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**Home to School / College Transport**

**Code of Practice**

Introduction

This code of practice has been produced to support safe travel arrangements. The code of practice forms part of the application process and ensures that both learners and operators are aware of the expectations upon them, whilst accessing/ providing transport.

This code of practice document has been produced by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council in compliance with the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure, 2008.

The Home to School & Post 16 Transport Policy is available on the Blaenau Gwent Website:

<https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/resident/schools-learning/school-transport/>

In Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, all functions related to the Home to School/College transport service are dealt with within the Build Environment, Environment and Regeneration, on behalf of the Director of Education.

Where there is a reference to the Director of Education, this refers to the Officer personally or staff associated with the transport services acting on or behalf of, and in agreement with, the Director.

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Contact Details / Applying for Home to School / College Transport

Home to School / College Transport Team

Should you have any queries relating to the provision of your child’s transport or require support in making an application please contact:

Email:

Mainstream / College Transport:

[hometoschooltransport@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:hometoschooltransport@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)

Telephone Contact Number: 01495 311556

Written Correspondence:

Home to School / College Transport Team

Built Environment

Environment and Regeneration

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

The General Offices

Steelworks Road

Ebbw Vale

NP23 6DN

How to Apply

Applications for transport assistance are available on Blaenau Gwent’s website.

Parents/Students can submit an application for transport assistance at any time, however, there is always an increase in demand prior to the start of an academic year and parents are advised to allow additional time. The Council sets a target to process all applications received at other times of the year within 10 school/college days, unless specialised provision is required.

<https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/resident/schools-learning/school-transport/>

Any queries relating to the provision of your child’s Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transport, please contact the ALN Section.

Email:

[Alnenquiries@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:Alnenquiries@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)

Code of Good Practice

Home to School / College Transport Team provide home to school transport for pupils travelling to mainstream, special schools and resource based units.

The Transport Team responsibilities and aims:

• Parents, schools and operators will have access to advice and assistance during normal office hours.

• Access transport application forms and send out confirmation details of bus allocation and operators details.

• Where passes for travel on contract hire vehicles are required they will normally be issued within 10 working days of receipt of an approved request, except at the start of a new academic year, when notification may take a little longer and therefore parents are asked to submit applications as soon as possible.

• Season tickets for travel on public transport services should normally be issued by the start of a new academic year or within 10 days of receipt of an approved application, at other times of the year.

• Payment of properly completed and submitted claims from Operators will be arranged within 30 days of receipt.

• Work with the Procurement Section to tender for and award contracts for suitable transport.

• The Home to School Transport Section will ensure that any special equipment, such as specialist harnesses or seats, will be provided, as he/she considers necessary.

• School journeys will be planned to minimise journey times subject to the provision of an efficient and cost effective service.

• The Home to School Transport Team will ensure that an escort is provided for children with special needs where this is agreed following an appropriate professional assessment.

• Checks will be made to ensure the operators, drivers and escorts have no record of criminal convictions or cautions, which make them unsuitable for a post, which involves access to children.

• The Home to School Transport Team will ensure that all the operators comply with specifications and conditions of their contract, which sets out the standards that operators must meet over and above the statutory requirements. Failure to comply may result in an operator being penalised or the contract being terminated.

• The Home to School Transport Section will endeavour to apply high standards of customer care and safety, and to undertake regular monitoring to ensure that contracts are operated in accordance of the Terms and Conditions.

• The Home to School Transport Team will identify any training needs and arrange for training to be provided to the operators and their staff.

• Any complaints MUST be referred to the Home to School Transport Team. Any complaints will be recorded and investigated.

• Utilise CCTV footage, where installed and available on Home to School Transport vehicles, to support any pupil involvement within an incident or complaint.

Parent/Guardian

The following information is to assist parents/guardians to ensure the safety of their child and others when using the school transport service.

• Make sure older children leave home in sufficient time and ensure that all primary aged pupils are taken to the bus stop in good time. It is your responsibility to ensure they are looked after until the bus arrives.

• Make sure where appropriate that children have their season ticket or bus pass with them – drivers will make checks.

• It is your responsibility to ensure that all primary aged children are met when the bus returns from school. Remember that young children can get excited and forget road safety as they get off the bus and therefore ensure they are met on the same side of the road as the bus stops.

