

Letter to: Parents/Carers of all
Shropshire School Children

Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire SY2 6ND

Date: 25th August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Coronavirus (Covid-19) – Journey to and from School wef September 2020

All Shropshire school children are returning to school from September 2020. In preparation for this, I wanted to write to you to reassure you that the Council has prepared a plan for safe transport.

Whilst most parents live relatively close to school and their children either walk or cycle, for those who rely on public or contracted transport to school this letter is particularly important.

Advice about public and contracted transport to school can be found on the Council's website at the following link:

www.shropshire.gov.uk/school-transport

This advice is based on the latest Government guidance, and where needs be it has been adapted to reflect local circumstances in Shropshire.

The key messages for all involved in children's journeys to and from school during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) emergency include:

- Follow Government, Council and School advice for safe travel
- Pupils should not travel if feeling unwell or if they or anyone in their household have any Covid-19 symptoms
- Avoid using public transport buses, particularly if you live less than two miles from school - Coronavirus (Covid-19) capacity regulations mean that public buses are likely to be full; where possible pupils should cycle or walk instead
- On some rural public bus services, the Council has provided additional buses just for school children; also, some public service buses will now be 'Schools Only' (*NB details are on the Council's website at the link above*)
- Where we can, we've arranged that pupils on contracted buses from different schools don't travel together

And for the journey,

- Wash or alcohol gel hands before and after travel, and as often as possible throughout the day; parents can supply gel if they wish
- For pupils aged over 11 face coverings are mandatory on public transport and should be worn on school contracted buses

- Pupils should use the same bus seat every day on school contracted buses - seating arrangements will reflect school year group 'bubbles', with eldest pupils at the rear and youngest at the front
- During the journey, pupils should face forwards, not touch others, not move out of their seat and avoid loud talking, shouting or singing
- Everyone should cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of the elbow when coughing or sneezing
- Hopefully this will not occur, but if any pupil presents an unacceptable risk to others, they may then not be allowed on the bus/taxi

We should also add that our plan also has specific guidance for SEND travel, and that the Temporary Seats Payment Scheme is not operating during the emergency.

Where parents have no option but to drive pupils to school, they should try and park well away from the school gates and walk the final part of the journey on foot. In any event, parents, pupils and others should avoid congregating in the school gates area, to help reduce both road and Coronavirus (Covid-19) risks.

Parental and pupil support in adhering to the guidelines is vital for safe travel and we are most grateful for your assistance.

Full details for safe travel can be found at the web link above.

By working together, we can make Shropshire safe.

Yours faithfully,

Shropshire Council
Passenger Transport Group

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