



From mountain to sea

Home-to-School Transport

Information for Primary and Secondary Pupils
and Parents/Carers

June 2018



General Information

This booklet is intended to provide pupils and parents/carers with useful background information relating to the provision of home-to-school transport services provided by Aberdeenshire Council.

It also sets out how we expect pupils to behave when travelling to and from school and remind parents/carers of ways in which they can help their children's journey safer and more pleasant.

Further details of various aspects of school transport provision are available on the Council's website:

www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk

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**PING!
NEW MESSAGE.
YOU GET OFF
THE BUS.
YOU STEP ONTO
THE ROAD.
WILL YOU SEE
THE CAR?**

**!
BUS
STOP**

1 SECOND 1 LIFE.CO.UK

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ENERGY**

Information for Pupils and Parents/Carers

Each school day, approximately 12,000 pupils are transported to and from school. In total, we use around 100 transport operators, utilising vehicles of all sizes, to provide the services on a mix of: dedicated school transport services; combined registered local bus/school transport services; and through the purchase of season tickets for use on registered local bus services. Of these pupils, around 11,000 travel free, with the remainder paying for a place on a 'privilege' basis.

All school transport operators are subject to detailed Terms and Conditions of Contract, covering a wide range of requirements relating to the safe and legal operation of home-to-school transport services.

One requirement is that any driver operating a school contract must be an Aberdeenshire Council Approved School Transport Driver. To apply for an Approved School Transport Driver I.D. Badge, all school transport drivers are subject to a Disclosure Scotland check at an enhanced level and are required to obtain membership to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme. Once approved, all drivers are issued with and must display at all times their Approved School Transport Driver I.D. Badge.

Operators are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure the security, safety, dignity and comfort of all pupils in their care. In the case of buses, vehicles used for the provision of school transport services are subject to stringent inspections by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA). Licensed Taxis and Private Hire Cars are tested twice yearly by Council vehicle examiners.

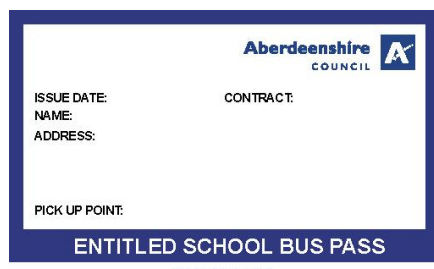
Liquidated Damages in the form of operational and financial penalties are levied, in line with the Council's Contract Performance Management System, against contractors who fail to adhere to the Terms and Conditions of Contract.

In addition, all operators and drivers are issued with the 'Guidance Notes for School Transport Drivers' booklet, which explains how they should perform their duties, including the procedures that should be followed in emergency situations.

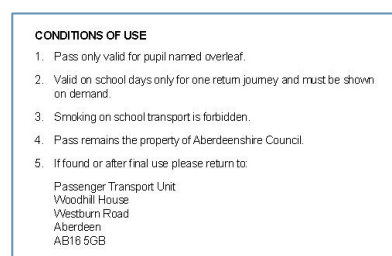
Entitlement to Free Home-to-School Transport

In order to qualify for free Home-to-School Transport, Primary school pupils must reside more than 2 miles from and attend their zoned school whilst Secondary school pupils must reside more than 3 miles from and attend their zoned school.

These distances are the shortest available route from the pupil's house to the school gate and can take into account main roads (including dual carriageways), tracks and paths. Application forms for free transport, Form PTU100, can be obtained from your school.



The front of the Entitled School Bus Pass is a white rectangular card with a blue border. At the top right, it features the Aberdeenshire Council logo, which includes the text 'Aberdeenshire COUNCIL' and a stylized 'A' in a blue square. Below the logo, there are two columns of text: 'ISSUE DATE:' and 'CONTRACT:' on the left, and 'NAME:' and 'ADDRESS:' on the right. At the bottom left, there is a field for 'PICK UP POINT:'. At the bottom center, the text 'ENTITLED SCHOOL BUS PASS' is printed in blue. At the very bottom, in small letters, it says 'FOR CONDITIONS SEE OVER'.



