



Education, Leisure and Housing School Transport Policy

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1. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

Clarify entitlement to, and the extent of, home to school transport provision;

Set out the standard of service expected from school transport operators in providing safe and reliable home to school transport; and

Clarify the responsibilities of parents / carers, pupils and school staff in ensuring safe home to school transport.

2. Introduction

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, Section 51 places a legal responsibility on Local Authorities to enable the attendance at school of children who live beyond the specified maximum walking distance.

In terms of Act the Council must make such arrangements as it considers necessary for the provision of transport to schools. In exercising its judgement as to what, if any, provision is required; the Council is required to have regard to the safety of pupils and must consider the circumstances of each individual case.

Education Authorities also have a common law duty of care for the safety of pupils under their charge, and this duty extends to pupils using school transport.

This policy determines the way in which Orkney Islands Council will consider applications for school transport and the operation of the service. The Council reserves the right to make exceptions to the policy in circumstances where Education, Leisure and Housing consider it reasonable.

Every pupil accessing school transport should be safe and travel in comfort. Education, Leisure and Housing has developed this policy and associated guidelines to set out the standards of service expected by pupils, parents / carers, school staff and school transport operators and drivers.

All school transport operators are subject to detailed Conditions of Contract, which cover a wide range of requirements relating to the safe and legal operation of home to school transport services. Any driver performing services under Contract to the Council shall hold a valid licence to operate the type of vehicle they are driving in performing the Contract and appropriate for the type of services being performed under the Contract, as required by statute. All drivers are required to be members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme for Children.

Pupils and parents / carers must agree to comply with the school transport Code of Conduct before the Council can grant access to school transport. Pupils who do not adhere to the Code of Conduct may be withdrawn from school transport.

Whilst the core function is to provide services for children, it is recognised that in some areas, where capacity allows, a school transport service provided to secondary schools may be registered with the Traffic Commissioner to carry members of the public.

3. Provision of Transport

3.1. Qualifying Distance

The Council provides free transport to all pupils who live more than the statutory walking distance from their designated school, which is two miles for pupils less than 8 years old and three miles for pupils aged 8 and over.

In Orkney, this reduces to 1.5 miles for all pupils during the winter terms (October break to Easter break). These distances are measured by the shortest available safe walking route. This is more generous than that prescribed by statute and therefore may be reviewed at any time.

3.2. Entitlement

The Council provides school transport for pupils who live out with the qualifying distance of their school as detailed in 3.1. The statutory requirement to make travel arrangements does not imply a door to door service and requires only that suitable arrangements are made.

Transport is usually provided as close to home as is practical, however parents / carers are responsible for getting their children safely to / from the transport pick-up / drop off point. Parents / carers can be expected to walk / transport their children up to the qualifying distance as detailed in 3.1 to reach the pick-up / drop off point.

Distances from home to school will be measured electronically using the Council's geographic information system (GIS) tools and Ordnance Survey large scale digital mapping.

When applying for school transport, the address provided on the school transport application form is the only address taken account of for transport purposes. However, if a pupil has more than one address because the parents are not living together but the pupil lives for part of the school week with each parent, then both places of residence will be regarded as home for the pupil. Both addresses must be within the catchment of the school and meet the entitlement distance.

The Council will not consider diverting school transport provision from an existing route. Where the distance from the pupil's home address to the pick-up / drop off point exceeds the qualifying distance, the Council will make provision. This can be either through a parent receiving a mileage allowance for undertaking the journey or, in exceptional circumstances, through extending the route of a hired vehicle to cover the stretch of road.

In cases where alterations to school transport arrangements are necessary, pupils and parents / carers will be given as much notice as possible and unless there are safety reasons, changes take effect as soon as practicable.

The safety of the pupil's journey between home and the pick up and drop off point is considered to include being accompanied by a responsible adult if necessary, such accompaniment to be arranged by the pupil's parent / carer.

The Council does not provide transport for:

- Pre-school education.
- 'Placing Request' pupils who are attending a school other than their catchment area school.

The Council does not provide transport for those pupils in receipt of a placing request, this must be taken into consideration when making a placing request. Parents must accept full responsibility for the organisation and cost of transport for their child travelling to and from school.

