

HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT CODE OF PRACTICE

Schools, parents, pupils, drivers, escorts and contractors



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Introduction

THIS CODE OF PRACTICE HAS BEEN PRODUCED AS A GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS, PUPILS, PARENTS, DRIVERS, ESCORTS AND CONTRACTORS TO ENSURE THAT WE ARE ALL AWARE OF OUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN ORDER THAT A SAFE AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE IS PROVIDED FOR MAINSTREAM AND ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (FROM HERE ON REFERRED TO AS ALN) PUPILS TRAVELLING ON HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT.

The School Transport policy is available on the Vale of Glamorgan website.
We aim to provide pupils with a reliable and stress free journey to and from school.
Suggestions for improvements to the service are always welcome.

PASSENGER TRANSPORT TEAM DETAILS

In the Vale of Glamorgan Council all functions relating to school and college transport are dealt with by the Visible Service and Transport division.

ANY CORRESPONDENCE CAN BE SENT TO:

Vale of Glamorgan Council
Passenger Transport Team
Directorate of Visible Services and Transport
Alps Depot
Quarry Road
Wenvoe
CF5 6AA

The contact telephone number is **01446 700111**

Mainstream school transport Email: schooltransport@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Additional learning Needs School transport Email: schooltransportsen@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
website:

<http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/living/transportation/transportation.aspx>

Transport team

The Vale of Glamorgan Passenger Transport Team currently provide home to school transport for over 3,900 pupils travelling to mainstream and special schools and resource based units on 200 bus and taxi routes.

The Transport Team responsibilities and aims are as follows:

- Assess and allocate pupils for suitable transport within 10 school days upon receipt of the request
- Tender for and award contracts for suitable transport
- Monitor and spot check the operation of the contracts throughout the year
- Provide an efficient and cost effective service
- Investigate and record any concerns or complaints
- Send out letters prior to the start of term giving information of route allocation
- Provide all mainstream pupils with a bus pass which will enable them to travel on their allocated service
- Inform pupils of their obligations under the Welsh Learner Travel Behaviour Code
- Process all payments relating to the school transport function.
- Ensure contracts are operated according to Contract terms and conditions.
- Update public transport information with information relating to school transport
- Attend meeting with schools to discuss school transport arrangements and issues
- Attend school council meetings to discuss issues pupils have in relation to school transport

Schools



- Schools should ensure that they meet their obligations under Welsh Government's Learner Travel Measure and that the Travel Behaviour Code is promoted to pupils.
- Schools should comply with the School Transport Policy and ensure that it supports their needs by actively engaging in the Consultation Process this may involve participation of the School Council.
- Schools are required to regularly review the School Transport web pages to ensure that they familiarise themselves with up to date information relating to changes to service and legislation.
- Schools should ensure they allocate a member of staff as a contact for all issues relating to school transport and that someone is available to assist the transport team should parents not be at home or the relevant bus stop when transport arrives at the end of the school day. Up to date parent contact details should be available.
- Headteachers should allow vehicles to unload and collect passengers within school grounds wherever possible or provide assistance from the highway for certain routes after discussion with the transport team.
- Primary schools must ensure pupils are met from the school transport in the mornings and taken to the transport provider in the afternoons.
- Schools are asked to provide information directly to the Passenger Transport Team regarding any issues with service as soon as possible.
- Primary and Additional Learning Needs pupils should be reminded to visit the toilet prior to the afternoon journey and should not be put on transport if they are in a distressed or upset manner.
- Schools should inform of inset days as soon as possible, preferably no later than one month before the inset day is due to be taken. Vale schools should complete the inset form on Staffnet. Failure to do this may result in a charge being passed to the school for any unnecessary operation of transport.
- Schools closing earlier than normal are responsible for ensuring that parents of primary school and ALN pupils are available to receive their children (or have arranged for a responsible adult to do so).
- It is important that ALN pupils transport requirements are reviewed each year. Transport should not always be awarded for the duration of the pupil's education.

ALN - The Team is grateful for the assistance from schools when planning appropriate places for ALN pupils and for the guidance to drivers on school drop off and pick up arrangements. If there is a problem please let us know as we aim to sort out any issues as quickly as possible. We welcome any suggestions from you for improvement to the service.

parent/carer/pupil guide

Eligibility

Welsh Government published The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure which places a statutory duty to provide transport for eligible pupils to and from school. This is defined as more than 2 miles to the nearest suitable school for Primary aged pupils and more than 3 miles for Secondary aged School pupils (At the discretion of the council this criteria also applies to those pupils in Year 12 and 13 attending their nearest suitable school). Please also refer to the Home to School Transport policy which is available on the Vale website.

Distances are measured by the nearest available walking route accompanied if necessary by a responsible adult.

THE Vale of Glamorgan council currently provide transport to Welsh medium and faith based mainstream schools at its discretion.

In circumstances when the nearest suitable mainstream school is full and admission is refused, free home to school transport will only be provided to the next nearest suitable school. The qualifying distances as outlined above must still be met.

