

# EXTRA Headteachers' Update

## The Daily 5 O'Clock Update For Schools

### DfE Updates

#### **DfE NEWS STORY: Update on face coverings in schools**

The Department for Education is updating its advice on face coverings in schools.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/update-on-face-coverings-in-schools>

#### **NEW GUIDANCE: Face coverings in education**

The DfE has issued new guidance on the use of face coverings for schools and other education institutions that teach people in Years 7 and above in England.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education?utm\\_source=53671f11-6c05-454a-845e-8e2a4463752b&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education?utm_source=53671f11-6c05-454a-845e-8e2a4463752b&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily)

#### **UPDATED: Guidance for schools: coronavirus (COVID-19)**

What school leaders, teachers and school staff need to do during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The DfE has added 'Face coverings in education' guidance in 'Safe working and protective measures' section.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19?utm\\_source=1d82c57e-3c93-4518-b8f3-49dfb7142afa&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=1d82c57e-3c93-4518-b8f3-49dfb7142afa&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily)

### Face Coverings Risk Assessment

The Local Authority's Health and Safety team have produced a draft risk assessment in relation to face coverings in schools.

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/15-DRV1r6o5VqrCPmQo5qdOPo6f8UVqj6J7yyUJ\\_ZyJw/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/15-DRV1r6o5VqrCPmQo5qdOPo6f8UVqj6J7yyUJ_ZyJw/edit?usp=sharing)

### Northumbria Healthcare NHS Flu Campaign Materials for Schools

The winter flu campaign materials will be sent to all schools next week by NHS Northumbria Healthcare in anticipation of the flu campaign from October 5<sup>th</sup> to December 18<sup>th</sup> 2020, along with each school's specific participation dates. The materials have been designed to complement the winter flu risk assessment prepared by the NCC Health & Safety Team.

The packs will include leaflets for parents which are available in a selection of languages, the information leaflet for the vaccine Northumbria-Healthcare deliver and the PHE (as was) promotional poster in a separate folder.

### School Transport Update

Please find below instructions & guidance we have issued to our contracted school transport providers regarding steps they need to take to ensure safe travel for children and young people as well as their own staff on the journey to and from school.

These instructions/guidance are based on DfE guidance issued on 11 August 2020. Whilst many of the mandatory requirements and recommendations can be implemented by the transport operators themselves they will require your assistance in a number of areas as outlined below:

#### **Seating Arrangements**

We know from past experience that the successful implementation of seating plans requires the active consent and co-operation of parents, their children, transport operators and school staff.

We have arranged for children and young people in the same year group to sit together onboard vehicles.

Transport operators are being issued with “loading lists” which will detail the year group each child and young person is in. This will assist them in determining how many seats they need to reserve for children in each year group on board the vehicle.

Clearly, drivers cannot be expected to police arrangements such as where children sit once the journey is underway - their role is to focus on driving the vehicle safely.

Your active support is therefore requested to ensure children and young people understand that they must follow the instructions of the driver to sit where instructed and remain there for the duration of the journey. Carrying out checks that children are following these instructions when buses arrive at or leave school on a regular basis will help ensure this is being adhered to. Schools should seek to reiterate requirements at the earliest opportunity after the start of term. Electing to reinforce arrangements and expected behaviour at first registration and/or by senior teachers during initial assemblies will serve to support this process and is strongly recommended.

### **Queuing Arrangements**

To support these revised seating arrangements we ask that you put in place appropriate queuing arrangements in preparation for the morning arrival and afternoon return journey home. These are to ensure children and young people are able to maintain social distancing and to support them with wearing face coverings when waiting to board and alight school transport.

When boarding, queues should be organised so that older cohort groups, who are advised to sit at the back of a vehicle, are first in the queue and first to board the vehicle. This will minimise the need to pass other groups on the vehicle whilst pupils are taking their seats. Likewise, whilst supervising arrivals, pupils should disembark the vehicle in their groups (those sat in the front of the bus disembarking first).

Schools and establishments should seek to undertake more direct supervision of the morning arrivals and boarding for the afternoon return

journey on initial occasions. This is to take the opportunity to observe that pupils are correctly seated and to directly reaffirm the expectations.

