

Date/Dyddiad: June 2020
Ask for/Gofynnwch am: School Transport
Telephone/Rhif ffôn: 01446 700111
Your Ref/Eich Cyf:
My Ref/Fy Nghyf:
e-mail/e-bost: schooltransport@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

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Dear Parent/Carer,

I refer to the provision of home to school transport for eligible pupils from Monday, 29th June 2020 and would like to share with you our intentions to provide transport, albeit on a very limited basis; please see below.

1. Primarily and bearing in mind the capacity issues school transport provision will have due to social distancing requirements, consideration must be given to how those who are entitled to free school transport will be awarded a space on a vehicle remembering that **the preference as recommended by the Welsh Government's Guidance is for pupils to walk or cycle and/or be taken by their parents**. Vehicles will only be able to accommodate 20% of their normal capacity to ensure the 2-metre social distance and as such we have had to put a number of measures in place.
2. The Council will assist as far as is practically possible to run buses to serve amended school start and finish times. However, transport will only run once to get pupils to school and once to get pupils home from school. Officers within the School Transport Team will work with schools to arrange this.
3. The Council will stop discretionary 'fare paying' school transport services with immediate effect, which cater for those pupils who live within qualifying distance of their school and should actively travel to and from it. This will further assist in freeing up vehicles across the network that could be reassigned to other statutory services where there is a lack of capacity.
4. The following criteria in the order shown are agreed (i.e. A to D) when deciding on whether a pupil can have a space on a school transport service, IF the number of seats requested is more than seats available:
 - a. If parent/carers can take pupil or pupil can actively travel to school (walking/cycling/scooting) accompanied as necessary, the pupil will not be eligible for a seat.
 - b. If (a) is not possible, first option of a seat will be given to a pupil who is considered vulnerable (information on this to be confirmed by individual schools).
 - c. If seats are still available after consideration of (b), a pupil is a learner of statutory school age (Reception to Year 11) they will be given preference over those of non-statutory school age (Year 12 and 13).
 - d. If seats are still available or if requests by statutory aged pupils are more than seats available and points b and c have been considered, learners who live furthest from the school will be given preference.
5. The Council will not be providing any additional transport provision compared to pre-Covid-19 levels for this four-week period.

6. Current Welsh Government recommendation is that three layered face covering should be worn on public transport. This is only a recommendation and not mandatory. To ensure the safety of pupils on school transport the wearing of such masks for drivers and escorts (not pupils who may struggle with this) is seen as good practice.
7. All operators will be given procedures to follow, in addition to their own Covid-19 procedures. This will include the following recommendations:
 - a. Drivers/Escorts to wear three-layer face coverings;
 - b. Drivers/Escorts to maintain social distance from pupils as much as possible;
 - c. Driver to remain in their seat for the entire journey and not get off the bus until they return to their depot;
 - d. Vehicles not be accessed by anyone in between the morning and afternoon services and
 - e. Vehicles be deep cleaned on the return to the depot in the evenings.However, it should be further noted that individual Operators may have additional requirements that will need to be adhered to in order to use the service. Such requirements will be further advised as soon as possible to persons concerned.
8. **ALN Transport** - The majority of the above applies to mainstream school transport services only and those pupils with additional learning needs who are entitled to free school transport will be assessed on an individual basis and agreement sought between the Passenger Transport Team, school and parent/carer about what transport can be provided separately.

I would therefore be grateful if you would share this information as soon as possible with parents/guardians of children using home to school transport services and request that they consider the above intentions, especially point 1, and email schooltransport@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk as soon as possible by 12:00 (noon), Wednesday 24 June 2020 at the latest if they still require school transport by providing the following information. However, the Council is unable to guarantee the provision of any child's transport at this stage.

- **Childs Name**
- **Date of birth**
- **School Attending**
- **School Bus Service Number (number should be on the child's existing school bus pass)**
- **Day(s) of the week transport is required**
- **Reason for service requirement (i.e. vulnerable child or unable to attend without school transport).**

We will email those parents/carers who request transport and confirm if we can provide. **If you do not receive an email your child is not able to travel.** Transport providers will receive a list of pupils that are to be transported and the day the pupil will travel. This will allow us to ensure vehicles do not go over capacity and provide the necessary social distance.

Yours sincerely

The School Transport Team

A Welsh translation is currently being processed and will follow in due course. However, due to time constraints, this letter is being sent out in English in the first instance.