

**Reference: Special Needs School Transport  
Arrangements 2020-2021**

County Hall  
New Road  
Oxford  
OX1 1ND

Parents/Carers of:

Jason Russell  
Director of Community  
Operations

Kevin Gordon  
Corporate Director for Children's  
Services  
26<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parents

**School Transport Arrangements**

We are looking forward to welcoming Pupils back to school in September.

We are writing to all parents/carers of Children & Young People who travel on Oxfordshire County Council contracted home to school services. It is very important for children and young people to return to school and college for their educational progress, wellbeing and their wider development. All pupils in all year groups will be expected to return to school full-time from the start of the autumn term.

Government guidance recommends that schools and colleges should minimise contact and mixing by implementing 'bubbles' thus ensuring where possible mixing is minimised. The Government further recognises that vehicle capacity and the complexity of some home to school transport arrangements mean there will often be limits to the extent to which mixing can be minimised.

Oxfordshire County Council has over the summer been working with schools to reflect school "transport bubbles" and where requested by the school to arrange seating plans informing students where they should sit in a vehicle.

Separate transport for Special Schools and Colleges that have separate Upper, Lower and Nursery sites have been arranged. This is to ensure that children and young people do not mix in the same vehicles. You will be sent separate information detailing travel arrangements if this affects your child or young person.

Recent Government guidance recommends that all children over the age of 11yrs should wear a face covering, although for some children and young people with special educational needs they may be distressed if they or people around them wear face coverings; others may become agitated if people do not wear face coverings. There are exemptions to this guidance that can be found here, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#exemptions-face-coverings> it should be noted that drivers and passenger assistants are also being encouraged to wear face coverings. If you think this will cause your child or young person distress, please let us know by emailing [ee-specialeducationalneedsITU@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ee-specialeducationalneedsITU@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

We are working with all of our service providers to agree the arrangements for cleaning vehicles to ensure frequently touched surfaces are cleaned after each journey wherever possible, and enhanced cleaning will take place at the end of each day. Drivers and passenger assistants are being asked to use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser after performing tasks such as helping a child into the vehicle or handling a child's belongings.

Please be advised that children or young people must not travel on home to school transport if they, or a member of their household, has [symptoms of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#). If a child or young person develops symptoms whilst at school or their place of education, they will be sent home but in doing so they must not travel on home to school transport. The school or place of education will contact you to make arrangements for the child or young person's journey home.

If you have not already received notification regarding transport from this September and your child or young person travelled last year, the same transport arrangements will be in place. If your child or young person is starting school or college for the first time or there has been a change in travel arrangements over the summer, you should by now have received a separate notification confirming travel arrangements. If this is not the case, then please either contact your SEN Officer or email [ee-specialeducationalneedsITU@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ee-specialeducationalneedsITU@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Attached are the Guidelines for Parents and Carers travelling on Special Needs transport organised by Oxfordshire County Council. Please note that there are additional elements relating to social distancing and travelling on the vehicles.

The website link below is regularly updated and has answers to frequently asked questions about Home to school transport services.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/travelling-school>

Yours Sincerely



Kevin Gordon  
Corporate Director Children's Services



Jason Russell  
Director Community Operations

Email = [ee-specialeducationalneedsITU@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ee-specialeducationalneedsITU@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Transport for Special Needs Pupils

### Guidelines for Parents and Carers



These guidelines are regarding the transportation of students with special needs between home and school, college or unit. Guidelines have also been given to the transport company, their employees and the school, college or unit. Please carefully observe the guidelines below to ensure the best service for the student.

**Please ensure the student is ready on time** - In order to get all students to school, college or unit on time, the vehicle can only wait 5 minutes before leaving and alternative transport cannot be arranged.

**Please be prepared to assist with any wheelchair straps, seatbelts, booster/car seats or harnesses** - The parent and educational establishment is responsible for escorting the student to and from the vehicle and securing/unfixing the student into the vehicle with a seatbelt. Where the student travels in a wheelchair, the driver/passenger assistant will be responsible for anchoring and securing the webbing on the chair on all journeys.

**Please let us know if transport is not required** – Please let us know if transport is not required for any reason (illness, appointments etc.) please let us know as soon as you can. During office hours please call the School & Social Care Transport Team (01865 323795), out of hours please call the transport provider directly and inform us after the event.

**This transport conveys students to the agreed home address, school, college or unit (after school club) only** No changes can be made to the agreed starting and finishing points of the transport that is provided.

**If the student's behaviour on the vehicle presents a danger to themselves or others, transport may be withdrawn** - We will work extensively with the parent/carer and school, college or unit before withdrawing transport. The parent/carer has a responsibility to manage the student's behaviour and if transport is withdrawn, it does not excuse the student from attending their school, college or unit.

**If the student may require medication in the vehicle** - Please discuss with your SEN Officer or The School & Social Care Transport Team prior to transport commencing. The transport provider is not permitted to administer medication.

**The Driver or Passenger Assistant is not permitted to bear any weight** - If the student requires any lifting into/out of the vehicle, please ensure the parent or carer is available to do this.

**Please ensure an adult is home to receive the student** - Students using special needs transport must be handed over to an adult, they will be taken back to the school if there is not an adult present and we cannot contact you. Drivers cannot wait for parents as they have other contracts to fulfil.

**Emergency Procedures on Home to School Transport**

Medical emergency - Passenger Assistant/Driver will stop the vehicle and follow protocols detailed on the student's Passenger Passport, call 999 if necessary or continue to the nearest destination (School/Home) and inform the School & Social Care Transport Team /Parents.

**Behavioural Emergency** - In the case that a student's behaviour prevents the vehicle from continuing safely, the driver may continue to the nearest destination (School/Home), request that parents collect the student from the vehicle where possible or call 999 if necessary. In all cases they will inform the School & Social Care Transport Team /Parents.

**Road Traffic Accident** - Passenger Assistant/Driver will take the safety precautions required, call 999 if necessary and inform the School & Social Care Transport Team /Parents.

**Passenger Passports**

Passenger Passports are designed to ensure the safety and comfort of students on transport, they include information for the driver and passenger assistant such as their likes and dislikes and daily medical requirements. In the event of an emergency, the Passenger Passport can also be passed to emergency services to aid them in their communication with the student and ensure they are aware of any medications used.

If you would like to request a Passenger Passport or make any changes to the information provided on a student's existing Passenger Passport please contact the Risk Assessment Team: [TransportRiskAssessment@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:TransportRiskAssessment@Oxfordshire.gov.uk) or 01865 323795.

Thank you for your cooperation with the above points, please do not hesitate to contact the School & Social Care Transport Team with any further queries:

**School Transport Code of Conduct – Social Distancing**

In addition to the Student Responsibilities within the Guidelines for Parents and Carers, please see below amendment to include social distancing measures for all students travelling on Home to School Transport:

Before the school journey

- It is recommended Face Coverings are worn by all children and young people over 11yrs. However, for some special needs children and young people it is recognised this will be difficult.

During the school journey

- Passengers must not intentionally cough, spit, or invade another passengers space or the driver's space.

At the end of the school journey

- Passengers must take all belongings with them when exiting the vehicle, it will be more difficult to return forgotten items during this time. .