes effect.
- The parent/guardian of the pupil/student 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 pupil/student continues to attend (unless the pupil/student 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 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.

Transport Operators' Code of Conduct

You are responsible for the safe provision of transport in accordance with the Conditions of Contract for the provision of transport and any relevant Traffic Management Policy produced by the school/college. A professional approach to transport provision by you and your staff will assist in ensuring passengers travel safely and in comfort. It is your responsibility to ensure that any staff involved in the provision of home to school transport have read and understood the contents of this Code of Conduct, and are familiar with the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014 and the All-Wales Travel Behaviour Code Statutory Guidance. Failure to meet these requirements may result in deductions being made from your contract payments, and ultimately in termination of the contract.

Your employees

- Ensure you adopt and maintain the highest possible standards of operation, including the provision of well maintained, properly licensed and equipped vehicles, appropriately licensed, enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked and, where specified, suitable Passenger Assistants. Where necessary the Council will provide appropriate training for Drivers and Passenger Assistants.
- Ensure that all relevant staff receive sufficient training in this Code's content and application.
- Staff should be clean and presentable, as well as suitable and able to undertake the role.

- You should notify the Council's Transport Unit immediately if you employ a new driver or passenger assistant, in order that the appropriate DBS Check can be carried out. No driver or passenger assistant can be used on School Transport until they have been approved by the Council.
- Ensure that staff identification badges are on display at all times.
- Ensure your staff adopt and maintain a professional and courteous attitude to passengers. You are responsible for the behaviour of your employees.
- Ensure your drivers are aware of the risk assessments that have been undertaken and that they are familiar with the routes they will be required to operate.
- Make sure that telephone numbers of the people who should be notified in an emergency, i.e. yourself, the Council's Transport Unit and the schools served are available on the vehicle. Please ensure that drivers are provided with mobile telephones or are in radio contact with their home depot in case of an emergency. Such equipment should only be used when safe and legal to do so.
- Ensure that drivers are aware of their responsibilities in the event of a vehicle breakdown or accident. Drivers should contact their control point immediately and you will need to arrange alternative transport immediately, if necessary by sub contracting to another company approved by the Council. Please ensure the Council's Transport Unit is immediately notified verbally of these arrangements followed by the completion of an Operational Report Form within 24 hours.

Your vehicles

- Ensure that your Drivers are provided with vehicles that meet the minimum specification for that route and with enough seats to accommodate the specified number of passengers, with one passenger to each seat.
- Ensure that the route number and school transport signs are displayed on vehicles when operating school/college contracts.

Liaison with schools/colleges

- Make sure you maintain regular contact with the schools/colleges you serve through the member of the school/college staff nominated to deal with transport matters.
- Primary school pupils will require special arrangements when transferring from your vehicle to the school. Please ensure the driver liaises with the Head Teacher of the school to confirm arrangements for the transfer of pupils to a responsible member of staff. Never drop the pupils at the school without formally handing them over to a responsible member of staff.
- The Council's Transport Unit should be kept fully informed of any discussions that you have with schools/colleges, particularly if any changes to transport arrangements are proposed. No changes to these arrangements should be made without the written approval of the Transport Unit.

Absent Parents/Guardians

- Where pupils who are taken to their drop off point in the afternoon and are usually collected by a parent/guardian, if there is no one there to collect them, the following procedure should be adopted –
 - i. Your driver should wait a maximum of 5 minutes for the parent/guardian to arrive. If there is still no one to collect the child, they should advise the Council's Transport Unit and yourselves of the situation but in the meantime keep the pupil(s) on the vehicle and operate the service on its scheduled route so as not to delay other pupils on board.
 - ii. On completion of the route, your driver should phone the Council's Transport Unit and yourselves for further instructions. Please liaise with the Council's Transport Unit and in the event of being unable to contact someone for further instructions, your driver should either contact the Safeguarding Duty Officer or the police on 101.