It is the Council, as Local Education Authority in conjunction with schools who decide if a school is at capacity in any academic year. Only when the necessary information is received and confirmed will decisions be made by the Council in respect of the provision of free home to school transport to the next nearest suitable school. If parents later make arrangements for younger siblings to attend any school other than their nearest suitable school then they will be responsible for making their own transport arrangements.

Where a pupil attends, as a result of parental preference, a school other than the nearest suitable school as recognised by the Vale of Glamorgan Council, it must be understood that parents accept full responsibility for making their own transport arrangements.

Arrangements

Pupils and Parents/Carers have an essential role in assisting with the smooth running of the service to ensure that the passenger gets a good start to the school day. We aim to provide a stress free journey in reasonable comfort.



Methods of transport can be in the form of –

- Dedicated school buses, minibus or taxi with or without an escort (a door to door service cannot always be provided and passengers may be asked to get to a pre-arranged pick up point).
- Local bus or rail pass. Some pupils may already hold or be entitled to a concessionary travel pass as mentioned above and these should be used wherever possible.
- Accompaniment to walk to school.
- A payment to the parent may be considered in exceptional cases where transport cannot be provided.

Mainstream School Transport -

Pupils names will be obtained from the School Admission Team and some schools to determine eligibility. Bus passes will be sent to the home address during the summer holidays. If you have not received your pass two weeks prior to the start of the new school term, please contact One Vale on 01446 700111 who will ensure that the message is passed to the transport section. By receiving a bus pass you are committing to Welsh Government's Travel Behaviour Code the details of this may be found on the Vale of Glamorgan's website along with the School Transport policy.

If you don't have a pass you will not be able to travel – **NO PASS = NO TRAVEL**

ALN (Additional Learning Needs)Transport

The majority of additional learning needs can be met in your local school and therefore transport would not be provided unless the distance criteria applies. If you choose an alternative mainstream school, transport would not be provided. There is no automatic entitlement to free school transport for pupils with Additional Learning Needs. Eligibility will be determined by the council's Pupils Support Service based on

a) the mileage criteria

Or

b) That there is a medical or physical condition that prevents the ability to walk or to use public transport accompanied if necessary by a responsible adult. These cases will require evidence and will be put before a panel for decision

parent/carer/pupil

The ALN transport process begins with the Pupil Support Service issuing an application form for transport to the parent/carer of an eligible pupil for completion prior to transport being arranged. Please ensure information is correct in order to aid the driver and escort. Once this form has been returned to Pupil Support Service they will pass a copy to the transport section. Arrangements can take up to 10 school days to organise. If a school place is available before transport has been arranged you may have to make your own arrangements to get your child to and from school. Once transport has been arranged, please ensure that the contractor has the correct car seats/booster seats or wheelchair tie down equipment in place.

If transport is refused on mileage and you feel that you should qualify for other reasons, please contact Pupil Support Service on 01446 709180 and your case may be referred to a panel for consideration.

School transport is not always provided for the entire duration of the attendance at school and will be reviewed at the very least annually. Please do not assume that there will always be a transport provision.

Pupils with certain needs not qualifying for free school transport may be entitled to a concessionary bus pass. Information can be found on the Vale's website or by contacting One Vale on 01446 700111.

Taxis and minibuses

When door to door pick up has been arranged parent/carer/pupil should be looking out for the taxi. Parent/carer must take the pupil to and collect from the taxi as other passengers cannot be left unattended.

If transport is not required in the morning due to doctor or dental appointments make sure that the contractor is aware if you have taken your child to school and that transport is required in the afternoon

Parents/carers are fully responsible for the safety and care of their children until they get on the vehicle and until the moment they get off the vehicle. In some instances parent/carers will be required to lift/assist their child into the vehicle or assist with seating their child in the correct restraint. The taxi can only wait for three minutes if the pupil is not ready.



Transport is to and from the home address only and alternative requests should not be made with the driver. In the case of an emergency arrangement please contact the Passenger Transport Team. If the parent/carer is not at home at the end of the day, the driver will leave a note at the house with contact details to say that he/she has called and will contact the Transport coordinator immediately for advice. The advice would normally be to try the home address at the end of the route depending on the route the taxi takes, after all other pupils have been taken home. If there is still no-one available to take the child, the advice would normally be to take the child back to school (depending on location and time). Social services may also be contacted by the Passenger Transport Team as drivers and escorts cannot keep children with them after the route has been completed. Consistent problems may result in the withdrawal of transport provision

Dedicated school buses

When pupils are travelling on buses, pupils should be waiting at the relevant stop 5 minutes before the bus is due to arrive. At the end of the day parent/carers of primary aged pupils should ensure that they are at the bus stop in plenty of time to receive their child.

If parent/carers are not at the home or the bus stop at the end of the school day, the transport provider will contact the Passenger Transport Team for advice. This can be to continue with the journey if possible whilst contact is trying to be made with the parent/carer. It might be advised to take the pupil back to school. Social services may also be contacted by the Transport coordinator as drivers and escorts cannot keep children with them after the route has been completed. Consistent problems may result in the withdrawal of transport provision.

A few points to consider –

- Pupils should respect others and behave appropriately.
- Pupils should remain seated with the seatbelt in place while travelling.
- Pupils should follow the instructions from the driver or escort.
- Pupils (mainstream) will not be allowed to travel without a bus pass.