• Make sure your child knows what to do if the bus is late, or does not arrive.

• Make alternative travel arrangements should your child miss the vehicle for whatever reason. It is a parental responsibility to ensure your child attends school and no additional transport will be provided.

• Teach children the safety rules. Make sure they understand the Travel Behaviour Code. Remember you will be held responsible for any misbehaviour or vandalism caused by your child. Persistent misbehaviour, particularly bullying or fighting, may result in exclusion from the bus and serious incidents will be reported to the Police.

• Help bus drivers and escorts to do their job. Remind young people that playing about at bus stops and on the buses can cause accidents and injuries.

• Advise the driver or escort if there may be a particular difficulty with your child on a specific day.

• If your child is unaccompanied between home and the bus stop, make sure that he or she knows and follows the safest route and uses the safest crossing places and is appropriately dressed. Remember the safest route is not always the shortest one.

• Notify immediately the Home to School Transport Team of any changes to your circumstances such as a change of address. If your ticket is no longer required you must return it to the Home to School Transport Team.

• If you have any concerns about school transport, you should contact the Home to School Transport Team.

• Remind your child they must always wear a seatbelt, lap belts must be worn across the hips and not the stomach. Static belts should be adjusted to fit and should be worn tightly. Seatbelts should be worn for the whole of the journey.

• Remember to remind your child/ren only to operate the bus doors in an emergency.

CHILD LEFT ON BUS/TAXI POLICY (DECEMBER 2015)

All Primary/Junior pupils should be met from the bus/taxi by a responsible parent/guardian (unless parent/guardian have in writing notified us otherwise)

In the event that no Parent/Guardian has turned up to meet a pupil from the Bus/Taxi at the end of the School day, the following guidelines are to be followed:

1. The escort/driver should contact the School immediately to arrange the return of the pupil?

• If there is no one available at the School, please contact the School Transport Section immediately as our office holds the contact numbers of parents and carers (07968 329234 / 07975 773300 ).

• Please take a record of the child’s full name and address and bus stop. And please provide the driver/escorts contact number to both School and School Transport Section so we can get back in touch with you.

2. Once contacting the School/School Transport Section if the vehicle has more than 1 passenger the bus/taxi should continue on its journey and await further instructions from the School Transport Section whilst they try to make contact with the parent and School.

3. If possible the operator should return the child to School at the end of bus/taxi’s journey.

4. If the School is not available and the journey has ended (all other children returned home) the driver/escort should return with the child to the bus garage/depot whilst School Transport gets hold of parent/guardian. A taxi needs to pull over somewhere safe and wait.

5. In the majority of cases the parent/guardian have made contact with either the Operator/School or School Transport Section during this time. Arrangements can be made for parents to collect the pupil from either School or Bus garage/depot/taxi point.

6. If everything else fails please take the child to the nearest available Police Station who will treat this as a Child Protection Issue.

Pupils / Students

These guidelines have been prepared to ensure the provision of transport is comfortable, safe and stress free.

Your safety is very important. You must behave responsibly and safely when travelling to and from school or college. Pupils / Students must behave in a way that does not endanger themselves, other passengers, drivers, escorts or other road users.

• Always arrive at the bus stop on time and make sure (if you have been allocated) you have your bus pass or season ticket with you and ready to show to the driver when boarding.

• Do not play about near the road while waiting for the bus. Wait on the pavement, well back from the road.

• Do not go near the bus and in particular, the wheels, until it has stopped.

• Do not push or rush for the door when the bus has stopped. Never operate the bus doors (except in an emergency). If you are requested to operate doors by the driver or escort report this to your teacher or parent/guardian.

• Having left your vehicle you should not return to it for safety reasons.

• Find a seat quickly and quietly without pushing, keep gangways clear in case of an emergency.

• You should listen to the driver or escort and do as he or she says with regard to the transport arrangements.

• Do not play games or throw objects on or from the bus, this is dangerous and could cause an accident.

• Do not distract the driver and only use the emergency door IN CASES OF EMERGENCY.

• Do not eat/drink or smoke on the bus. Do not leave litter on the bus.

• Once the vehicle has commenced its journey you must remain in your seat at all times.

• You must always wear a seat belt if one is provided; lap belts must be worn across the hips and not the stomach. Static belts should be adjusted to fit and should be worn tightly.

