

Protocol for loading/ unloading of passenger transport vehicles - home to school transport wef June 2020

SEN transport

Assumes

- general direction to parents re child must not travel if showing any symptoms/ follow isolation of whole household for 14 days if anyone in household.
- All to be reviewed wef Sept 2020 or earlier if guidance requires it.

1. Social distancing:

- 1.1. Seats alongside or immediately to rear of driver to be out of use.
- 1.2. Passenger Assistant will take up one of the available seats where a Passenger Assistant is required.
- 1.3. Occupation of available seats constrained, with one passenger in each row of seats, staggered nearside/offside, except passengers from same household allowed to sit together. Consequential capacity will depend on exact layout of the seats on the vehicle, but typical examples below:

(Typical equivalent seating if all seats used) ^ alongside driver * 2 behind driver	Theoretical seating capacity of vehicle net of seats out of use	Maximum allowable seat occupancy wef June 2020
4 seat saloon (1^+3*)	1 (ie 0+1)	1 passenger, seated rear nearside
6 seat people carrier (1^ +3*+2)	3 (ie 0+1+2)	2 passengers from separate households, 1 seated in middle row nearside and 1 in rear offside 3 passengers from same household, 1 seated in middle row nearside and 2 in rear.
8 seat minibus (2^+3*+3)	2 or 4 (ie0+1+1or3)	2 passengers from separate households, 1 seated in middle row nearside and 1 in rear offside 4 passengers from same household, 1 seated in middle row nearside and 3 in rear.
10 seat minibus (2^+2*+3+3)	2 or 4 (0+0+1+1 or 3)	2 passengers from separate households, 1 seated in penultimate row nearside and 1 in rear offside 4 passengers from same household, 1 seated in middle row nearside and 3 in rear.
14 seat minibus (2^+2*+2+3+3)	3 or 5 (ie0+0+1+1+1or3)	3 passengers from separate households, 1 seated in first usable nearside, then others 1 per row staggered offside / nearside 5 passengers if 4 from same household seat in rear row and penultimate row, 3 in rear + 1 in staggered seat in penultimate row.
16 seat minibus (0^+3*+3+3+3+4)	5 (0+1+1+1+1+1) or more if multiple children in family groups; depends on number in groups etc)	5 passengers from separate households, 1 seated in first usable nearside, then others 1 per row staggered offside / nearside Increased with various household group seating permutations

Coaches and buses	Varies	Typically no more than 25% seats usable, 1 per row, with front row of coaches seated only on nearside to preserve separation from driver.
-------------------	--------	---

NOTE – achieving distancing in line with these standards will mean increasing the size of the vehicle, or where that is not possible, splitting the children across separate runs – either by additional runs with the same vehicle (ie staggered times of arrival at and departure from schools), OR additional vehicles operating. Costs will increase for each of these options, in the order listed.

2. Loading (general protocols):

Boarding when travelling to school: Each passenger to sit at **rearmost** available seat unless specifically agreed otherwise due to reasons of child welfare/ risk assessment. Parent/ Carer to assist with loading their child onto the vehicle where required (ie where a child cannot do so independently).

Boarding at school: every effort should be made to load passengers in reverse of drop off order (ie last drop off on first, etc) in order to maintain social distancing. School staff from appropriate pod/ bubble to assist with loading at school .

Where passengers pass the driver’s seat to board the vehicle, drivers must turn off the engine and alight from the vehicle (using the driver’s door if available) before the passengers board.

Driver to verbally allow passengers on 1 by 1 as distancing allows. Support to be provided by school staff at school end of journey – AM & PM.

3. Seatbelts, car seats, securing wheelchairs etc

To avoid close proximity between driver and children, parents to be asked to encourage their children to board the vehicle independently, so far as possible. Where assistance is required (likely to be youngest children), the parent/ responsible adult should be encouraged to assist when boarding at home. When boarding at the school, the school staff in the “bubble” may be able to assist as required. However, where applicable the legal responsibility of drivers to ensure worn properly is unchanged; but normally a visual check should be sufficient.

Where risk assessment deems Driver or Passenger Assistant support eg in securing a wheelchair unavoidable, this will follow the risk assessment instructions with appropriate PPE used.

4. Unloading:

Alight in reverse order of boarding, preserving distance.

Where passengers pass the driver’s seat to alight from the vehicle, drivers must turn off the engine and alight from the vehicle (using the driver’s door if available) before the passengers alight.

Signs and verbal instruction to pupils on safe distancing where pupils are able to independently depart the vehicle.

5. Ventilation

Ventilate vehicle with opened windows wherever possible (but be aware of need to avoid risk of children leaning out of windows etc).

Operator extractor systems where available.

Do not set to recirculate air.

6. Cleaning:

Cleaning regime (please see separate cleaning guidance) to be carried out before and after each trip. (Staff doing this will need appropriate PPE (disposable gloves, apron???)

7. PPE - face coverings

- 7.1. Driver is permitted to wear a face covering. Please note this is not mandatory under current government guidance but is encouraged.
- 7.2. Passengers - **It is noted that for SEN pupils, wearing a face covering is more challenging and may not be possible.** However, the general guidance is as follows:
 - 7.2.1. Secondary school age children encouraged but not required to wear cloth face covering unless specific reason makes that inappropriate.
 - 7.2.2. Primary school children permitted to wear face covering where appropriate.

8. PPE - other

- 8.1. Driver : no other required unless specified under a risk assessment OR, where required to assist with seat belts (disposable gloves required). PPE for vehicle cleaning is detailed in the cleaning guide.

9. Good practice personal care

- 9.1. Children to wash hands with soap and water immediately before and after each journey.
- 9.2. Driver to wash hands with soap and water or alcohol sanitiser (>70% alcohol) before and after each journey.
- 9.3. Hand sanitising gel can be provided on the vehicle for those who wish to use it in addition to hand washing.
- 9.4. Coughs/sneezes – children/parents to be given guidance on good management of coughs and sneezes. Passengers to bring own tissues which should be disposed of responsibly (ie in nearest bin – they must not be left on buses).
- 9.5. Where pupils needs mean there are additional risks around personal care or where pupils display behaviours which pose additional risks (eg spitting), a risk assessment must take place to identify additional measures and PPE.

10. Personal belongings

Children to minimise the transport of bags. All bags must be stowed under the seats, not on seats.

11. Carriage of passengers with symptoms

Any child, young person or other learner who starts displaying coronavirus symptoms while at their setting should be collected by a member of their family or household. In exceptional circumstances, where this is not possible, and where a symptomatic child or young person or other passenger needs to be transported to their home, you should do the following:

- If possible use a vehicle with a full height partition screen between the driver and the passenger
- the driver and passenger should maintain a distance of 2 metres from each other
- the driver should use PPE = face mask (and gloves?)

- the passenger should wear a face mask if they are old enough and able to do so

12. Use of consistent driver

The same Driver and Passenger Assistant should be used for the operation of the contract unless exceptional operational circumstances make that impossible on a given occasion. Where there is an unavoidable need for a change of staff, Transport Commissioning and school/ parent/ carers must be informed.