NO PASS = NO TRAVEL.

parent/carer/pupil

- Pupils should take care when crossing the road.
- Pupils should wear suitable clothing with no trailing items such as scarves that could get caught in doors.
- Pupils should not play around or push others whilst waiting at the roadside for the bus.
- Parent/carers should ensure that younger children have visited the toilet before getting on the vehicle.
- Drinks and food are not allowed to be consumed in the vehicle for safety reasons.
- ALN - Toys or hard/heavy items that could harm someone if thrown should not be taken on transport.
- Smoking and E cigarettes – These are not permitted on or around the vehicles.
- All drivers and escorts will have Disclosure and Barring checks.
- All drivers and escorts will have ID badges
- Drivers and escorts are not allowed to lift children in or out of the vehicle.
- In the case of door to door transport please keep contact numbers for the contractor handy and inform them in plenty of time if transport will not be required due to illness, appointments etc. If transport is not required in the morning due to doctor or dental appointments make sure that the contractor is aware if you have taken your child to school and that transport is required in the afternoon.
- Drivers and escorts are not allowed to give medication on transport.
- ALN - Ensure that the Passenger Transport Team is advised of any change to the details that were originally submitted on the Transport Request form and do not just inform the driver/escort.
- Taxis/minibuses - Parents are responsible for ensuring that they or an appropriate adult is at home to receive the child at the end of the day. If a child is allowed to let themselves into the home then this should be confirmed in writing to the Passenger Transport Team. Depending on the age/maturity of the pupil, if you allow them to walk from the taxi to the home, you must acknowledge to the driver / escort that you are at home and aware that your child has been dropped off.
- ALN - New wheelchairs will not be permitted on the vehicle until the parent/carer has agreed and signed as suitable the type of equipment that will be used. In these cases the ALN Transport section will issue a form prior to commencement of transport for parents to agree/amend and sign.



Behaviour

Parents/carers are responsible for the behaviour of their children and it would be helpful if pupils could be regularly reminded on how to behave whilst travelling on school transport. The safety of other passengers and road users is paramount and dangerous misbehaviour will result in the withdrawal of transport and parents/carers will be responsible for making sure that their child attends school.

Parents/carers will be responsible to pay the contractor for any damage that their child has caused.

Cameras on mobile phones should not be used by pupils on school transport. Pupils should not ask drivers and escorts to be their friends on social media. CCTV may be used to monitor behaviour on certain vehicles. Notices will be displayed to indicate this.

Mainstream - By receiving a bus pass you are committing to Welsh Government's Travel Behaviour Code and the home to school transport policy, the details of which may be found on the Vale of Glamorgan's website.

We hope that school transport is a happy experience for you. If you are not pleased about something please contact us and we will do our best to sort it out quickly.

We are continuously looking at ways to improve the service and welcome any suggestions.

Extreme weather

HAZARDOUS WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather conditions can cause major problems to the provision of home to school transport. With safety paramount, contractors will take the ultimate decision, as to whether a service will operate and the specific timings of the service in the event of it operating during adverse weather.

In order to manage this effectively, please keep yourself updated of the weather conditions at all times and ensure contact telephone numbers are up to date.

Schools will inform the Vale's contact centre of their closure and these will be quickly published on the Vale of Glamorgan website www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk Local radio normally broadcast regular updates on school closures in extremely bad weather.

parent/carer/pupil

If severe weather is anticipated and the Council has not announced the closure of school(s), the decision to operate morning journeys rests with the contractor. If a contractor operates the morning journey it should be expected that the afternoon journey will also be in operation unless weather worsens quickly or if forecasts predict worsening weather. If morning journeys are not carried out because of inclement weather conditions, contractors must inform Headteachers and the Passenger Transport Team of their decision immediately.

Where a decision is made to not operate a morning journey, operators must be mindful of the fact that conditions may improve to the extent that an afternoon journey is practicable. This is particularly important where children normally transported by school transport have been taken into school by parents. In these situations ALN or mainstream taxi pupils parents must let the contractor know that they have taken their child to school and would like them to be transported home in the afternoon. Contractors will not be expected to transport a child taken into school by a parent home if an assessment considers an afternoon journey inoperable.

Should weather conditions deteriorate during the day, Headteachers may decide to close their school early. If this is the case transport contractors will be asked to supply transport as promptly as possible. Schools closing earlier than normal are responsible for ensuring that parents of primary school and ALN pupils are available to receive their children (or have arranged for a responsible person to do so).

the escort



By working on school transport you are agreeing to abide by this Code of Practice.

Your role is very important. You are responsible for the supervision of the passengers while they are in your care and you should work in partnership with the driver as a team. The driver is in overall charge of the vehicle.