• Do not stand up to get off the vehicle until it has come to a complete standstill at your stop.

• Take care that your coat, scarf or bag is not caught in the door when boarding or alighting.

• Make sure you have all your belongings as you leave the vehicle. If you have forgotten something, the parent/guardian should telephone the company.

• Do not cross the road close behind or in front of the bus. You must be able to see clearly both ways. Where possible use a pedestrian crossing.

• Older pupils should remember – your actions may influence younger children for example when getting off the bus stay well clear of the vehicle before it departs, when walking to or from the bus stop, follow the green cross code. Copies should be available at your school.

• If you wish to make a complaint against the driver and/or escort, do not approach them. Tell a teacher or your parent/guardian who can refer the matter to the Home to School Transport Section.

• Please remember that in the event of persistent misbehaviour, particularly bullying or fighting, you may be excluded from using school transport. Serious incidents of misbehaviour or vandalism will be reported to the Police.

• If you are subjected to bullying let your teacher, parent or guardian know.

Schools

Schools have an important role to play and as part of their responsibilities to ensure the provision of a quality school transport service.

• The head teacher should be the contact point for the authority and operator for transport issues or, if someone else carries out that role it should be communicated clearly.

• There must be prompt reporting of any shortcomings in the transport service to the authority.

• Have in place a Traffic Management Risk Assessment which includes the site management of school buses.

• There should be appropriate supervision of embarkation/disembarkation points where these are on, outside, or near school premises.

• Share any concerns regarding school transport, including safeguarding matters with the Home to School Transport Team.

• The school should assist the authority to identify suspected misconduct on buses.

• Provide every assistance in identifying those involved in incidents of bad behaviour and liaise with the Home to School Transport Team to determine the appropriate course of action to be taken.

• Even though many children may not travel by bus to and from school it is likely that they would use such transport at some time during their school life for school trips etc. Schools are therefore encouraged to raise awareness of safety issues contained in this document.

• To raise an awareness of Travel Behaviour Code.

• Report all incidents of pupil misbehaviour to the Home to School Transport Divisions, regardless of whether the issue has been dealt with at the School.

• Always refer to Council Policy during periods of severe weather.

• Should a contracted school bus fail to arrive at school, wherever possible contact the Home to School Transport Division and keep the children together.

• Notify the Home to School Transport Divisions of changes to pupil circumstances, such as leavers.

Transport Operators

Operators undertaking contracts on behalf of the Council have a responsibility to ensure safe travel for pupils / students.

Operators must comply with all statutory legislation relating to school transport and with the Council’s terms and conditions of contract.

By working on Home to School transport, the operators and their staff are agreeing to abide by the Code of Practice. All staff should be made aware of the code.

• The welfare of the pupils is of paramount importance.

• Ensure that you, and your staff, are familiar with all aspects of this Code of Practice and Travel Behaviour Code

• Make sure that you adhere strictly to the conditions of contract.

• Make sure that telephone numbers of the people who should be notified in an emergency, i.e. yourself, the Home to School Transport Section and the schools served, are on the vehicle.

• Operators must inspect drivers’ licences at monthly intervals. Drivers’ licences must be checked for traffic offences and/or medical restrictions and any changes in entitlement must be notified to the Home to School Transport Section immediately. Operators must have records to evidence such checks.

• It is your responsibility that all drivers and or escorts carry mobile telephones for emergency use only. Drivers must be issued with guidance in relation to the use of mobile phones. The use of hand held mobile phones whilst driving is strictly prohibited. In emergency situations where it would be unsafe or impractical to stop driving, drivers may make or receive calls if they have a totally hands free kit. A hands free kit consists of equipment that does not need to be held during operation.

• You must establish contingency plans for dealing with vehicle failures, staff unavailability and other emergencies and make the plan available upon request by the Home to School Transport Section.

• Ensure staff and vehicles meet both statutory obligations and any additional requirements set by the Home to School Transport Section as per conditions of contract.

• Make sure that any necessary equipment, such as specialist harnesses, wheelchair restraints and any other equipment is obtained from the Home to School Transport Section and that they are returned when no longer needed.

• Report recurrent problems, such as pupil discipline, to the Home to School Transport Section if the matter remains unresolved.

• Report any late running, breakdown or accident to the school and the Home to School Transport Section. Ensure that all services are operated according to the agreed route and schedule.

