

When considering your child's return to school you will be thinking about school transport. Our advice to parents is to follow government guidelines:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

***...consider whether children could walk or cycle, accompanied by a responsible adult or carer, where appropriate.***

If this is not possible, the next best recommended option is to transport using your own vehicle; only use a bus or seek a Council commissioned taxi where there is no other option.

When travelling on public transport government advice is:

*Social distancing applies to children as well as adults. Children should keep their distance from others who are not in their household, where possible. Public Health England recommends keeping a 2 metre distance from others. If this isn't possible children should avoid physical contact, face away from others, and keep the time spent near others as short as possible.*  
(See [Staying alert and safe: social distancing guidance for young people](#))

*If you are the responsible adult or carer travelling with children, please help them follow this guidance, wear face coverings (on public transport and in public taxis), minimise the surfaces they touch and maintain their distance from others, where possible.*

*Children under 2 years old are not recommended to wear face coverings. Some children may not be able to wear a face covering. For example children with breathing difficulties or children whose disabilities make it difficult for them to wear a face covering.*

*Note a face covering does not mean a face mask:*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering>

**Your child must not travel if he/she or a member of the household is displaying Covid-19 like symptoms:**

- a high temperature (37.8°C or greater)
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>

### **Personal travel budget for parents in receipt of a home to school taxi service**

The Council is able to offer a personal travel budget (PTB) for those who usually travel in a shared taxi or minibus and who are unwilling or unable to use a shared vehicle. This is paid at 45p per mile per round trip, for each day of attendance. Normally a parent gives up their taxi offer, but we are happy to offer a PTB as a short-term arrangement during this transition phase, with taxi service restored when government guidance permits, or when a place on a vehicle is possible. .

### **Taxi/minibus transport**

The Government has not given any specific guidance regarding home to school transport. We have issued this guidance to our suppliers which is based on the safer transport guidance for operators which can be found on our website.

Social distancing in shared taxi transport is obviously challenging. Approximately 550 children normally travel to school in approximately 150 vehicles, therefore it is not possible for each child to have their own vehicle.

We will work with schools when considering the options available. This may result in pupils sharing a vehicle with other children in the school determined 'bubble' or 'pod'. Alternatively, we will consider the size and layout of vehicles to determine how many passengers could be carried in a safer way. For example, 2 passengers plus driver and guide on an 8-seater so that each person occupies one row. We will liaise with school and families to make decisions.

### **Face coverings for children when travelling alone or in a school bus or home to school vehicle**

Our advice is that children and young people **should not** wear face coverings. This is consistent with the advice schools are giving to parents. This is because even if there is a guide on the vehicle, the use of face coverings by pupils without parental supervision introduces more risk than the risk reduction from wearing a mask, for example it is vital that correct fitting, wearing and removal of mask procedures are adhered to. Government advice is: ***Face coverings should not be used by children under the age of 2 or those who may find it difficult to manage them correctly. For example, primary age children unassisted, or those with respiratory conditions.***

For pupils/passengers who may require rescue medication it is unlikely that transport can be provided because of the potential infection risks that this may cause.

If pupils or passengers present an unacceptable safety risk to staff or other pupils/passengers the Council reserves the right to withdraw transport without notice.

### **School Transport Team**

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