Home to school transport covers one return journey, to school in the morning and home at the end of the school day.

3.3. Transport Commencement

The Council requires up to five working days to organise and arrange transport for a new pupil between home and school or implement a change of address which may also mean a change of bus route. If there are capacity issues on the route then it may take longer to allocate spaces as nominated passengers are entitled to ten working days' notice to make alternative arrangements.

3.4. Nominated Passengers

Nominated places may be allocated by the Council to pupils who do not qualify for transport but live on an established bus route where the bus serving the route has available empty seats. It is important to note that a nominated place is not an entitlement to school transport, it is only offered to a pupil who does not qualify for free home to school transport where space is available on an existing school contract vehicle.

The Council reserves the right to withdraw transport if the seat is required for a pupil travelling to their entitled school. Under such circumstances parents / carers will be provided with ten working days written notice to make alternative transport arrangements.

If the number of requests for nominated places is greater than the number of vacant seats available, the Council must select which of those pupils will be allocated nominated places. This will normally result in removing pupils who are a Placing Request followed by those who live closest to the school.

If the number of entitled pupils in any area becomes such that it may be more practical and cost effective to provide transport in smaller vehicles nominated pupils may have this provision withdrawn with ten days' notice.

Nominated passengers may also be asked to relinquish their place on school transport at any time if it is deemed necessary for any other reason at the Council's sole discretion.

A nominated place cannot be provided where a school route is also registered as a local bus service (some Secondary routes). In such cases non entitled pupils should pay the appropriate fare.

3.5. Pupil Pick up / Drop off Points

Suitable pick-up / drop off points will be agreed with the Council's Education Transport Officer. As stipulated in 3.2 transport may not be provided door-to-door.

The Education Transport Officer will endeavour to assess new pick-up / drop off points to ensure that potential dangers are identified and solutions are found to keep risks to a minimum. If required, advice may be sought from Officers within the Roads Service of the Council. Any risk assessment carried out on a pick-up / drop off point is made on the assumption that pupils will be accompanied by a responsible adult from their home to and from the pick-up / drop off point.

Parents / carers are responsible for their child's journey to and from school, or where transport is provided, between home and the pick-up and drop off point.

Parents / carers should note that drivers are **not** required to help children cross roads and parents / carers should advise their children accordingly.

3.6. Pupil Catchment Areas

School transport is provided for pupils who reside within the catchment area of their designated school. Parents / carers should note the qualifying distances at 3.1 which outlines the entitlement criteria to school transport. Where a placing request is made for a school within a different catchment area the Council will not provide transport.

3.7. Medical Grounds

In exceptional circumstances, home to school transport may be provided on medical grounds, to enable pupils to attend their designated catchment school even though they may live within the statutory qualifying distance from the school. An application should be made if a pupil who is attending their correct catchment school is unable to walk to school due to a medical reason. Supporting written medical evidence must be obtained from a GP or hospital to confirm that the pupil is unable to walk to school and the likely period of incapacity. Please note: Medical grounds do not mean automatic entitlement. Entitlement on these grounds will be reviewed on an annual basis.

3.8. Additional Support Needs

A pupil with additional support needs will be individually assessed by a member from the Support for Learners Team and where appropriate, an arrangement made to ensure the pupil is transported suitably and safely.

The Pupils Requiring Special Arrangements (PRSA) Code of Practice was produced by the Council to provide contractors, escorts, parents / carers and school staff with summary information about the provision of transport for pupils requiring special arrangements arising from additional support needs.

This entitlement will be reviewed by the Support for Learners Team as part of the pupil assessment.

3.9. Pre-School Pupils

There is no statutory duty for the Council to provide transport for pupils attending nursery or pre-school.

3.10. Travel by Ferry or Plane

Ferry

Senior pupils living on an island commuting into Kirkwall Grammar School or Stromness Academy travel by ferry on a daily or weekly basis. Ferry tickets are issued by the school office or Papdale Halls of Residence to pupils who are eligible for free travel so they do not incur a fee.

Pupils commuting on a weekly basis on the school roll of Kirkwall Grammar School are resident at Papdale Halls of Residence during the week.

Pupils living on an island commuting to school on another island or to the mainland may also travel by ferry on a daily or weekly basis.