• Do not sub-contract any school transport service to another operator without the prior permission of the Home to School Transport Section. Requests to sub-contract must be made in writing for except in cases of emergency. In the event of an emergency you should only sub-contract where you have evidence and are satisfied that the contractor is able to provide a Driver, Escort and Vehicle that meets fully with the authority’s conditions of contract. Please note sub-contracting of contracts will only be agreed on a short term basis.

• Ensure all drivers are familiar with the route, drop off and pick up points.

• You should notify the Home to School Transport Section immediately should you employ a new driver or escort in order for the appropriate checks to be carried out.

• Ensure that vehicles arrive at the school/college premises by the start of the morning session and the end of the afternoon session no more than 10 minutes before either time.

• Should a driver or escort leave your employment, you should immediately notify the Home to School Transport Section.

• Make sure that the conditions of contract and all appropriate legislation are strictly adhered to at all times.

• Routes are not allowed to be altered without prior approval of the Home to School Transport Section.

• If an operator wishes to exclude a child from a bus due to persistent behaviour or violence, such actions must be confirmed by the Home to School Transport Section and your written evidence will be required.

• The operator must report the following incidents immediately to the Home to School Transport Section:

o serious incidents of violence used by or on pupils using the bus:

o serious outbreaks of disorder

o wanton damages caused to property, belongings of passengers of the bus

o Child Protection Matters

• A written record should be kept of injury to a child that occurs on the vehicle. All injuries should be reported to the parent (were appropriate), headteacher and Home to School Transport Section immediately.

• You must ensure that risk assessments are carried out prior to the start of the contract and updated when necessary

• You must hold the relevant Operator license(s) and have in place suitable insurance cover.

• Ensure all vehicles are licenced and have a current MOT/test certificate and road tax.

• Ensure drivers possess a current valid DVLA driving licence and hold all necessary driving qualifications relating to the type of vehicle they operate.

• Only use drivers and or escorts who possess an Enhanced DBS check and who are authorised by the Council.

• Ensure that drivers and escorts complete the online Safeguarding Training or face to face training before commencing on Home to School Transport contracts.

• Provide a vehicle that is maintained in a fit and road worthy condition, is clean, adequately heated and ventilated, in a proper state of repair and in good running order at all times.

• All vehicles must have a first aid kit and fire extinguisher and drivers must know how to use them. Regular checks should be made to ensure first aid kits are complete and fire extinguishers are in perfect working order.

• Where training is provided by the LEA for escorts/drivers you are required to ensure attendance.

• Ensure that no unauthorised passengers are carried on the transport.

• No transportation of pets on vehicles with the exception for working dogs – guide dogs for the blind / deaf / disabled.

Vehicle Requirements

• The Contractor shall ensure that all vehicles used in the performance of this provision shall meet the Authority’s requirements and conditions. All vehicles should be suitable for purpose, presentable and in good working order at all times, kept clean, adequately heated and adequately ventilated.

• All vehicles used in the performance of this provision must hold the appropriate licenses.

• All vehicles, where applicable, must have a Certificate of Initial Fitness (COIF) or type approval and comply with current legislation.

• The Contractor must comply with any act, regulation or directive or any other law which is currently in force or which may come into force from time to time. Under the requirements of the Road Vehicle Lighting (Amendment) Regulations 1994 relating to “School Bus Signs” the Contractor must supply his own signs for all appropriate vehicles for school transport routes.

• Any vehicle provided under the Terms and Conditions of Contract shall be available at all reasonable times for inspection by a duly authorised officer of the Authority and at a location of their choosing.

• All vehicles used in the performance of this provision must be fitted with seatbelts in line with current legislation.

• Double Decker buses are not permissible.

Driver and Escort

Your role is very important, you are responsible for the supervision of the pupils / students while they are in your care.

• Escorts will be provided for children with additional learning needs where this is recommended, following an appropriate professional assessment.

• Escorts will be provided for all mainstream primary school and ALN buses, minibuses and taxi’s.