Changes to provision

- Notify the Council's Transport Unit immediately, if for any reason you are unable, either temporarily or permanently, to provide the contracted transport. An Operational Report Form should be completed and returned at the earliest opportunity.
- In an emergency, sub contracting to another licensed operator approved by the Council is acceptable, but the appropriate details of the subcontractor must be included in the completed Operational Report Form. If sub-contracting is not possible, then the Transport Unit will then make alternative transport arrangements and you will be charged for any additional costs incurred.

- During inclement weather it is your decision, in conjunction with the Council, as to whether or not you undertake a school contract. The decision should be sufficiently supported by a completed risk assessment form.
- If one of your vehicles is not able to go any further on a route, contact the Council's Transport Unit. Depending on weather conditions, road conditions and weather forecast there are numerous scenarios that may follow. Utilising the information at hand and the resources available the Council's Transport Unit will liaise with you to decide upon the appropriate action. Actions may range from, waiting for the weather to pass over, the re-prioritising of the supply of 4x4 vehicles and gritting vehicles to clear roads, requesting assistance from the emergency services or even arranging alternative accommodation.
- The drivers need to be aware that although they will feel under pressure from the driving conditions and pupils/students they must be reassured that they have the resource capability of the Council at their disposal.
- Pupils/students should not be allowed to leave the vehicle.

Bus Passes

- Instruct Drivers and Passenger Assistants to check bus passes daily. Parents of primary children may prefer to keep their passes for them. This is acceptable but passes should still be inspected in the mornings.
- Make sure Drivers or Passenger Assistants note the names and other identification of pupils/students who do not show a pass. Please send this information to the Council's Transport Unit who will deal directly with the pupils/students and parents.

- Instruct Drivers and Passenger Assistants only to refuse transport, if you have been given prior notification from the Council's Transport Unit that from a given date transport should be denied. In these cases the Transport Unit will have given parents prior notification.
- If a pupil/student is not entitled to free transport and the parents/guardians refuse to purchase a pass, they should not be permitted to travel. However if they have been identified as using the bus, notice will be given to them and to you that, from a given date, transport will be refused. Drivers and passenger assistants must then be instructed accordingly.

Passenger Behaviour

- Please ensure your drivers inform you immediately of incidents of serious passenger misbehaviour. Please verbally report the incident to the Council's Transport Unit immediately, and then complete the incident report form. Please advise your drivers to obtain as much information about the individuals concerned and the nature of the incident as they can. The incident reports must be submitted as early as possible, but in any case within 24 hours of the incident occurring. The Council's Transport Unit will then arrange to investigate the matter in conjunction with the school/college as soon as possible.
- Do not remove any passenger from a vehicle when they have been involved in an act of misbehaviour. The driver can of course stop the vehicle to restore order or make contact with his base or the police at the earliest opportunity if the incident is deemed to be very serious and passenger safety is at risk. Should the incident happen on the morning run, please report the matter to the school on arrival and then verbally inform the Transport Unit before completing the incident report form as outlined above.

- The prompt completion of the Incident Report Form will assist the Transport Unit in resolving issues quickly and provide the basis of management information for service developments in the future. It is also vital to enable the school to discipline the offenders. Contact details for the Transport Unit are provided at the start of this Code of Conduct.
- Do not take disciplinary action yourself (e.g. by banning a pupil/student from your vehicles), without the prior approval of the Council's Transport Unit. That approval will not be unreasonably withheld.

Carriage of unauthorised persons.

- Under no circumstances may any person not authorised by the Council be allowed to travel on school transport.

Drivers' and Passenger Assistants' Code of Conduct

The safety of the pupils/students travelling on school/college transport is the responsibility of the driver and his or her employer. The Council therefore expects a high degree of professionalism from drivers in carrying out their duties. Please read and follow this Code of Conduct which is designed to promote safe and efficient school transport. Your co-operation is essential.