Plane

Pupils, who commute on a weekly basis into Kirkwall Grammar School, from Papa Westray, North Ronaldsay and, S1 and S2 pupils living on Eday, are entitled to travel by plane. Flights are booked and managed by the Council.

Transport (usually a taxi) is provided to / from Kirkwall Airport to take pupils to / from Papdale Halls of Residence or Kirkwall Grammar School. This is booked by the Council.

3.11. Safety Routes

In addition to distance entitlement, free home to school transport may be provided when a route is assessed as being unsuitable for a child to walk to school whilst accompanied by a responsible adult. Even where statutory distances are not reached safety route criteria can apply if no other suitable walking route exists.

To assess whether transport should be provided for safety reasons, a safety audit will be carried out. In determining whether or not a safe walking route exists, the Council will take expert advice from the Police and / or other qualified road safety officers. Parents remain responsible for arranging suitable travel arrangements for their child during this time.

Any assessment carried out on a route is made on the assumption that pupils will be accompanied by a responsible adult. Where a parent / carer allows a child to walk unsupervised, the parent / carer is responsible for the safety of that child.

Where a route is deemed as unsuitable, transport provision will be organised. This may be in the form of providing transport or paying a parental allowance per mile.

In assessing any route a combination of factors and criteria are used. Therefore, what is acceptable for a road with high traffic volume is different from what is acceptable for routes with low or very low traffic volume.

4. Responsibilities

4.1. Responsibilities of Orkney Islands Council

The Schools (Safety and Supervision of Pupils) (Scotland) Regulations 1990 place a general duty on Local Authorities to secure, as far as is practicable, the safety of pupils under their charge.

Pupils travelling on dedicated school transport arranged by the local authority are under the charge of the authority. Therefore the authority will keep school transport provision under review to ensure the safety of pupils when travelling on school transport.

The Council provides assistance with transport to all pupils who live more than the statutory qualifying distance from their designated school, which is two miles for pupils less than 8 years old and three miles for pupil aged 8 and over. In Orkney, this reduces to 1.5 miles for all pupils during the winter terms (October break to Easter break).

Orkney Islands Council's Education, Leisure and Housing will:

- Agree all routes and schedules with the school transport contractor.
- Ensure that the contractor provides a suitable vehicle and that all drivers are suitably licensed and insured for the conveyance of school children.
- Ensure that all conveyors, drivers and escorts are members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme for Children.
- Monitor the requirement to ensure that all conveyors, drivers and escorts are members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme for Children.
- Ensure that, as far as possible, the maximum single journey time will be up to 45 minutes for a primary pupil and 65 minutes for a secondary pupil.

Schools will:

- Investigate any instances of anti-social behaviour on school transport and report their findings to Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Ensure pupils are aware of the school transport Code of Conduct and enforce where necessary.
- Work with Education, Leisure and Housing to decide the appropriate actions for pupils who are in breach of the Code of Conduct.
- Report any school transport contractor who fails to meet their contractual obligations to Education, Leisure and Housing so appropriate action can be taken.

4.2. Responsibilities of Contractors

The safety and welfare of pupils is of paramount importance.

The School Transport Contractor will be contracted by Orkney Islands Council's Education Transport Service, to provide the safe conveyance of pupils between their designated pick-up / drop off point and the school site, and vice versa. The contractor's duties will be set out in full in its contract with the Council.

Contractors should pay close attention to the advice in Appendix 1 which details their responsibilities while contracted to carry out school transport.

4.3. In the event of a Breakdown or Accident

In the case of a breakdown, emergency or an accident on a school service, the driver should not leave the pupils unless in situations of extreme emergency. Pupils should be instructed to stay in the vehicle until alternative transport arrives. If the situation is deemed to be dangerous, the pupils will be guided to a safe place by the driver.

Drivers should be made aware of the information and advice contained in Appendix 4 in regard to dealing with a breakdown or accident.

4.4. Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

The information laid out in Appendix 5 should be read and understood by parents and carers before their children use free school transport provided by the Council.

Parents / carers are ultimately responsible for the proper and safe behaviour of their child when getting on, whilst travelling and getting off the transport provided. They are also responsible between home and the pick-up and drop off point, immediately prior to boarding school transport each morning and again following the afternoon journey.