• The operator shall provide a driver and escort where required by the authority, and will not permit any person to drive the vehicle in the execution of the contract unless the contractor has ascertained that the person has all necessary licences to drive the vehicle under the contract. All drivers must be appropriately licenced to drive the said vehicle for hire or reward purposes

• The operator shall enter into a binding written agreement with each and every driver and or escort, which shall provide that:

o Deployed either in the capacity of an employee or owner driver by the operator on each contract. As far as is possible, it shall be the personal duty of the driver and or escort to ensure the good behaviour of the pupils while in the vehicle or while entering or alighting from the same and shall report immediately to the Employer and Headteacher of the school attended any cases of disorderly or unruly conduct and shall see that all pupils remain seated whilst the vehicle is in motion.

o The driver and or escort shall not use foul language, smoke or carry a lighted pipe, cigar or cigarette on school transport vehicles. This includes smoking prior to children boarding the vehicles. This applies equally to school premises.

o The driver and or escort will personally open, close and properly secure the door(s) of the vehicle before and after any passenger enters or alights from the vehicle and ensure that all such operations be carried out in a safe manner.

• Where an escort is required to be provided pursuant to any condition of this contract such an escort must be aged over 18 and his/her duties shall include the passing on of messages between the Headteacher and parents of those children being conveyed.

• The operator must make the driver and escort (where required) available for any training arranged by the authority.

• Prior to starting work for contracts arranged a driver/escort must complete an Enhanced DBS Check and have been cleared by the directorate for use.

• Drivers and Escorts must complete the online Safeguarding Training before commencing on Home to School Transport contracts.

• Ensure that children board and alight safely by:

• keeping doors closed until the vehicle is at a complete standstill

• ensure that all children use seatbelts where fitted

• not allowing children to open or close vehicle doors

• getting off the bus to ensure that all children are well clear of the vehicle and that nobody is going back for property they have left behind

• escorts travelling in taxi’s should sit in the rear of the vehicle where possible

• assisting parents to help pupil’s board and alight

• discouraging children from crossing in front of, or immediately behind, the vehicles

• closing doors before moving off, and ensuring nothing is caught in the door

• ensuring all children are seated before the vehicle starts

• stowing all luggage safely and ensuring gangways are kept clear.

• Ensuring with the driver, that any restraints and wheelchair clamps are correctly fastened.

• If possible, take a seat where you can reach the doors easily, ensuring that you are able to watch children and control behaviour.

• In the event of severe or persistent misbehaviour, notify the Headteacher or your employer immediately. Never evict a child from the vehicle. If you threaten to report misbehaviour, then do so.

• Co-operate with authority staff, teachers and parents to resolve any problems.

• Maintain a courteous, professionally detached relationship with the pupils, parents and your driver. Inappropriate conversation topics and language must be avoided at all times.

• Ensure the vehicle completes its routes, and all children are picked up according to the timetable.

• In the event of breakdown or accident, remain with the children. Never leave them unattended. If necessary, enlist the help of a passer-by to summon assistance.

• Make sure you are familiar with the particular problems of the children you escort.

• Make sure you have received adequate instruction with regard to children with additional learning needs from the appropriate staff at the school and that you are familiar with any safety equipment, i.e. seatbelts, wheel-chair clamps, first aid kit, fire extinguisher and emergency exits.

• Be prepared to act as messenger between school, parents, and pupils but do not take instructions from parents or children, such as varying the transport arrangements, without first discussing revised arrangements with the Home to School Transport Divisions.

• If a responsible adult is not available at the drop off point, you should follow the information above on ‘Child Left on Bus/Taxi Policy’.

• Never drive a vehicle you are not appropriately licenced to drive.

• Do not drive a vehicle you consider to be unroadworthy or in contravention of any relevant PCV regulations or legislation. Report any faults to your employer immediately.

• Prior to starting work as a driver for contracts arranged by this directorate you must complete an Enhanced DBS Check and have been cleared by the directorate for use. Should you receive any cautions or convictions after clearance you must inform the Home to School Transport section immediately.

• Drivers and Escorts must complete the online Safeguarding Training before commencing on Home to School Transport contracts.

• Always be aware that the welfare of the pupils is of paramount importance.

• Never use a hand held mobile phone whilst driving. In emergency situations where it would be unsafe or impractical to stop driving, drivers may make or receive calls if they have a totally hands free kit. A hands free kit consists of equipment that does not need to be held during operation. Remember you must have full control of the vehicle at all times.

• It is the driver/escort’s responsibility to ensure seatbelts are worn if fitted if the child is under 14 years of age and is conveyed in the front seats of all vehicles or rear seats of cars and small minibuses (with an unladen weight of 2540 kilos or less).