- You must have an enhanced Data and Barring service check (now DBS previously CRB) carried out by the Passenger Transport Team prior to working on transport.
- An ID badge must be worn while on duty.
- You should be suitably dressed to work with school children and have no trailing items of clothing that may get caught on something and suitable footwear should be worn.
- Passengers, parent/carers and school staff should be treated in a polite and courteous manner at all times even if they do not act in the same manner to you. If there are problems contact your contractor or school transport officer for advice. It is best not to get into arguments or express opinions.
- Confidentiality should be maintained at all times.
- A note/log book should be used to note daily occurrences.
- Ensure that pupils are safely seated and wearing their seatbelts prior to the vehicle moving off.
- The driver may need your assistance should reversing manoeuvres need to be carried out.

Passengers

ALN and vehicles 16 seats and under - You should have introduced yourself with the driver to new pupils and their parents/carers prior to the start of each academic year or prior to pupils travelling on your vehicle if they start after September. ALN - This is a good chance to find out how to best to manage the passenger if there are specific needs and discuss the details of the passenger on the transport form in your route folder. You will have information about each passenger in your route folder which contains the transport form issued by the

the escort

ALN school transport section containing information you will need to know about each pupil and any specific needs that the pupil may have. The route folder should be stored away after each journey as it contains personal information about the passengers. Please treat this information as confidential.

Car seats and booster seats should be provided according to Car seat law.

You should try to avoid touching the pupil unnecessarily and if reassurance or a prompt is required you should limit contact to the upper arm i.e. from the elbow to the shoulder. Of course a pupil must be made safe and comfortable if they are unable to do this for themselves. You must respect the dignity and independence of passengers and ensure that they travel as comfortably and safely as possible.

ALN Transport -

Is to and from the home address only unless advised otherwise by the school transport section. Do not take instructions from pupils always check with the school transport section.

Safeguarding -

Please familiarise yourself with the Safeguarding appendix at the back of this document. If you have any concerns regarding the safeguarding of a child please contact the school transport section or the school if it is urgent but keep the Passenger Transport Team informed.

Data Protection ALN only -

Please familiarise yourself with the Data Protection appendix and make sure that pupil information is stored securely after the school run.

You should check the inside of the vehicle prior to each journey, making sure that there are no unsuitable items on board, that doors can be opened, that child locks are in position to use when collecting the passengers and that suitable wheelchair equipment is available if required. Fire extinguishers and first aid kits should be checked regularly. Please check vehicles after the journey to ensure that all is in order.

ALN and mainstream taxis -

You should ensure that any bags are stored safely in the boot or secured to a spare seat with the seatbelt so as to ensure they do not cause harm in the event of an emergency stop.



You should ensure that all pupils are properly seated and fastened appropriately into their seat belt, special seat, harness and in the case of wheelchair passengers that the wheelchair is suitably restrained with the equipment as instructed in your blue folder.

- You should be able to see all passengers when you are travelling.
- You should maintain a polite and professionally detached relationship with the passengers and parent/carers. Inappropriate conversations, topics and language must be avoided at all times. Do not give passengers sweets, treats, presents or make social media contact face book passengers as you are there to look after them and this could end up getting misinterpreted at a later date.

ALN and mainstream taxis -

Do not leave other passengers unattended at any time. The parent should bring and receive the passenger from the vehicle. On arrival at school you should work in partnership with the driver who should share the handover of passengers to school staff if required. On arrival home you should be aware that a parent/carer or responsible person has received the child. If with older pupils they are allowed to let themselves into their homes, then this must be confirmed in writing by the parent to school transport section who will then inform you in writing. ALN pupils - There will be an indication on the pupils transport form if they are allowed to let themselves into their home.

On morning arrival at a pupil's home, if the pupil is not ready please wait 3 minutes. If the problem continues contact the Passenger Transport Team who will take the matter up with the parent/carer.

On afternoon arrival at a pupil's home if the parent/carer is not at home you should leave a card to say that you have called, inform your contractor or school transport immediately for advice and continue the journey. The advice would normally be to complete the route and call again to the pupil's home or to take the pupil back to school depending on the time and distance. Whilst you are continuing the route, attempts will be made to contact the parent/carer.

Do not talk to the driver about other pupils or anything inappropriate when there are other pupils in the vehicle, even if you think that they cannot understand what you are saying.

the escort

Breakdowns or delays

In the event of a breakdown or delay, you should let the contractor know as quickly as possible. Parents should be kept informed.

Accidents

In the event of an accident the emergency services should be contacted where necessary. The contractor and the Passenger Transport Team should be informed immediately of all accidents and injuries however minor even if the child seems unaffected.

Training

The contractor is responsible for ensuring that you are suitably trained and that you are aware of the needs of the pupils and how best to understand and manage them. You may periodically be required to attend relevant training provided by the council in conjunction with the school and transport provider. Training topics will depend on the service provided.

ALN – Pupil information will be in your blue folder, please contact the transport section should you require further advice.

On certain vehicles you should know how to restrain passengers and their wheelchairs correctly. You should have received training on the correct operation of the passenger lift (if applicable). You should not lift passengers. The transport section can be contacted should any manual handling issues arise. The school transport section can always help you if you are not sure of something, don't be afraid to ask.