It is advisable that parents / carers wait at their children's drop off point and accompany them across the road if necessary as parents / carers are responsible for their children's safety after they have left the school transport vehicle.

Parents / carers are also reminded that they are ultimately responsible for the behaviour of their child when travelling on school transport. Parents / carers have a duty to read through the Code of Conduct with their children and explain its importance and consequences for not adhering to it.

4.5. Code of Conduct – School Transport

School Transport users must read the Code of Conduct and sign to say that they agree to adhere to it before they are entitled to use free school transport. For pupils under the age of 16 parents / carers must also sign to say that they agree to the terms.

The Code of Conduct relates to pupils who are entitled to school transport provided by the Council and sets out what is expected of pupils if they are to travel on school transport.

Pupils who fail to abide by the Code of Conduct could have their entitlement to school transport removed for a period of time. Should this situation arise, it will become the responsibility of the pupil's parents / carers to arrange transport to and from school for this period of time.

The Council requests that parents / carers of pupils who use school transport familiarise themselves with the behaviour expected of their children by reading the 'Code of Conduct' (Appendix 6).

5. General Information

5.1. Behaviour on School Transport

Parents / carers are ultimately responsible for the proper and safe behaviour of their child when getting on, travelling and getting off the transport provided. Pupils travelling on school transport, who misbehave, cause damage or injury either to the vehicle or other passengers may at the Council's discretion either be temporarily or permanently removed from using school transport. In cases of anti-social behaviour, children will be subject to the normal disciplinary procedures of the school.

Any such behaviour can be reported by a teacher, pupil, parent, driver, operator or member of the public.

The Council may request an investigation into the alleged incident by working closely with the school and transport operator. If requested, this would be carried out by senior management within the school. This would normally involve taking written statements from pupils who witnessed the incident and interviewing individually those pupils who were named or identified as involved. Operators may also be requested to submit a report. CCTV images may be shown to school staff, and, in the case of a serious incident, to the Police.

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

Following an investigation, any further action to be taken will be agreed between Education, Leisure and Housing and the investigating officer. This will usually take the form of an 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.

The following can be used as a guideline for a minor incident (e.g. persistently moving around the school bus while in motion, not wearing a seatbelt):

- 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 / operator or pupils, smoking, any action threatening the safety of individuals or the vehicle, vandalism or damage):

- Exclusion from transport for a minimum of 5 days or up to one 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.

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

In very serious cases, where it is considered that the safety of the vehicle, pupils and other transport users 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 or service will attempt to contact the parents / carers to make them aware of the situation and arrange for them to collect the pupil from school.

If there has been damage, the operator will seek to recover the cost of repairs. Education, Leisure and Housing will write to the parent / carer of the pupil(s) responsible detailing the date of the incident, the damage caused and the cost of repairs.

After a period of exclusion has ended, a pupil will normally be allowed to travel on the school transport 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.

Parents / carers are reminded that they have a duty to ensure that their children regularly attend school. Where a child fails to attend regularly at school (and has no reasonable excuse) then, unless Education, Leisure and Housing have consented to the withdrawal of the child from school, their parents / carers shall be guilty of an offence (Education (Scotland) Act 1980 – Section 35). It is therefore the parent / carer's responsibility to get their children to and from school whilst entitlement to school transport has been removed.

5.2. Behaviour on Other Modes of Transport

Pupils who travel on other modes of transport (e.g. ferry, plane or taxi) who misbehave, cause damage or injury may at the Council's discretion have their entitlement to school transport withdrawn.

Orkney Ferries staff can report instances of anti-social behaviour by pupils on board the ferry to Education, Leisure and Housing.

Parents / carers and pupils should note the procedure in 5.1 'Behaviour on School Transport' will also be followed in the event of any report of anti-social behaviour on other modes of transport.

5.3. Seatbelts

All coaches, minibuses and cars used for the conveyance of school transport are fitted with seatbelts. Pupils are expected to wear the seat belts provided for them. Failure to wear a seatbelt means that the pupil is in breach of the Code of Conduct and therefore may have their entitlement to school transport removed.

