



PUPIL BEHAVIOUR ON SCHOOL TRANSPORT

LOCAL AUTHORITY POLICY

Pupil Behaviour on School Transport Policy

Aim of the Policy

At the heart of this policy is a commitment to ensuring that home to school transport for young people in Darlington is as safe and secure as is possible, and that it operates to the advantage of all of the pupils who use it, to their schools, to their community and to the Borough Council.

We are also concerned about the safety and welfare of other road users, bystanders and, where transport is being shared, the general public.

Principles of the Policy

This policy is underpinned by the following principles:-

- that school staff, pupils, parents, operators, drivers, escorts, governors and the Local Authority should work in partnership to achieve the aim set out above;
- that all children and young people who are provided with transport should be able to travel in a safe, secure, non threatening and civilised environment;
- that all the partners in educational transport need to be aware of their role and their attendant responsibilities, as well as their entitlements;
- that the policy should be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by a working group representative of the partnership.

Entitlements and Responsibilities of the Partners

All partners in our home to school transport arrangements have an entitlement to the aim set out above being met. However, this entitlement can only be met where all partners also fulfil their responsibilities. It is important therefore to ensure that there is a range of consequences and/or sanctions that can be applied where one or more partners fails to fulfil their responsibilities. This should ensure that entitlements are maintained and that transport meets the needs of all users.

Where it is felt that there is a need to complain about the application of any sanction then procedures should be followed as described in guidelines which will be produced to support the operation of this Policy.

Principles Guiding the Use of Sanctions

- a sanction should only be applied after investigation of an incident;
- where a sanction has been applied parents / carers have access to an appropriate form of complaint, representation or appeal procedure;
- all long term sanctions which include removal of transport should be subject to regular review;
- sanctions should be fair and appropriate to the seriousness of the incident(s) / behaviour(s) which led to their 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;

- Local Authority approval must be sought in all cases where transport is to be removed for more than 5 days;
- 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 on a fixed term or permanent basis;
- where a pupil's behaviour on transport is causing concern, he / she will be advised of the consequences of a failure to improve behaviour. The parent / carer should also be kept informed;
- there should be the highest possible degree of predictability in the application of sanctions, and those pupils who breach their responsibilities should be clearly aware of the consequences of such breaches. It is anticipated that each school may wish to incorporate behaviour on transport into its behaviour policy remit;
- 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;
- in the most serious of cases, transport privileges will be withdrawn on a permanent basis without a substitution of alternative arrangements.

Factors Which Need to be Considered in Applying Sanctions

- the seriousness of the incident / behaviour, and its impact on others;
- the frequency of such incidents / behaviours by the pupil;
- consideration should also be 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 state
 - the pupil's behavioural history on school transport
 - the circumstances preceding the incident
 - 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.

Conclusion

The Policy will be supported by guidelines which will be developed by the Education Authority in partnership with schools, operators and other partners. These guidelines will spell out clearly, in detail, the expectations and responsibilities of each of the partners and will be communicated widely. A draft of the guidelines is attached at appendix 1.

The Local Authority believes that where all partners are aware of their entitlements and responsibilities, are committed to them and the partnership, then an effective framework will be in place to ensure a safe and civilised home to school transport system for the Borough's children and young people.

APPENDIX 1

The Local Authority

Entitlements

To:

- Support from other partners in school transport in implementing, maintaining and reviewing the Pupil Behaviour on School Transport Policy and Guidelines.
- Information from other partners about serious behaviour problems on school transport, for monitoring purposes.
- Information from schools nominated person on withdrawal of travel (short term).
- Consultation / agreement on withdrawal of travelling privileges (long term).

Responsibilities

For:

- Supporting other partners in school transport in relation to the Policy and Guidelines.
- Maintaining data on serious behaviour problems on school transport.
- Ensuring contract compliance.
- Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the Policy and Guidelines and attendant practices and procedures.
- Ensuring that all behaviour problems on school transport are properly addressed.
- Ensuring that pupils are provided with a safe, secure, non threatening and civilised environment on school transport.
- Communication of details about Policy and Guidelines to parents, schools, operators and other relevant parties.

Consequences / Sanctions

- Complaints from schools.
- Complaints from operators.
- Complaints from parents and pupils.
- Appeals from parents.

Schools

Entitlements

To:

- Support from other partners in school transport in relation to the Policy and Guidelines.
- School transport being provided for its pupils in compliance with the Conditions of Contract.
- Be consulted by the Local Authority in the process of evaluating and reviewing the Policy and Guidelines.