Medication

Drivers and escorts are not permitted to give medication while on transport. Should a passenger require urgent medical assistance, they should be made to feel as comfortable as possible while the driver/escort contact the emergency services. You should take the passenger to the home, school, or closest medical place whichever is the nearest to seek help. Depending on your location the emergency advice may be to await assistance. In all circumstances the parent should be notified. For ALN pupils, the passengers transport form in the blue folder may be given to the emergency services as it will contain relevant information.



Behaviour

If a passenger misbehaves the escort should ask the driver to stop whilst calmness is regained. The police should be contacted if there is a threat to anyone on board. The Passenger Transport Team should be kept informed. Do not put yourself or anyone else at risk.

Smoking and E cigarettes

These are prohibited on school transport. Do not smoke or use E cigarettes in and around the vehicle, on or near school grounds or prior to the route commencing.

Unauthorised travel

Under no circumstances should any person not authorised by the council be allowed to travel. School transport should be a comfortable and stress free experience for the passengers. We are continuously looking at ways to improve the service and welcome any suggestions.

If a pupil absconds whilst under your care, you must seek advice immediately from the transport team.

Any concerns should be raised with the Passenger Transport Team or your contractor.

driver

By working on school transport you are agreeing to abide by this Code of Practice.

Your role is very important. You are responsible for the passengers while they are in your care and you should work in partnership with the escort (if applicable) as a team. The driver is in overall charge of the vehicle. If an escort is not required on your vehicle please make sure that you are aware of the duties required of the escort as you will be solely responsible for the pupil.

- You must have an enhanced Data and Barring service check (DBS previously CRB) carried out prior to working on transport.
- An ID badge must be worn while on duty.
- You should be suitably dressed to work with school children and have no trailing items of clothing that may get caught on something and suitable footwear should be worn.
- Passengers, parent/carers and school staff should be treated in a polite and courteous manner at all times even if they do not act in the same manner to you. If there are problems contact your contractor or school transport for advice. It is best not to get into arguments or express opinions.
- Confidentiality should be maintained at all times.
- ALN - A note/log book should be used to note daily occurrences this may prove useful at a later date.
- Pupils should be safely seated and wearing their seatbelts prior to the vehicle moving off.
- The escort (if applicable) can provide assistance should reversing manoeuvres need to be carried out.

Passengers

ALN and vehicles under 16 seats. - You should have introduced yourself with the escort if appropriate to new pupils and their parents/carers prior to the start of each academic year or prior to pupils travelling on your vehicle if they start after September. This is a good chance to find out how to best to manage the passenger if there are specific needs and discuss the details of the passenger on the transport form in your route folder.



ALN -

You will have information about each passenger in your route folder which contains the transport form provided by the Passenger Transport Team, the parent/carer will have contributed to the details and it will contain information you will need to know about each pupil and any specific needs that the pupil may have. The route folder should be stored away safely after each journey as it contains personal information about the passengers. Please treat this information as confidential.

Car seats and booster seats should be provided according to Car seat law.

You should try to avoid touching the pupil and if reassurance or a prompt is required you should limit contact to the upper arm i.e. from the elbow to the shoulder. Of course a pupil must be made safe and comfortable if they are unable to do this for themselves. You must respect the dignity and independence of passengers and ensure that they travel as comfortably and safely as possible.

ALN Transport is to and from the home address only unless advised otherwise by the school transport section. Do not take instructions from pupils always check with the school transport section.

Safeguarding -

Please familiarise yourself with the Safeguarding appendix a the back of this document. If you have any concerns regarding the safeguarding of a child please contact the school transport section or the school if it is urgent but keep the Passenger Transport Team informed.

You must respect the dignity and independence of passengers and ensure that they travel as comfortably and safely as possible.

Data Protection ALN only –

Please familiarise yourself with the Data Protection appendix and make sure that pupil information is stored securely after the school run.

If there is no escort you should check the inside of the vehicle prior to each journey, making sure that there are no unsuitable items on board and that doors can be opened.

driver

ALN and Primary -

Ensure that child locks are in position to use when collecting the passengers and that suitable wheelchair equipment is available if required. Fire extinguishers if applicable and first aid kits should be checked regularly. Please check vehicles after the journey to ensure that all is in order.

ALN and vehicles less than 16 seats -

You should ensure that any bags are stored safely in the boot or secured to a spare seat with the seatbelt so as to ensure they do not cause harm in the event of an emergency stop.

You should ensure that all pupils are properly seated and fastened appropriately into their seat belt, special seat, harness and in the case of wheelchair passengers that the wheelchair is suitably restrained with the equipment as instructed in your blue folder.

You or the escort if applicable should be able to see all passengers when you are travelling.

You should maintain a polite and professionally detached relationship with the passengers and parent/carers. Inappropriate conversations, topics and language must be avoided at all times. Do not give passengers sweets, treats, presents or make social media contact with passengers as you are there to transport them and this could end up getting misinterpreted at a later date.

ALN and mainstream taxis -

Do not leave other passengers unattended at any time. The parent/carer should bring and receive the passenger from the vehicle. On arrival at school you should work in partnership with the escort who should share the handover of passengers to school staff if required. On arrival home you should be aware that a parent/carer or responsible person has received the child. If with older pupils they are allowed to let themselves into their homes, then this must be confirmed in writing by the parent to school transport section who will then inform you in writing.