Before the Journey

- Ensure you are fully aware of the company's procedures for dealing with accidents, breakdowns and inclement weather.
- Ensure that you are provided with either a mobile phone or a two-way radio and that you have the emergency phone numbers you need - i.e. your depot, school(s) and the Council's Transport Unit.
- Ensure the route number is visibly displayed towards the front of the vehicle and the school bus signs are correctly displayed at the front and the rear of the vehicle, if required by law for that type of vehicle.

During the Journey

- Arrive at and stop at the designated pick up and drop-off points in plenty of time. Never depart early.
- Approach each stop with caution, particularly if there are large numbers of pupils/students waiting.

- Hazard warning lights must be used when pupils/students are entering and exiting the vehicle or when other circumstances dictate.
- Remember the safety of passengers on the vehicle is your responsibility. Ensure you close the vehicle doors before moving off from each pick up point and keep them closed until you arrive at each stop and the vehicle is at a complete standstill.
- Stop the vehicle at a designated bus stop, an adequate stopping place off the carriageway or on the nearside of the carriageway where passengers can enter and exit the vehicle safely.
- Check that each pupil/student boarding the bus has a valid travel pass. The parents of primary school pupils may prefer to keep the passes for them. This is acceptable but they must be shown each morning.
- Pupils/students who fail to produce passes should be allowed to travel but their name, school/college and year group/form should be noted and forwarded to the Council's Transport Unit. During the first week of each Autumn Term pupils/students may not have been issued with their passes and therefore you will need to use your discretion about whether you need to record and report their details.
- You must only refuse travel when you have been given specific advance notice by the Council's Transport Unit, via your employer. You must refuse travel from the date given. The pupils'/students' parent/guardian will have been given prior notice by the Council that transport will be refused from that date.

- Never under any circumstances allow a person not authorised by the Council to travel on school transport.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of passengers including the wearing of seat belts where they are fitted to the vehicle.
- Do not drive away until the pupils/students are seated.
- When preparing to drive away from the stop be aware of latecomers who may take risks in trying to get onto the bus.
- If you are required to make a connection to transfer passengers to or collect passengers from another service, make sure you arrive at the connecting point at least five minutes before the time of the connection and wait with the passengers until the connecting bus arrives. If you arrive late at the connection due to delays and have missed the connecting vehicle, please transport the pupils to school.
- Drive your vehicle in a safe and considerate manner, with a high degree of professionalism with the safety and comfort of your passengers uppermost in your mind. You should have a good awareness of other road users, including pedestrians and try to anticipate their actions.
- Do not allow passengers to stand by your cab or driving area whilst the vehicle is in motion or to operate any of the vehicle controls (e.g. the doors).
- Never drive with the vehicle door open.

- Many passengers suffer from food allergies and intolerances, therefore it is important that you do not allow passengers to consume food onboard the bus and never give passengers any food unless they are suffering from a medical condition such as diabetes. If the weather is hot you may consider allowing the pupils to drink water.
- If, because of unforeseen weather conditions or road works, it is impossible to follow the scheduled route, ensure that alternative stops are used which do not entail children walking long distances unsupervised.
- In the event of an accident, vehicle breakdown or anything else which prevents you completing the journey, your first consideration must be the safety of the passengers. Passengers should be told to remain seated unless it is unsafe to do so. If it is not safe, they should be escorted to a place of safety away from the road and other traffic if possible.
- In an emergency you should call for assistance by whatever means possible. Use a mobile phone if one is provided by your employer, but only if safe and legal to do so. If a Passenger Assistant is provided, one of you should stay with the passengers. You should never leave the children unattended.
- In the event of an emergency/accident you should always contact the police, your Operator and then the Council's Transport Unit and the school/college.

At the End of the Journey

- Ensure you deliver your passengers to the school within the agreed times.
- Park on the same side of the road and as near the school entrance as possible (or preferably at the designated point provided in the school grounds).