• If driving a large vehicle, you should actively encourage all passengers to wear seatbelts if fitted. Remember you should not pull off until all children are seated. Report any problems with this to the Headteacher and your employer.

• Work with escorts where provided and be aware of any problems a pupil may have.

• Follow the scheduled route and use only designated pick up and set down points. If it proves impossible to maintain the scheduled timetable, notify your employer.

• Check pupils’ passes to ensure they are entitled to travel. Never allow any other unauthorised passengers to travel on your vehicle.

• Avoid physical contact with pupils wherever possible. Maintain a courteous and professionally detached relationship with your passengers, parents and any escort. Do not give gifts and avoid inappropriate conversation topics and language at all times.

• Report any incident of misbehaviour to the Headteacher and to your employer. If you threaten to report bad behaviour, then do so.

• Any injury to a child must be reported immediately to your employer for a permanent record to be made.

• Never allow children to leave the vehicle on route. Children should not be set down until they have arrived at their final destination.

• Check for lost property at the end of each journey and hand any items found to your employer or school.

• Approach each stop safely and with care. Do not brake sharply. Wherever possible, pick up and set down on the pavement, and not on the carriageway.

• Hazard warning lights may be used when pupils are boarding and alighting, as circumstances dictate.

• Keep the doors closed until you have brought the vehicle to a complete standstill. Do not allow children to open or close the doors of your vehicle.

• Always wait for several seconds before closing the door. Check that doors are properly closed, and that nothing is trapped in them, inside or out. Use nearside mirrors to check for latecomers trying to board before pulling away.

• After unloading, make sure that all pupils are well clear of the vehicle before moving off.

• Do not drop pupils off to wait unattended for connecting buses or taxis unless agreed by Home to School Transport and parents. Wait until the other vehicle has arrived.

• Ensure you are familiar with any equipment on the vehicle to assist with boarding and alighting, such as wheelchair lifts or ramps.

• If pupils have to exit by the rear of a minibus, make sure they are supervised.

• If you have to reverse the vehicle, activate the buzzer, if fitted. Only reverse before setting down or picking up pupils.

• Co-operate with school and authority staff over arrangements for circulation, parking, picking up and setting down within school grounds.

• Pupils have been advised not to return to the vehicle. Always, however, ensure that you watch out for children rushing back for property they have left behind.

• If a child has a special harness or wheelchair, make sure you know how to deal with these, that they are secured before moving off and that there is an independent passenger restraint for each wheelchair user.

• Make sure all luggage is safely stowed, and the gangway and emergency exits are not obstructed.

• Do not allow your vehicle to be loaded beyond its capacity.

• Ensure that no unauthorised passengers are carried on the transport.

• No transportation of pets on vehicles with the exception for working dogs – guide dogs for the blind / deaf / disabled.

• Follow the Highway Code at all times. Adhere to speed limits and take special care in country lanes.

• Do not eat or drink on school transport vehicles.

• Do not smoke or carry a lighted pipe, cigar or cigarette on school transport vehicles. This includes smoking prior to children boarding the vehicle. This applies equally to school premises.

• ‘School Transport’ signs must be used as appropriate and in accordance with legislation. Ensure they are in the appropriate positions, and only displayed when the vehicle is being used for pupils.

• Ensure you have been supplied with a telephone and the telephone numbers of the people who you should contact in an emergency, i.e. your employer, the Home to School Transport Section and the schools served. Those should be kept on the vehicle at all times. In an emergency, enlist the help of a passer-by to summon assistance.

• Only in extreme circumstances and as a last resort should you leave your vehicle to seek assistance.

• If, because of unforeseen weather conditions or road works, it is impossible to follow the scheduled route, ensure that safe alternative stops are being used which do not entail children walking long distances unsupervised. If it is not possible, take them very close to the authorised stops by following a sensible diversion. Take them to a point from which telephone calls can be made to parents/guardians and make sure they are not left unattended.

• If a responsible adult is not available at the drop off point, be prepared in certain circumstances to have to wait for ten minutes from the drop off time just in case the parent has been delayed. If the parent/guardian has not arrived within the ten minutes, contact your employer immediately who will then contact the Home to School Transport Division. Please carry on the remainder of the route and await further instruction from your employer. ‘Child left on Bus/Taxi Policy’.