ALN pupils - There will be an indication on the pupils transport form if they are allowed to let themselves into their home.

On morning arrival at a pupil's home, if the pupil is not ready please wait 3 minutes. If the problem continues contact the transport section who will take the matter up with the parent/carer.



On afternoon arrival at a pupil's home and the parent/carer is not at home you should leave a card to say that you have called, inform your contractor or school transport immediately for advice and continue the journey. The advice would normally be to complete the route and call again to the pupil's home or to take the pupil back to school depending on the time and distance. Whilst you are continuing the route, attempts will be made to contact the parent/carer.

Do not talk to the escort about other pupils or anything inappropriate when there are other pupils in the vehicle, even if you think that they cannot understand what you are saying.

Breakdowns or delays

In the event of a breakdown or delay, you should let the contractor know as quickly as possible. Parents should be kept informed.

Accidents

In the event of an accident the emergency services should be contacted where necessary. The contractor and the Passenger Transport Team should be informed immediately of all accidents and injuries however minor even if the child seems unaffected.

Training

The contractor is responsible for ensuring that you are suitably trained and that you are aware of the needs of the pupils and how best to understand and manage them. You may periodically be required to attend relevant training provided by the council in conjunction with the school and transport provider. Training topics will depend on the service provided.

ALN –

Pupil information will be in your blue folder, please contact the transport section should you require further advice.

ALN -

On certain vehicles you should know how to use the correct equipment to tie down wheelchairs and restrain passengers correctly. You should have received training on the correct operation of the passenger lift (if applicable) organised by your

driver

contractor. You should not lift passengers. The transport section can be contacted should any manual handling issues arise. The school transport section can always help you if you are not sure of something, don't be afraid to ask.

Medication

Drivers and escorts are not permitted to give medication while on transport. Should a passenger require urgent medical assistance, they should be made to feel as comfortable as possible while the driver/escort contact the emergency services. You should take the passenger to the home, school, or closest medical place whichever is the nearest to seek help. Depending on your location the emergency advice may be to await assistance. In all circumstances the parent should be notified. For ALN pupils, the passengers transport form in the blue folder may be given to the emergency services as it will contain relevant information.

Behaviour

If a passenger misbehaves the escort should ask the driver to stop whilst calmness is regained. The police should be contacted if necessary. The Passenger Transport Team should be kept informed. Do not put yourself or anyone else at risk.

Smoking and E cigarettes

These are prohibited on school transport. Do not smoke or use E cigarettes in and around the vehicle, on or near school grounds or prior to the route commencing.

Unauthorised travel

Under no circumstances should any person not authorised by the council be allowed to travel.

School transport should be a comfortable and stress free experience for the passengers. We are continuously looking at ways to improve the service and welcome any suggestions.

If a pupil absconds whilst under your care, you must seek advice immediately from the transport team.

Any concerns should be raised with the Passenger Transport Team or your contractor.



Vehicles

All vehicles used in the performance of the service are licensed in all respects, insured, equipped, and maintained in a thoroughly safe and roadworthy condition in accordance with Department of Transport Regulations, manufacturers' recommendations and the requirements of the Council. All vehicles should be subject to checks prior to commencing each journey including the inside of the vehicle.

All vehicles used will be kept clean to a high standard inside and out. They shall be comfortable, properly heated and ventilated to ensure the comfort of the pupils.

Communications systems

A mobile phone must be carried on vehicles at all times for communication and emergency situations.

contractor



As a contractor you are responsible for the operation of your contract and the safe carriage of the passengers. You must be aware of your contract terms and conditions and all of the contents of this Code of Practice. Failure to comply may result in the termination of the contract or could lead to prosecution in some cases. By working on Home to School Transport, you, your drivers and escorts are agreeing to abide by this Code of Practice and you should make sure that your drivers and escorts are aware of this.

You must ensure that risk assessments are carried out prior to the start of the contract and as necessary whenever there is a change to the route. You must be aware of the route that the drivers are taking. You should report any problems regarding routing/operational matters, e.g. access problems, seating/equipment as soon as is practicable, to the Passenger Transport Team. Each school will have a Traffic Management policy of which you should be familiar with and ensure that your drivers are aware of the dropping off and picking up procedure at school.

If there is an inability to provide a service please contact the Passenger Transport Team immediately.

The Passenger Transport Team must be provided with all information for each route i.e. driver, badge number and expiry date (if applicable) or driving licence and CPC, vehicle details, plate number and expiry date, public liability insurance, disc, LOLER certificates etc. where applicable prior to the commencement of the contract. You must inform the Passenger Transport Team of any changes as they occur.

ALN and mainstream taxis -

Confirmation of these changes or declaration of no change must be made on the relevant document provided by the council when submitting your monthly invoices. It is your responsibility to inform us of any changes and payment of your invoice will be delayed if the declaration has not been signed and submitted with the invoice.

The vehicle

All vehicles used in the performance of the service are licensed in all respects, insured, equipped, and maintained in a thoroughly safe and roadworthy condition in accordance with Department of Transport Regulations, manufacturers' recommendations and the requirements of the Council. All vehicles should be subject to checks prior to commencing each journey including the inside of the vehicle.