- Do not open the vehicle doors until the vehicle is stationary, and ensure that it is otherwise safe to do so.
- When delivering a primary child to his/her stop, if the parent/guardian is not there to meet their child then follow the procedures below regarding Absent Parents/Guardians.
- Watch out for pupils/students running back for items they may have left on the vehicle.
- Pupils should not leave via the rear exit of a minibus unless there are exceptional circumstance, e.g. a wheelchair user, emergency situation. They would need to be properly supervised in this instance.
- Search the vehicle for any property left accidentally by passengers and if the owner is known return the property to the owner on the next service or hand the property to the school or your employer.
- Search the vehicle for any damage that may have occurred during the journey and if there is any complete an Incident Report Form and give it to your Operator to return to the Council's Transport Unit as soon as possible but within 24 hours.

Absent Parents/Guardians

- Where pupils who are taken to their drop off point in the afternoon and are usually collected by a parent/guardian, if there is no one there to collect them, the following procedure should be adopted –
 - i. Wait a maximum of 5 minutes for the parent/guardian to arrive. If there is still no one to collect the child, advise the Council's Transport Unit and your Transport Operator of the situation but in the meantime keep the pupil(s) on the vehicle and operate the service on its scheduled route so as not to delay other pupils on board.
 - ii. On completion of the route, phone the Council's Transport Unit and your Transport Operator for further instructions. In the event of being unable to contact someone for further instructions, please contact the Safeguarding Duty Officer or the police on 101.

Inclement weather

- During inclement weather it is the operators decision, in conjunction with the Council, as to whether or not they undertake a school/college run. The decision should be sufficiently supported by a completed risk assessment form.
- During inclement weather it is your responsibility to remain in control of the vehicle and passengers at all times.
- Initially, consider whether it's appropriate to leave the school site. Inform the Council's Transport Unit if you decide to stay so that alternative arrangements can be put in place.

- When or if the vehicle cannot go any further along a route. contact the your operator, who will then contact the Council's Transport Unit for assistance. Depending on weather conditions, road conditions and weather forecast there are numerous scenarios that may follow. However, it is almost certain that the safest place for pupils/ students will be to remain on the vehicle. Never ask anyone to leave the vehicle. If possible keep the vehicle's engine running, and reassure the pupils/students. The Council's Transport Section will liaise with the vehicle operator or driver. Utilising the information at hand and the resources available they will decide upon the appropriate action. Actions may range from, waiting for the weather to pass over, the re-prioritising of the supply of 4x4 vehicles and gritting vehicles to clear roads, requesting assistance from the emergency services or even arranging alternative accommodation.
- Do not allow pupils/students to leave the vehicle.
- Although you may feel under pressure from the driving conditions and pupils/students, be assured that you have the resource capability of the Council to support you.

Working with children

- Adults are regarded as the responsible individual at all times and must recognise the need for a mature responsible approach in any situation that arises or may arise when transporting children.
- Avoid physical contact with children unless formally requested or instructed to assist a less able-bodied pupil/student.

- Do not discuss matters of an inappropriate nature with children, examples of subject matter that are considered inappropriate nature include:
 - i. Alcohol
 - ii. Drugs
 - iii. Personal matters
 - iv. Sex
 - v. Violence

The list is not finite and is designed as an indication of the obvious.

- Think about the language that you use and avoid using any form of swear words.
- Treat all pupils/students equally and consistently and do not leave yourself open to allegations of victimisation or favouritism.
- Avoid confrontation with children. In cases of indiscipline then children must be conveyed to the designated drop off point. In some cases the vehicle can be returned to school with the agreement of the Transport Unit. The incident should be reported immediately to your employer/company. Your employer/company should refer the incident to the Council's Transport Unit via an Incident Report Form within 24 hours.
- Do not engage in any activity that is detrimental to the well being or welfare of any child carried.