• In the event of a fire or hazard, evacuate the vehicle in a calm and orderly manner and take pupils to a safe distance from the vehicle.

• Ensure you know how to use the fire extinguisher and first aid kit, and any other safety equipment.

• Drivers must carry out the necessary safety checks to their vehicles prior to operating any school contract journey. Any drivers must ensure that vehicles are not used until defects are rectified.

Framework for dealing with incidents on Home to School/College Transport

The Council has an approved Travel Behaviour Code that covers all Home to School / College transport provision.

SCHOOL BUS TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR CODE - TO BE SAFE

o When the bus arrives, wait for it to stop before boarding

o Make an agreement with your parents what to do if the bus does not arrive or if you miss it

o Get on and off the bus carefully – pushing or rushing can cause accidents

o Show your bus pass (if you have been given one) when you get on the bus

o Always follow the instructions of the driver or passenger assistant at all times.

o Always wear your seat belt and stay in your seat for the whole journey – it could save your life

o On a public bus, find a seat if one is available

o Store your bag or other belongings safely and out of anyone’s way

o Let the driver drive without distraction during the journey

o Take care of the bus

o Never spit or smoke

o Never try and get on or off the bus until it has stopped.

o Never be rude to other learners or the driver

o Never interfere with driver controls or safety equipment

o Never eat or drink on the bus

o Never throw anything in or from the bus

o Never damage or vandalise any part of the bus

o Only operate the bus doors or exits in an emergency and don’t get off the bus until it has stopped

o If there is an accident, stay on the bus until you are told to leave – but leave the bus by the safest exit if it is unsafe to stay on the bus

o When crossing the road find a safe place where you can be seen by all other drivers

Please tell a teacher, parent or driver about any bad behaviour you see

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council reserves the right to refuse to provide travel assistance where a child’s/young person’s behaviour is such that it is unacceptable or a significant Health and Safety risk. (All parties will have previously signed the Blaenau Gwent Transport Behaviour Contract). In these instances, the Transport Department in conjuction with the school will issue warning letters; parents will receive no more than four letters;

**Stage 1** - initially raising the concerns/issues.

**Stage 2** - informal warning indicating the remedial steps taken and the

potential of transport removal.

**Stage 3** - final warning indicating that transport will be removed.

**Stage 4** - The school jointly with the Transport Department will issue the final letter confirming the removal of transport, citing the reasons for the removal, the date of the proposed removal and the parental route of appeal.

**In these cases, parents become responsible for their child’s attendance at school and any transport required.**

Any wilful damage that incurs cost to the transport provider for either repair or cleaning remains the responsibility of the parent/carer of the child concerned. Continued or repeat behaviour that results in wilful damage can result in exclusion from Home to School Transport.

**SCHOOL BUS TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR CODE**

Your safety is very important. You must behave responsibly and safely when travelling to and from school or college, whether you go there by bus, train, taxi, bicycle, walking or any other way.

If you get a bus to school or college, you must also follow the rules in the School Bus Travel Behaviour Code. If you do not follow this Code, for your own safety, and other people’s, local authorities, schools and colleges can take action against you. This might involve taking away your right to school transport and even excluding you from school.

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| ***Your Responsibility*** | ***Your Safety*** | ***Your Rights*** |
| • Always respect others,  including other pupils,  drivers and the public.  • Always respect vehicles  and property.  • Always be polite.  • Never drop litter.  • Always obey the law. | • Always behave well when travelling.  • Always follow the  driver’s instructions when travelling.  • You must not distract drivers.  • Always cross the road safely and sensibly.  • Always travel by a  safe route. | • To be safe when travelling.  • To be treated fairly and with respect.  • To tell someone if somebody or something is causing you problems.  • Not to be bullied or picked on. |
| ***Please tell a teacher, parent or driver about any bad behaviour or bullying you see.*** | | |

**Action Against Incidents of Misbehaviour**

The following is a comprehensive list/schedule of actions to be taken against certain categories of misbehaviour:

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| **Nature of Incident** | | **Risk** | **Recommended Action** |
| Verbal bullying  \*Note 1 | | - Driver Distraction | 1st offence – warning letter  2nd offence – ban for 1 week  3rd offence – ban for 2 weeks |
| Physical bullying  \*Note 1 | | - Driver distraction  - Harm to other pupils | 1st offence – ban for 2 weeks  2nd offence – ban for 2 weeks  3rd offence – ban for 1 month |
| Throwing items inside/outside vehicle  \*Note 2 | | - Driver distraction  - Damage to vehicle/others | 1st offence – ban for 2 weeks  2nd offence – ban for a term  3rd offence – ban for a further term  Any further offences may result in permanent exclusion on Health and Safety grounds |
| Damage to vehicles  \*Note 3 | | - Driver distraction  - Criminal damage | 1st offence – ban for 2 weeks  2nd offence – ban for 1 month  3rd offence – ban for a term  Recovery of costs |
| Threatening the driver/distracting the driver  \*Note 4 | | - Driver distraction  - Health & Safety  - Harm to bus users  - Harm to other road users  - Harm to driver | 1st offence – ban for 2 weeks  2nd & 3rd offence – to be considered on basis of behaviour on Health and Safety Grounds |
| Failure to comply with driver’s instructions  \*Note 5 | | - Health & Safety  - Harm to bus users  - Harm to other road users  - Harm to driver | 1st offence – warning letter  2nd offence – ban for 1 week  3rd offence – ban for 2 weeks on Health and Safety Grounds |
| Smoking  \*Note 6 | | - Health & Safety | 1st offence – warning letter  2nd offence – ban for 1 week  3rd offence – ban for 1 month on Health and Safety Grounds |
| Fraudulent use of pass  \*Note 7 | | - Capacity of bus  - Threat to service | 1st offence – warning letter  2nd offence – ban for 1 week  3rd offence – ban for 1 month  If caught, driver may refuse travel with immediate effect for the day in question |
| Dropping litter  \*Note 8 | | - Cleanliness of bus  - Possible safety of bus travel | 1st offence – warning letter  2nd offence – further warning letter  3rd offence – ban for 1 week |
| Misbehaviour at bus stops during boarding and alighting  \*Note 9 | | - Safety of pupils  - Safety of bus users  - Safety of general public  - Convenience to public by  anti-social behaviour | 1st offence – warning letter  2nd offence – ban for 1 week  3rd offence – ban for 2 weeks on Health and Safety Grounds |
| Use of a lighter/matches that may cause fear to other passengers or damage to the vehicle | - Driver distraction  - Health & Safety  - Harm to bus users  - Harm to other road users  - Harm to driver | | 1st offence – ban for 2 weeks  2nd offence – ban and meeting to be held with school and parent to discuss way forward on Health and Safety Grounds  Any further offences may result in permanent exclusion. |
| Injury to pupils, pupils clothing or damage caused to the vehicle as result of the use of a lighter or matches | - Driver distraction  - Health & Safety  - Harm to bus users  - Harm to other road users  - Harm to driver | | 1st offence – ban for 1 month  2nd offence – ban and meeting to be held with school and parent to discuss way forward on Health and Safety Grounds  Any further offences may result in permanent exclusion. |
| Open or attempted opening of emergency exit | - Driver distraction  - Health & Safety  - Harm to bus users  - Harm to other road users  - Harm to driver | | 1st offence – ban for 1 month  2nd offence – ban and meeting to be held with school and parent to discuss way forward on Health and Safety Grounds  Any further offences may result in permanent exclusion. |

**Notes: Bullying refers to bullying of other pupils on the vehicle and may include verbal as well as physical.**

1. This includes any item (excluding the dropping of litter) whether personal to the pupil, or the property of other pupils, or property of the bus operator. It also refers to items being thrown inside the bus and items being thrown from bus (irrespective of damage caused).

2. Refers to any damage caused as a consequence of any incident. It is the responsibility of the operator to pursue any recovery of costs for criminal damage.

3. Can be both verbal and/or physical threat. Also includes driver distraction specifically aimed at the driver.

4. In the event of a pupil repeatedly failing to comply with the driver’s instructions during any one journey, the Council has the discretion of moving to the 2nd or 3rd offence level immediately (this includes failure to comply with a contractor instruction e.g. rules and regulations governing travel).

5. If damage to vehicle is caused by smoking, please see ‘damage to vehicle’ category.

6. Includes providing passes to other pupils.

7. It is the responsibility of all pupils to not drop litter, and to remove all their litter from the bus.