### **Personal Hygiene and Disposal/Storage of Face Coverings**

References in the DfE and broader government guidance are made to other actions that also require your active cooperation. They include: -

- Ensuring children and young people clean their hands before boarding transport and again on disembarking.
- Correctly fitting/removal of face coverings, their disposal and storage and disposal of tissues - it is unlikely that many transport operators will have a bin onboard their vehicle and therefore we ask that you have a process in place for children and young people to remove face coverings when they arrive at school, for disposing of disposable face coverings and used tissues when they arrive at school, and for children and young people to store reusable face masks. s

### **Staggered Arrival & Departure Times and Change of School Opening Hours**

As noted in the 14 August Headteacher Briefing, whilst where possible we have adjusted the times of home to school transport routes as a result of changes to school opening times, this is not possible in all cases due to the complexities of the transport provision. Further details of timings will be provided when you receive your loading lists. Please note that children and young people in different year groups will be traveling together on home to school transport so that it will not be possible for them to arrive at school at different times from one another.

### **Behaviour of Children & Young People on Home to School Transport**

You will note from the correspondence that has been issued to parents that we are seeking their support in ensuring their children behave appropriately onboard school transport. However, we would appreciate your support in emphasising key messages to students, especially those that concern sitting where instructed by the driver, behaviour when on the bus and the wearing of face coverings.

## And finally....

If a child develops Covid-19 symptoms at school please remember that they must not be sent home on home to school transport. If a child who uses home to school transport tests positive for Covid -19 please inform the home to school transport team.

## School Transport Operators & Measures Required to Control Covid-19

Dear Operator,

### Government Guidance

National Government guidance is changing as the situation evolves and we can all expect it to continue to do so.

The Department for Education (DfE) issued guidance entitled "Transport to school and other places of education: autumn term 2020" on 11th August 2020 covering guidance for the provision of dedicated home to school or college transport as schools return for full re-opening and also for managing the capacity of, and demand for, public transport from September.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020>.

### Risk Assessment

Transport operators should conduct a risk assessment for all their operations including dedicated school transport services. This will determine the most appropriate safety measures to be put in place for their staff such as for social distancing, face coverings and PPE.

By PPE, we mean equipment such as fluid-resistant surgical face masks, disposable gloves, disposable plastic aprons and eye protection such as a face visor or goggles. We do not mean face coverings.

Drivers and passenger assistants will not normally require PPE on home to school transport, even if they are not able to maintain a distance from the children and young people on the transport. This is because children and young people with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) must not board home to school transport. Where your own risk assessment requires it, the driver and passenger assistant should be provided with appropriate PPE to use where required.

The following are steps and advice we require you to either undertake or consider following to ensure safe travel for your staff as well as children and young people on Home to School Transport from the start of the new academic year.

Where we have used the word "**must**" it is mandatory that the control measure it refers to is implemented. Where the word "**should**" is used, we ask that serious consideration is given to implementing the task it refers to but it is not mandatory. We appreciate that not all initiatives listed below are workable on every contract.

### Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell

Drivers and passenger assistants **must not** work if they have symptoms, or if someone in their household has symptoms. If they develop symptoms whilst at work they **must** go home and get a test.

Drivers and passenger assistants who have been in close? contact with someone who has developed symptoms whilst at school or on home to school transport do not need to go home to self-isolate unless (one of these):

- they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test)
- the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive and they were in contact within 48 hours of them first displaying symptoms
- if they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace

Close contact means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, unprotected physical contact (skin to skin)
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected individual

Drivers and passenger assistants **must** wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after contact with someone who has symptoms.

If a person with symptoms has been in a vehicle that provides home to school transport, the vehicle **must** be cleaned with normal household disinfectant to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

### Response to any infection

Any transport personnel who has a high temperature or new persistent cough or is within 14 days of the day when the first member of their household showed symptoms of Covid 19 **must not** access the school transport service but **must** follow the guidance on [self-isolation](#).

Operators **must** inform the school transport team if any member of their staff start to display symptoms of Covid-19 or are tested positive.

Anyone identified as extremely vulnerable should follow the advice provided at [shielding and protecting extremely vulnerable people](#).

### Engage with the test and trace process

Transport operators **must** ensure that drivers and passenger assistants [book a test](#) if they display [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#) and let NCC know.

Transport operators should ensure that drivers, passenger assistants understand that they will need to be ready and willing:

- to provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace
- to [self-isolate](#) if they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), or if anyone in their household develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)

### Seating Plans

Seating plans **must** be put in place so that children in designated year groups sit together within the vehicle, whether it is a taxi, minibus or coach.