All vehicles used will be kept clean to a high standard inside and out. They shall be comfortable, properly heated and ventilated to ensure the comfort of the pupils.

You must ensure that your staffs have enhanced DBS checks carried out by the Passenger Transport Team, wear a Vale of Glamorgan ID badge (issued by the council) and are fully trained to carry out their duties and attend any training provided by the council.

ALN You will need to ensure that all staff have received training for basic lifesaving skills (please discuss this with the transport team to ensure an approved trainer is used).

ALN -

All vehicles transporting passengers in wheelchairs/buggies will be fitted with an appropriate tracking system on which to fix wheelchair and seatbelt restraints in accordance with the Department of Transport Code of Practice "The safety of passengers in wheelchairs on buses (publication VSE 87/1)". All wheelchairs will have a plastic TAG attached indicating the minimum type of restraints to be used (This Information will also be contained in the blue folder). If there is no TAG the wheelchair or details are not contained in the blue folder the wheelchair should not be transported. All staff must be trained in the safe transportation of wheelchairs prior to working on these vehicles. All vehicles transporting passengers in wheelchairs will be fitted with a mechanical tail lift or the use of a gradient ramp (which should not exceed 1 in 12) may be considered necessary but only after discussions with the council. Your staff should have received training for the operation of the lift and the regular LOLER checks should be carried out.

All seats will be fitted with appropriate seat belts in accordance with the conditions of contract and current seat belt legislation.



contractor

It is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that pupils travel in the correct car seats, booster seats or booster cushions in accordance with current legislation. Please keep up to date with current legislation which can be found on www.gov.uk

First aid kits –

All school transport vehicles should be equipped with a first Aid kit.

Fire extinguisher -

Two fire extinguishers are required for minibuses to be positioned at the front and rear of the vehicle. These shall be fitted in an easily accessible position in accordance with The Road Vehicles (Constructions and Use) Regulations 1996 and BS5423 all PCV's/PSV's must carry extinguishers marked with the British Standard Institute No. BS5423 or EN3.1 They must have a minimum test rating of 8A or 21B and contain either water or foam.

Fire extinguishers should only be used to make an emergency access route to the doors; everyone should then keep well away from the vehicle.

Adequate safe storage -

This refers to safe storage for passenger items such as musical and sporting equipment. This should be provided and used to reduce the impact, in the event of road traffic collisions, of the movement of unsecured objects in the cabin.

Daily vehicle defect check -

These are the checks that are mandatory and should be undertaken before the vehicle begins its designated route every day. These checks should include tyres, wipers, lights, fluids (brake, oil, water, windscreen wash), cleanliness, presence of first aid kit, fire extinguisher, operator licence number and route number as well as listing any new interior and exterior damage.

Communications systems -

A mobile phone must be carried on vehicles at all times for communication and emergency situations.

Distinctive yellow and black signs are required to be displayed to the front and rear of all vehicles with more than eight seats transporting children to and from school, in accordance with the Road Vehicles Lighting (Amendment) Regulations 1994. These signs are to be plainly visible to other road users.



ALN -

The transport forms for each child issued by the transport team must be available and drivers and escorts must be familiar with the contents, they carry important information about each child. These forms must be stored safely when school routes are not in operation. At the end of the contract they must be destroyed as confidential waste or they may be returned to the transport section for safe disposal.

Home pick ups -

Vehicles should wait no longer than three minutes for a child to be ready in the mornings.

At the end of the day if a parent is not at home then a note should be left with a contact number and the journey continued. The contractor or the Transport team should be notified and they will try to make contact with the parent. It may be necessary to return to school or return to the home after the run is complete.

Vehicles must arrive no earlier than *10 minutes* before school commences unless prior arrangement with the Passenger Transport Team and School has been made.

Vehicles must be in place at least five minutes before the end of the school day to receive pupils.

Prior to the commencement of the school year, all parents will be notified by letter giving information of the contractual arrangements for their child's travel to school and an approximate pick up time.

Home pick ups -

It is indicated on the letter to parents that these times are approximate and that the driver will give a more accurate time once the route has commenced. Contractors must ensure that all drivers and escorts introduce themselves to parents prior to the commencement of the school term. This will ensure parents familiarise themselves and their child with drivers/escorts and allay any anxieties that they may have with regard to their children's travel arrangements to school.

Contractors must assign regular staff to specific routes as part of their conditions of contract to avoid undue distress to passengers and parents. This is essential for continuity purposes for parents, children and schools, particularly where specific transportation needs are identified and are in place for a particular child.

contractor

Passengers

Passengers shall be transported between designated pick-up points at home and school, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed with the Passenger Transport Team.

ALN and primary school transport -

Each passenger should be passed over to a member of school staff in the morning and a parent/carer in the afternoon, the parent/carer should bring and collect the child from the vehicle to avoid other passengers being left unattended. The escort/driver should never leave the vehicle unattended at any time with other children on board.

Passengers should not be transferred from one vehicle to another en route except in the case of a breakdown or other emergency.