Safeguarding

- As someone working with children and young people you can help to keep them safe by keeping an eye out for the signs or indicators of abuse, harm and neglect, and then taking appropriate action early.

- Please look out for:
 - i. Physical signs of abuse or neglect. This could include bruises, burns, fractures (broken bones), or poor hygiene.
 - ii. Behavioural signs of abuse or neglect. This could include showing little or no emotion when hurt, wariness of their parents, alcohol or drug abuse, or age-inappropriate sexual behaviour.
 - iii. If the child discloses they have been abused.

If a child makes a disclosure to you, please make sure you

- Listen quietly
 - Make it clear that you cannot keep the information secret
 - Be reassuring
 - Do not prompt or question, think TED – **T**ell me, **E**xplain to me, **D**escribe to me
 - Write down what you have been told, using the exact words used
 - Pass the information on immediately using the contact details below
 - Do not confront the alleged abuser or discuss with other people
 - Do not worry if you may be mistaken. It is better to have discussed it with somebody with experience and responsibility to make an assessment
- If you have any concerns relating to any of the above you should use the contact details below for each relevant authority.

PCC - During office hours - Child Care Assessment Team
01437 776322/25. Out of hours - 08708 509508

CCC - Llanelli Assessment Team 01554 742322

Carmarthen/Dinefwr Assessment Team 01558 825485
Out of Hours 01558 824283

CCOS - School and Governor Unit, Civic Centre
01792 636079/637148/636551/635381
Transport Unit 01792 636079/636330
Social Services 01792 635700

NPT - During Office Hours - Common Access Point 01639 686803
Out of Hours - Emergency Duty Team 01639 895455

You may also contact the Police Public Protection Unit on 101 and if a child is in immediate danger the police must be contacted on 999. Please do not assume that someone else will inform the relevant services, it is your duty of care to report any concerns you have.

- If the behaviour of any adult (including colleagues and members of the public) towards children and young people causes you concern:
 - i. Do not dismiss your concerns.
 - ii. Do not confront the person about whom you have concerns
 - iii. If it is a person with professional responsibility for children and young people discuss your concerns with that person's line manager. If you feel that this is inappropriate, or you are not satisfied with the response that you get, contact the relevant person in your Company or Social Services. It is very important that you do not ignore or dismiss your suspicions.
- Please ensure that you maintain clear professional boundaries with the pupils/students you transport.

General Conduct

- Do not consume alcohol, drugs or medication that may affect your driving, prior to or whilst driving a school transport vehicle.
- Do not use a mobile phone when driving, If there is an emergency and you need to call for assistance, please ensure you have pulled over to a safe place.
- Do not eat or drink when on school transport duty.
- Do not smoke at any time whilst on the vehicle or on/near the school premises.
- Be clean and presentable.
- Always treat pupils/students with respect and in a polite and friendly manner. You will need to be firm, but in no circumstances should you use bad language or aggressive behaviour.
- Report cases of pupil/student indiscipline to your company immediately and if travelling to school also report to an appropriate member of the school staff on arrival at the school. Each incident should be recorded on the appropriate report form and sent to the Council's Transport Unit within 24 hours. Whenever possible record names of the pupils/students involved and their pass numbers.
- In cases of serious misbehaviour you are authorised to stop your vehicle if necessary to try to restore order and report by phone to your depot. You are not authorised to turn pupils/students off the vehicle along the route and leave them to make their own way to school or home. Such action could endanger their safety. In the event that a pupil/student attempts to leave on their own accord all reasonable efforts should be made to verbally persuade them to remain on the vehicle,

should this fail and they leave the vehicle, you should immediately report the matter to the your operator who must relay the information to the Council's Transport Unit at once.