- Implement systems for boarding, alighting and queuing of children and young people to minimise contact and mixing.
- If children and young people in the vehicle attend different schools then the children for each school **must** all sit together as a group in the vehicle

- Make it clear to children which seats are available for use.
- Face to face seating **must not** be used to sit children and young people on board vehicles

Other initiatives which we encourage you to do if practical and possible are:

- Use a larger vehicle than that normally deployed on their school transport route in order to allow increased separation of children and young people between year groups or individuals.
- Consider rearranging, limiting or removing seating to help enforce social distancing.

### Vehicle

#### Vehicle Seat Belts and Car Seats

To avoid close proximity between driver and children, parents should be asked to encourage their children to put seat belts on themselves, so far as possible. Where assistance is required (likely to be younger children), the parent/responsible adult should be encouraged to assist when boarding at home. When boarding at the school, the school staff in the child's teaching "bubble" may be able to assist as required. However, where applicable the legal responsibility of drivers to ensure seat belts and car seat harnesses are worn properly is unchanged; but normally a visual check will be sufficient.

#### Vehicle Ventilation

Keep vehicles well ventilated by opening windows and ceiling vents wherever possible, (whilst being aware of the need to avoid the risk of children leaning out of windows etc). Do not use re-circulation air conditioning

#### Vehicle Cleaning

- Implement procedures for standard and deep cleaning of vehicles
- Regularly touched objects and surfaces (like door handles and handrails) **must** be cleaned more often than usual and after each journey using standard cleaning products
- An enhanced cleaning regime of the whole vehicle **must** be undertaken using standard products (minimum clean at the end of each day). Coronavirus (COVID-19) is easy to kill on surfaces. Normal cleaning products will do this such as detergents and bleach - specialist cleaning products are not needed. Staff undertaking cleaning to be provided with appropriate PPE

## Vehicle Modifications

For the added benefit of drivers and passengers consider the installation of a protective screen in between the rear passenger compartment and the driver in taxis and the installation of a protective screen around the driver area on buses and coaches. The following conditions must be met in relation to their installation in taxis:

- **Must not** be permanently installed in the vehicle;
- **Must not** have a solid frame to the screen;
- **Must only** be fitted by way of either Velcro or adhesive fastenings, which can be removed from the vehicle when the screens are no longer permitted.
- **Must** be fitted in such a way so as to not affect the structural integrity of the vehicle, or interfere with any manufacturer fitted safety equipment e.g. airbags;
- **Must not** wrap around the driver seat and create a partition between the two front seats, in addition to the rear cabin area.
- Must be approved as necessary by either the Council's taxi licensing team or the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).

## Driver & Passenger Assistants

- The same driver and, where applicable, passenger assistant **must** be deployed for the operation of each contract on a continuous basis to reduce the risk of transmission unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- Remind drivers and (where deployed) passenger assistants that they **must** wash their hands before and after every journey.
- In addition to washing their hands with soap and water before and after each journey, drivers and passenger assistants should use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol based) at intervals throughout the journey, and should always do so after performing tasks such as helping a child into the vehicle or handling a child's belongings.
- Drivers and passenger assistants should maintain a distance from their passengers wherever possible. We acknowledge that the nature of school transport, and the needs of the children and young people receiving it, mean this will not always be possible.

## Communication & Signage

Drivers should:

- report any concerns to the council about any issues with social distancing at bus stops or collection points
- in a calm, polite but authoritative manner, reiterate standards of behaviour and instructions to children and young people on how they are to board and alight, and allocate seats to children on their first day of travel as they board the vehicle
- issue a reminder each day of behaviours expected and report issues of concern to the school transport team for follow-up.

Transport Operators should where possible implement the following :

- the application of floor tape, signs or paint in passenger areas to help direct students to their allocated seats.
- the use of signage to indicate to children and young people where they should sit
- the display of notices to emphasise the importance of good behaviour e.g. sit in allocated seats, keep your distance when entering and leaving the vehicle etc.
- displaying Public Health posters in vehicles that emphasise the importance of washing hands and the 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' message
- the use of signs and messages to build awareness of good hand washing technique and other hygiene behaviours, for example, around coughing and sneezing

And finally.....

**Drivers should not be expected to police arrangements such as seating plans, queues, the wearing of face coverings - their role is primarily to focus on driving the vehicle safely**