The rear of the Entitled School Bus Pass is a white rectangular card with a blue border. At the top, it is titled 'CONDITIONS OF USE'. Below the title, there is a numbered list of five conditions: 1. Pass only valid for pupil named overleaf. 2. Valid on school days only for one return journey and must be shown on demand. 3. Smoking on school transport is forbidden. 4. Pass remains the property of Aberdeenshire Council. 5. If found or after final use please return to: Passenger Transport Unit, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB.

Example of front and rear of the Entitled School Bus Pass

Getting to/from the Pick-up/Drop-off Point (PUDO)

Parents/carers are solely responsible for conveying their child(ren) to/from the designated PUDO.

Parents/carers should note that drivers are not required to help children cross roads and parents/carers should advise their child(ren) accordingly.

Any parent/carer who has concerns over the safety of the walk route to their child's PUDO or, alternatively, the safety of the PUDO itself, may bring the matter to the Passenger Transport Unit who will instigate an appropriate safety assessment. Parents/carers should, however, be aware that in determining the safety of the walk route and/or PUDO, it is presumed that the child is accompanied by a responsible adult.

Privilege Seats and Fare Paying Buses

Transport provision is also made available for pupils who are not entitled to free transport.

In the case of pupils who are attending their zoned school, privilege transport is provided on dedicated school transport services, subject to spare seating capacity, at a fixed annual charge. For further information and an application form, see the 'Privilege School Transport for In-Zone Pupils' booklet, available on the Council website.

Alternatively, a copy can be requested via the school or by emailing: school.transport@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

In the case of pupils who are not attending their zoned school, travel may be provided on dedicated school transport services, subject to spare seating capacity. However, there is no guarantee that transport will be available for the duration of the school year.

For further information and an application form, see the 'Privilege School Transport for Out-of-Zone Pupils' booklet, available on the Council website.

A copy can be also be requested via the school or by emailing: school.transport@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

A small number of school transport services also operate as local bus services, which are open to the general public. On these services, pupils not entitled to free transport may purchase single, return or 10-journey tickets on the bus.

Where fare paying privilege transport is provided, pupils in receipt of the School Clothing Grant receive a 50% discount on the annual charge. Discounts are also available for families who have 3 or more children attending and travelling to the same zoned school.

Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

ISSUE DATE: _____ CONTRACT: _____
 NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____

PICK UP POINT: _____

SCHOOL BUS PRIVILEGE PASS

FOR CREDIT ONLY SEE OVER

Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

ISSUE DATE: _____ CONTRACT: _____
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SCHOOL BUS PRIVILEGE PASS

FOR CREDIT ONLY SEE OVER

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Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

ISSUE DATE: _____ CONTRACT: _____
NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

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SCHOOL BUS PRIVILEGE PASS

FOR CONDITIONS SEE OVER

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ISSUE DATE: _____ CONTRACT: _____
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ADDRESS: _____

PICK UP POINT: _____

SCHOOL BUS PRIVILEGE PASS

FOR CONDITIONS SEE OVER

CONDITIONS OF USE

This pass is only valid on the contract indicated, during the school year for which it was issued. The pass entitles the holder to one return journey per school day at school opening and closing times.

Bad behaviour may result in removal of the pass.

This pass must be shown to the driver when boarding the bus, or to any bus inspectors, or any official of the Passenger Transport Unit. Any passenger unable to produce his/her pass may not be permitted to travel.

This pass remains the property of Aberdeenshire Council, and may be replaced at a small charge if lost, damaged or defaced.

The pass is non-transferable and will be forfeited if used by any person other than the one to whom it was issued.

Examples of the School Bus Privilege Pass (fronts and rear).

Quality of Service

All contractors and staff must adhere to all legislative requirements regarding the maintenance and operation of school transport services.

The Council monitors various aspects of school transport provision, in particular, service reliability and adherence to the contract specification, including the size and type of the vehicle(s) allocated to the service. In addition, Council staff monitor service performance in terms of: the cleanliness of the vehicle; whether the vehicle is heated and/or suffering from excessive condensation; the condition of the interior and seats; and, the appearance and attire of the driver.

Safety of Pupils on School Transport Services

The Council is responsible for the general safety and welfare of all pupils being conveyed on school transport services and whilst boarding/alighting the school transport vehicle.