All passengers must be provided with their own individual seat on the vehicle and may not 'double up' and place two children on an adult seat or three children on two adult seats. The contractor shall also ensure that the vehicle does not carry more passengers than it is licensed for.

Seat belts must be fitted on all vehicles.

Bus passes should be carried at all times as there is a *no pass no travel* scheme in place.

Accidents

In the event of an accident the emergency services should be contacted where necessary. The contractor and Passenger Transport Team should be informed immediately. All accidents and injuries however minor must be reported even if all seems to be OK.

Breakdowns or delays

In the event of a breakdown or delay, drivers should let their contractor know as quickly as possible who will in turn inform the Passenger Transport Team. Parents should be kept informed.

In the event of a vehicle breakdown, accident or anything else that prevents a journey being completed, all reasonable precautions should be taken to ensure the well being of passengers. Under no circumstances must the passengers



be left alone and, where possible, they should remain in the vehicle. If it is deemed unsafe to do so, then they should be escorted to a place of safety. The driver should alert the Passenger Transport Team or the Contractor immediately of any such occurrence. The utmost care should be taken to minimise distress or discomfort in the event of a breakdown.

If there is an inability to provide a service the Passenger Transport Team should be notified immediately in order to work in partnership to find a solution.

Hazardous weather

In the case of bad weather when roads may be particularly bad and hazardous, contractors should decide whether or not to operate their vehicle(s). Any decision should be made with the safety of passengers in mind. Contractors must alert the Passenger Transport Team and inform parents as soon as possible when it has been decided not to operate. In severe weather, especially if forecasts predict worsening weather conditions, contractors are advised not to run.

Pupil behaviour

If a passenger misbehaves the driver should stop whilst calmness is regained. The police should be contacted if there is a threat to anyone on board. The transport section should be kept informed. There is a protocol for dealing with behaviour. You should ensure that drivers/escorts do not put themselves or anyone else at risk.

Medical issues

Drivers and escorts are not permitted to give medication while on transport. Should a passenger require urgent medical assistance, they should be made to feel as comfortable as possible while the driver/escort contact the emergency services. The passenger should be taken to the home, school, or nearest medical place whichever is the nearest to seek help. Depending on your location the emergency advice may be to await assistance. In all circumstances the parent should be notified. ALN - The passengers transport form may be given to the emergency services as it will contain relevant information.

Training

contractor

Contractors, drivers and escorts must be available to attend the annual training for drivers and escorts. New starters should receive guidance and training from their contractor. **Wheelchair transport** - Wheelchair training must be completed prior to working on school transport. Contractors must provide training on the correct operation of the passenger lift (if applicable). Passengers should not be lifted or carried. The transport section can be contacted should any manual handling issues arise.

Smoking and E cigarettes

These are prohibited on school transport. Do not smoke or use E cigarettes in and around the vehicle, on or near school grounds or prior to the route commencing.

Carriage of Unauthorised Passengers

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

Extreme weather

HAZARDOUS WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather conditions can cause major problems to the provision of home to school transport. With safety paramount, contractors will take the ultimate decision, as to whether a service will operate and the specific timings of the service in the event of it operating during adverse weather.

In order to manage this effectively, please keep yourself updated of the weather conditions at all times and ensure contact telephone numbers are up to date.

Schools will inform the Vale's contact centre of their closure and these will be quickly published on the Vale of Glamorgan website **www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk** Local radio normally broadcast regular updates on school closures in extremely bad weather.

If severe weather is anticipated and the Council has not announced the closure of school(s), the decision to operate morning journeys rests with the contractor. If a contractor operates the morning journey it should be expected that the afternoon journey will also be in operation unless





weather worsens quickly or if forecasts predict worsening weather. If morning journeys are not carried out because of inclement weather conditions, contractors must inform Headteachers and the Passenger Transport Team of their decision immediately.

Where a decision is made to not operate a morning journey, operators must be mindful of the fact that conditions may improve to the extent that an afternoon journey is practicable. This is particularly important where children normally transported by school transport have been taken into school by parents. In these situations ALN or mainstream taxi pupils parents must let the contractor know that they have taken their child to school and would like them to be transported home in the afternoon. Contractors will not be expected to transport a child taken into school by a parent home if an assessment considers an afternoon journey inoperable.

Should weather conditions deteriorate during the day, Headteachers may decide to close their school early. If this is the case transport contractors will be asked to supply transport as promptly as possible. Schools closing earlier than normal are responsible for ensuring that parents of primary school and Additional Learning Needs pupils are available to receive their children (or have arranged for a responsible adult to do so).

Appendix

Safeguarding

The safeguarding of children is everybody's responsibility. Children must be protected from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and preventing their development.

You have a very important role working on school transport as you are in a position to observe things that others do not see. If you see or are aware of anything concerning regarding the wellbeing of a child in your care, you have a duty to report it. You can tell a member of staff at school and/or report it to the Passenger Transport Team at the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Your information may be another piece in a jig saw which will add to the bigger picture of safeguarding information that may have been provided by other parties or depending on the information it may be acted upon immediately.

Make sure you log any small niggling concerns in your log book as they may become part of a bigger issue in the future.

We all have a duty to protect children.

Thank you.