- If an incident of serious misbehaviour occurs at other times you may wish to consider the following courses of action where appropriate:
 - i. If returning from school but still within its general vicinity, return to the school and report details of the culprits to school staff;
 - ii. In very extreme cases, drive to a nearby police station. You will have to consider whether this delay in completing the journey may simply make matters worse. In practice it may be preferable to complete the journey in the normal way and report details of the incident quickly.
- Advise pupils/students at the beginning of each term or when there is a change of vehicle of the location of the emergency fire extinguishers, first aid kit, emergency doors and their operation. Also of the requirement to wear seat belts, where they are fitted, at all times.

Schools'/Colleges' Responsibilities

- The Schools/Colleges along with Council's Transport Unit have a key role to play in the safe transportation of pupils/students to and from the various educational establishments throughout the County.
- All parties have a major role to play in setting and maintaining standards for pupil/student behaviour that will help ensure the safety of all road users.
- School Governing Bodies should raise awareness and enforce the Welsh Government's Travel Behaviour Code and ensure it is embedded into the Schools Behaviour and Discipline Policy. They should also do what they can to raise awareness of the Home to School/College Transport Code of Conduct.
- If the school/college becomes aware of any incidents or potential breaches of these Codes it should report the matter to the relevant Council's Transport Unit detailed at the front of this document.
- The guidance notes contained within this Code of Conduct are designed to assist Schools/Colleges with the administration and supervision of the school/college transport process on a day to day basis.
- Please ensure that a member of staff is available to supervise pupils/students when they are arriving or departing by home to school/college transport.

- Where primary school children are involved, schools are requested to supervise children to and from the school grounds and the vehicles.
- Please liaise with the operators to make the most appropriate arrangements for the School's/College's particular circumstances.
- The Council's Transport Unit is available for advice and mediation should the need arise.
- Please keep a regular check on the transport provided to your establishment and report any issues to the Council's Transport Unit, utilising the Incident Report Forms. Please arrange to fax or e-mail the report to the Council's Transport Unit on the same day as any incident occurs. A prompt written report will assist the Unit in resolving issues quickly and provide the basis of management information for service developments in the future.
- Should a vehicle fail to arrive at any time, please inform the Council's Transport Unit immediately. Please do not contact the bus operator directly. The Council will investigate the matter directly and arrange to make alternative arrangements if required. Should the problem arise at the time of pick up from the School/College, please keep the pupils/students together until the replacement vehicles arrive.
- Please ensure the drop off and pick up points are clearly marked and provide a safe means of entering and exiting the school/college.

- Where private cars obstruct stopping points or restricted parking areas outside the school/college, please notify the Police.
- Please assist us to provide a safe environment for pupils/students to travel to and from school/college by investigating any allegations of pupil/student mis-behaviour or indiscretion as soon as practicably possible following the receipt of an incident report.
- Please provide every assistance in identifying the culprits and liaise closely with the Council's Transport Unit on the appropriate course of action that needs to be taken. This may include :
 - i. An interview with the pupil/parent.
 - ii. Temporary withdrawal of school transport.
 - iv. Arranging for offenders to clean vehicles where appropriate.
 - v. Involve the Police in cases of criminal damage or assault.
- Please provide written notification to the Council's Transport Unit of the proposed inset and school closure days at the commencement of the academic year, or at the latest ,within a minimum period of 28 days. The Transport Unit will advise operators in advance, thereby avoiding unnecessary expenditure. Failure to provide notice will incur additional expenditure.
- Please include the use of transport and school journeys on the school curriculum through assemblies, class tutorial time etc. The Council's Transport Unit are available to assist in the provision of information, if required.
- Should the school/college be considering any structural alteration that may affect the parking/pick up points at the school/college, please consult with the Council's Transport Unit at the earliest opportunity.

- Please ensure that all transport operators receive a copy of the traffic management policy for your school/college premises.
- In order to implement this Code of Conduct which incorporates the requirements of the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014 and the All-Wales Travel Behaviour Code, please ensure all relevant staff receive sufficient information and/or training in the content and application. Should you require further information, please contact your Council's Transport Unit.