Only staff within the Council's Passenger Transport Unit are authorised to allocate pupils to vehicles. Drivers are issued with pupil manifests detailing the pupils who are allocated to their vehicles along with their respective PUDOs.

A seat is provided for every child who has been authorised to travel. It is very important that pupils travel on the vehicle to which they have been allocated. Where more than one vehicle is operating from your area to your child's school, ensure your child is fully aware of which vehicle to board.



**Seatbelts
must be worn**

All vehicles operating school transport contracts are provided with seat belts or other appropriate passenger restraints.

Seat belts are provided for the safety of the pupils and must be worn for the duration of their journey to and from school.

It is important that pupils follow the instructions of the drivers. In particular, pupils should remain seated with their seat belt fastened at all times during the journey and at no time should they touch or attempt to open or close the doors or emergency exits of the vehicle.

All school transport vehicles carry a mobile phone or equivalent communication device for emergency use.

Guidelines for Pupils

There are a number of rules that should be followed whilst travelling on school transport:

- Always arrive at the PUDO on time. Make sure you have your school transport pass with you and always show it to the driver (unless you pay your fare on the vehicle).
 - If the transport is late, you should wait up to 20 minutes before either returning home or making your own way to school. Your parent/carer should advise you of the appropriate course of action in such circumstances.
 - Don't play about near the road while waiting for your transport. Wait on the pavement or, if one is not available, stand well back from the road.
 - Don't try to get on or off the vehicle until it has stopped.
 - Don't push or rush to the door once the vehicle has stopped.
 - Don't attempt to open or close the doors of the vehicle yourself. Wait for the driver to do so.
 - Keep your school transport pass in good condition. If it is lost or damaged in any way, you will have to pay for a new one.
 - Find a seat quickly and quietly, without pushing.
 - Seat belts must be worn at all times during the journey to/from school. This is a legal requirement.
 - Listen to the driver and do as he or she says.
 - You should remain in your seat at all times during the journey.
 - Don't smoke or vape on the bus.
 - Don't leave litter on the bus.
 - Have consideration for other passengers and treat the vehicle with respect.
 - Take care of your personal belongings. Do not block the passageway or emergency exits and ensure that personal belongings do not become caught on the door when alighting the vehicle.
 - On buses, don't ring the bell unless you want to get off the vehicle.
 - When you are alighting the vehicle, make sure that younger pupils are clear of the vehicle.
 - Don't cross the road until the vehicle has moved away. You must ensure that you can see clearly in both directions before you cross.
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- You should behave appropriately at all times. It is an offence for anyone to misbehave on a school transport vehicle or to do anything that would put the safety of other passengers or the driver at risk. If you make a nuisance of yourself or cause any damage on the vehicle, you may be precluded from using the school transport service.
- Normal disciplinary sanctions that would be incurred if misbehaving on school premises will be taken against any pupil caught misbehaving or acting in an unacceptable manner on school transport services.
- Please note that CCTV systems are routinely used on school transport services. Video footage of pupils behaving in a manner that is deemed to put at risk their own safety, the safety of other passengers, the driver or other road users, or indeed in any other inappropriate manner, will be forwarded to the school. In more serious cases, footage may be forwarded to Police Scotland to take action.

Guidelines for Parents/Carers

The following guidelines should be followed to assist your child:

- Ensure your child arrives safely at the PUDO, in good time and, where appropriate, that they are looked after until the transport arrives.
 - If the transport fails to arrive on time, pupils should wait 20 minutes before either returning home or making their own way to school, accompanied if necessary. Make sure your child knows what to do if the transport is late, or does not turn up.
 - Ensure your child carries their school transport pass and that it is in good condition (unless they pay on the vehicle, in which case you should ensure they have the correct money to travel to and from the school).
 - A charge is made for the replacement of a damaged or lost school transport pass. Passes are durable so, if looked after properly, this should not be an issue. Entitled passes are not routinely renewed annually and, therefore, should be retained over the summer holidays. Privilege passes are renewed annually.
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- Where necessary, ensure that your child is met when the vehicle returns from school. In the case of younger children, they often forget road safety when they alight the vehicle.
 - Should your child be unaccompanied between home and the PUDO, make sure that he/she knows and follows the safest route and uses the safest crossing places.
 - Remember that you, as parent/carer, are responsible for the child's safety and well-being prior to boarding and after alighting the school transport vehicle.
 - Make sure that your child understands that he/she must behave properly both in and out of school. It is an offence to misbehave on school transport vehicles or do anything that would put the safety of other passenger or the driver at risk. You and your child may also be liable for any vandalism, soiling or damage to the vehicle caused by your child.
 - Teach your child all the safety rules. Remind them that playing about at PUDOs and on vehicles can cause serious accidents and injuries. Make sure your child does not wear clothing that could be dangerous (e.g. hanging belts or bags with loose straps) and that backpacks or rucksacks are carried and not worn on the vehicle. Make sure they understand the pupil guidelines set out in this booklet.
 - Normal disciplinary sanctions that would be incurred whilst misbehaving on school premises will be taken against any pupil caught misbehaving on school transport services.
 - CCTV systems are routinely used on school transport services. If a pupil behaves in a manner that is deemed to put their own safety, the safety of other passengers, the driver or other road users at risk, or indeed if they behave in any other inappropriate manner, the school request the video footage from the relevant transport operator to identify the culprit(s) so that the appropriate action can be taken. In more serious cases, footage may be forwarded to Police Scotland to take action.
 - Notify the Council's Passenger Transport Unit or your school of any changes in circumstances. In particular, if your child no longer requires his/her school transport pass, please return it to your child's school.
 - If you have any concerns about school transport, please let us know. Contact details are given at the end of this booklet.
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Winter Weather Operation

During periods of adverse weather, some or all home-to-school transport services may not operate or, alternatively, operate a curtailed service, depending upon local road conditions.

Decisions to cancel or amend school transport services are taken in the interests of the safety and welfare of the pupils, school transport drivers and other road users. These decisions are taken by the operators in liaison with schools, as parties most aware of local road conditions.

Information is provided to parents/carers by means of the Council's website (search for School Status and Transport Notification), local radio stations and a dedicated School Information telephone line (telephone 0870 054 4599 and enter the school's individual pin number).

For updates during periods of adverse weather, parents/carers are recommended to subscribe for email alerts or to regularly check the information line.

Further information is available on the Council's website (search for School Transport Adverse Weather).

Feeder Transport Services

In some areas, pupils are required to take connecting transport to/from a main school transport service, in which case the Council ensures that the point of pupil transfer is safe and appropriate and that both vehicles are situated on the same side of the road to avoid pupils unnecessarily crossing roads.

Operators are advised that in no circumstances should pupils be permitted to leave a vehicle until the connecting vehicle has arrived. Should a connecting vehicle fail to turn up, operators are advised that the pupils concerned be transported directly to home/school or that alternative arrangements are made in liaison with the other operating company.

Our Commitment

For our part, Aberdeenshire Council are committed to providing a school transport service that meets the requirements of pupils, parents/carers and schools.

We will work in partnership with all parties concerned to ensure that the school transport services are operated in a safe and efficient manner. We will assist contractors in identifying pupils who damage or deface vehicles and support any reasonable action taken against a pupil who is found to be behaving in this way. Equally, we will support pupils, parents/carers and schools if they have a justifiable complaint against the contractor or driving staff.

In the Passenger Transport Unit we have a small team that is responsible for ensuring that the transport provided is operated as efficiently as possible whilst, at the same time, meeting the needs of the pupils, parents/carers and schools. They work closely with contractors and schools to provide a safe environment for pupils to travel. Obviously, in transporting such a large number of pupils (around 4 million journeys per school year), things may go wrong from time to time. It is our aim, however, to ensure that any problems are dealt with effectively and as speedily as possible.



**MAKE
SURE
YOUR
NEXT
STOP
ISN'T
YOUR
LAST.**

**!
BUS
STOP**

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A ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVE SUPPORTED
BY TALISMAN ENERGY (UK) LIMITED

**TALISMAN
ENERGY**

Contact information

Any enquiries regarding
school transport services
should be directed to:

The Passenger Transport Unit
Infrastructure Services
Aberdeenshire Council
Woodhill House
Westburn Road
Aberdeen
AB16 5GB

(01467) 533335
Option 4

[school.transport@
aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:school.transport@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)