

What if there has been damage to the bus?

The operator may seek to recover the cost of repairs from the parents of the pupils responsible. The County Council will release the name and address of the parent or guardian of a pupil to an operator, if it receives a reasonable request to do so from an operator, in order to allow the operator to seek to recover the cost of damage caused to a vehicle.

What happens when a pupil returns to transport?

After a period of exclusion has ended, a pupil will normally be allowed to travel on the school bus again. However, the operator may require certain conditions (e.g. that the pupil must use a specified seat at the front of the bus) or the pupil may be transferred to another school bus. Sometimes, other transport arrangements may be made, (e.g. for travel on an ordinary bus service, where available) rather than return to the school bus.

What other help is available if there is bullying on the bus?

Head teachers have a legal duty to address all forms of bullying. They have the statutory powers to discipline pupils who behave badly on the way to and from school including travelling on school buses. The school should always be made aware of any bullying on the school bus.

Leicestershire Anti-Bullying team provides support for schools, parents and students. Their website www.beyondbullying.com provides useful help, information, guidance and further contact details.

If your child has special needs you can talk to the Parent Partnership Service on **0116 2752097** for confidential advice.

Leaflets in this series

This leaflet aims to give advice and information to students, parents, schools, colleges and bus operators who use and deliver transport services provided by Leicestershire County Council.

Other leaflets in this series, available on request, include:-

- ★ **Guidelines for School Staff**
- ★ **Bus Passes – Frequently Asked Questions**
- ★ **Guidelines for Parents and Students**
- ★ **Guidelines for Drivers**
- ★ **Guidelines for Parents:
Special Educational Needs Transport**

If you require information contained in this leaflet in an alternative version, e.g. large print, Braille, tape or an alternative language, please telephone: **0116 265 8777**.

Fax: **0116 265 7181**

Email: passengertransport@leics.gov.uk

Web: www.leics.gov.uk

or write to:

**The Passenger Transport Unit
School Transport Guidelines
P.O. Box 1151
LEICESTER
LE3 8ZQ**

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the services it relates to please contact the Passenger Transport Helpline - 0116 265 8777.

Leicestershire School and College Transport

Safe Travel on School Buses

Anti-Social Behaviour on School Buses



Issue 1

April 2007

Introduction

The vast majority of pupils travel to and from school every day in safety and without incident. However, anti-social behaviour on school buses by a small number of pupils is a growing problem. This is a national trend and not confined to Leicestershire. Some of the implications of anti-social behaviour are: -

For pupils and parents - the safety of those directly involved and other pupils on the bus and the inconvenience when buses are delayed because of anti-social behaviour

For bus operators - the cost of repairing damage and the loss of income while a vehicle is out of service being repaired

For the County Council - the increased cost of providing school transport reflecting bus operators' increased costs

For the School - visible anti-social behaviour may diminish the reputation of the school in the community

What is Anti-social Behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour includes a range of problems.

Some examples of anti-social behaviour on school buses are: -

- Fighting, bullying, intimidation of other pupils
- Verbal abuse of drivers and harassment of other pupils
- Vandalism, graffiti and criminal damage to vehicles
- Smoking
- Moving around the bus, throwing objects, distracting the driver
- Misuse of bus passes
- Opening emergency exits on the vehicle.

What happens if anti-social behaviour is reported?

The school is in the best position to carry out an investigation into the incident, as they know the pupils involved. It is usual for the school to determine how to carry out the investigation but it would normally involve taking written statements from pupils who witnessed the incident and interviewing individually those pupils named or identified as involved. Drivers may also be requested to submit a report.

Any information given is treated in confidence. The investigation will seek to establish, as far as possible, exactly what happened and who was responsible.

CCTV is fitted on some vehicles. Where available, CCTV recordings or still images will be shown to the school to identify those pupils taking part in anti-social behaviour.

In very serious cases, the bus operator may call the Police, particularly if there has been damage to the vehicle. The Police may carry out their own investigation and might also wish to interview those pupils involved.

What action is taken against pupils involved in anti-social behaviour?

Following an investigation, further actions against pupils are agreed between the school and the Passenger Transport Unit. This is usually in the form of exclusion from transport for a defined period although disciplinary action within school, e.g. after school detentions, may sometimes be agreed as an alternative.

The action taken will depend on the severity of the incident and whether a pupil has previously been involved in anti-social behaviour. However, the following can be used as a guideline:-

- For a minor incident (e.g. misuse of bus passes, moving around the vehicle)

- warning letter on the first occasion
- on the second occasion, exclusion from school transport for 1 to 5 days
- on subsequent occasions, exclusion from transport for 5 to 10 days
- For a serious incident (e.g. bullying, physical or verbal abuse of driver or pupils, smoking, any action threatening the safety of individuals or the vehicle, vandalism or damage to the vehicle)
 - Exclusion from transport for a minimum period of 5 days up to 1 term depending on circumstances and previous history.

These are only guidelines and the action agreed in any particular case will take into account individual circumstances and the views of the school.

What happens if a pupil is excluded from transport?

When exclusion from transport has been agreed, parents will normally be notified in writing and given an appropriate period of notice before the exclusion period starts. This is to allow parents an opportunity to make alternative transport arrangements. During the exclusion period, it remains the responsibility of the parents' to ensure their child's continued attendance at school.

In very serious cases, where it is considered that the safety of the vehicle and other pupils would be put at risk by allowing a pupil to continue to travel, exclusion from transport may start immediately and without written notice. In such cases, the school would attempt to contact the parents to make them aware of the situation and arrange for them to collect the pupil from school. If the parents could not be contacted, alternative transport would be arranged to get the pupil home.