Responsibilities

For:

- Supporting other partners in relation to pupil behaviour on school transport issues.
- Nominating a key person in school who will act as a contact in relation to school behaviour on transport issues.
- Logging reported incidents in school and informing the Authority and operators, where appropriate, of relevant incidents, and to investigate such problems, as appropriate.
- Liaising with the Local Authority and operators to ensure the smooth organisation and running of school transport.
- Assisting in developing the understanding of pupils (and parents where appropriate) in relation to behaviour on school transport issues.
- Informing the Local Authority of withdrawal of travelling privileges from a student (short term).
- Consult with the Local Authority and gaining agreement prior to any long term withdrawal of a students travelling privilege.
- Incorporating behaviour on school transport within the school's behaviour policy.
- Investigating complaints about behaviour on transport.
- Making arrangements for the managed and safe boarding and alighting of pupils.

Consequences / Sanctions

- Complaints from the Local Authority.
- Complaints from operators.
- Complaints from parents and / or pupils

Operators, Drivers and Escorts

Entitlements

To:

- Support from other partners in school transport in implementing the Policy and Guidelines.
- Be consulted by the Local Authority in evaluating and reviewing the Policy and Guidelines.

Responsibilities

For:

- Supporting other partners in relation to the Policy and Guidelines.
- Reporting relevant incidents and concerns to the school, Local Authority or other relevant body (eg Police), as appropriate.
- Providing safe and secure transport at all times by ensuring that staff are adequately trained and licensed, and that vehicles are adequately maintained and licensed.
- Aiming to achieve consistency in dealings with pupils.
- Liaising with schools and the Local Authority to ensure the smooth organisation and management of school transport.
- Nominating a named person to take a lead on behaviour on transport issues.
- Delivering a service in accordance with the terms of the contract.
- Monitoring the conduct of pupils whilst on the vehicle and maintaining appropriate levels of pupil behaviour.

Consequences / Sanctions

- Complaints from parents and / or pupils.
- Complaints from schools.
- Complaints from the Local Authority.
- Loss of good reputation.
- Report to the Vehicle Inspectorate.
- Withdrawal of Contract.

Parents / Carers (also see pupil entries)

Entitlements

To:

- Be made aware of the Local Authority and school Policy and Guidelines on School Transport.
- Be involved and consulted where there are problems on school transport and to share in the solution.
- Be listened to where they have concerns and where appropriate, register complaints.
- Be assured that transport in a safe, secure, non threatening and civilised environment will be provided.
- Be made aware of the details of home to school transport arrangements.
- To support, assistance and co-operation from other partners in school transport.
- Be made aware of the consequences of their child's poor behaviour.

Responsibilities

For:

- Supporting the Local Authority, school and operator in applying the Local Authority Policy and Guidelines.
- Supporting a positive resolution where there are problems on school transport which include their child/ren, eg attending school meetings, etc.
- Paying for the making good of damage caused by vandalism / criminal activity which involves their child/ren.
- Ensuring that their child/ren conduct themselves in accordance with the expectations of the school and the Local Authority Policy and Guidelines. This may include meeting with the school to discuss problems and in some cases, entering into a voluntary agreement between them, the school and the pupil, to manage the situation positively.
- Acting as a good role model to their child/ren and encourage good positive behaviour.
- Ensuring that their child/ren always have their bus pass available for use on school transport.

Consequences / Sanctions

- Charge for replacement pass.
- Charge for the making good of damage caused through acts of vandalism.
- Short and long term withdrawal of transport with no reimbursement or alternative provision being made.
- The potential for the refusal of travel if no pass is carried.

Pupils (also see Parents/Carers entries)

Entitlements

To:

- Support from other partners in relation to the implementation of the aims of Policy.
- A safe, secure, non threatening and civilised environment on school transport.
- Have their views and concerns listened to and addressed, as appropriate.
- Be treated consistently and fairly.
- Be made aware of the Policy and their school's and Local Authority's expectations of the behaviour and conduct expected on transport and the sanctions which may be applied where these expectations are not met.
- A good 'service' on the school transport provided by the Local Authority.
- Be made aware of the seriousness of their behaviour where there are problems, and the possible consequences arising from such.

Responsibilities

For:

- Conducting themselves at all times in a safe, orderly, courteous and responsible manner.
- Respecting the rights and feelings of others, including other passengers, drivers and escorts, bystanders and other roadusers.
- Complying with the guidelines issued to pupils by the Local Authority and any such issued by the school.
- Assisting schools and the Local Authority in any investigations related to behaviour on transport problems.
- To carry and show bus passes at all times when using school transport.

Consequences / Sanctions

- Letters of complaint to parents / carers from school and / or Local Authority.
- The range of normal school based sanctions, which may include exclusion, detention, withdrawal of privilege, etc.
- Voluntary agreements / contracts between parent, school and pupils.
- Short and long term withdrawal of transport with no reimbursement or alternative provision made.
- The potential of loss of travel if no pass is carried.
- Possible Police action in appropriate cases.
- The loss of transport privileges on a permanent basis in the most serious of cases.