5.4. CCTV Cameras

Parents / carers and pupils should be aware that CCTV equipment is operational on some modes of transport. Vehicles / vessels using CCTV will have notices displayed to this effect. Recorded images may be shown to school staff to identify individual pupils.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act, operators are required to have their own policy and procedures in place.

5.5. Bus Passes

Pupils travelling on certain routes may be issued with school bus passes. Pupils should ensure that they carry their card with them at all times so the drivers are aware that they are entitled to use the bus, and if travelling on a public service bus do not incur a fee.

If a pass is lost, stolen or damaged, pupils should inform the school as soon as possible. Please note there will be an administration fee for a replacement pass.

5.6. Winter Weather Operation

During periods of adverse weather some or all school transport routes may not operate, or alternatively operate a curtailed service depending on local road conditions. It is very difficult to obtain individual route information to advise parents / carers whether the school bus on their route is running that morning, as this will depend on the local weather and road conditions. We therefore are only able to advise whether there will be disruptions to school transport in general.

Decisions to cancel or amend school transport routes are taken in the interests of the safety and welfare of pupils, school transport and other road users. These decisions are taken by operators in liaison with Council staff and will have regard to the prevailing weather forecast and road conditions along with advice from Police Scotland.

Parents / carers are responsible for their child's journey to and from school, or where transport is provided, between home and the pick-up and drop-off point and immediately prior to boarding school transport vehicles each morning. They assume that responsibility again at the moment their children leave the school transport vehicle following the afternoon journey.

Over the winter months when conditions of severe weather can arise, it is advised that parents / carers agree a length of time, such as 20 minutes, that children wait for transport at their designated pick-up point before returning or contacting home if their transport has not arrived. Parents / carers should make sure their children are aware of what to do if the transport is late or does not arrive.

If there is no school transport due to bad weather, it is the parent's / carer's decision whether or not it is safe to transport their children to school. We expect that parents / carers base this decision on the condition of roads in their area – there is no expectation that all parents / carers will be able to transport their children. If a parent

/ carer decides it is not safe to put their children to school, then they should contact the school stating that the absence is weather related.

If school transport is cancelled in the morning by the operator and parents / carers make the decision to transport their children to school, they must also arrange their afternoon transport, as the operator will not be responsible for conveying their children home (other than Barrier closures, where the Barriers are re-opened before the end of the school day). This applies even if the weather has greatly improved throughout the day. Parents / carers also need to be available to pick-up their children earlier if conditions deteriorate and an earlier closure is needed.

How to obtain information on Morning Closures:

- The School Transport Facebook page is available; this will be the first stop for information on school closures and transport changes. (Note: This Facebook page is an open page; you do not have to be a member of Facebook to access the page.)
- The Facebook page and OIC Twitter feed are both updated as soon as information is available, this can be as early as 06:15, which should assist daily isles travellers in planning their travel. Information about and links to these sites are available at: <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Council/O/OIC-Updates.htm>
- School closure information is passed to BBC Radio Orkney, which they then broadcast on their programme at 07:30 (on 93.7 FM) and also post on their Facebook page (also an open page). Radio Orkney will be notified if there is disruption to transport, however detailed information on specific routes will not be provided.
- Information on school closures and transport disruption is also provided on the Council's answer phone (01856873535).

6. Additional Information

6.1. Concerns and Complaints

Any queries over the operation or timing of a service should be made initially to the operator of the service. Where the response received is deemed unsatisfactory, a complaint should be made to the Education Transport Officer who will investigate and address concerns raised.

Concerns regarding behaviour of children using school transport should be addressed direct to the relevant school. Schools will take active steps to investigate and address issues of misbehaviour raised with them. In extreme cases, access to school transport may be withdrawn.

Concerns about the conduct of any transport operator or employees of transport operators should be made to the Education Transport Officer. All concerns will be investigated and appropriate action taken.

If parents / carers are otherwise unhappy with the school transport service they should contact the Education Transport Officer. If they wish to report a particular incident they should note as many details as possible of the incident, including time, place and registration number of the vehicle and then contact the service.

Contact Details

Education, Leisure and Housing, Orkney Islands Council, School Place, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1NY.

Telephone: 01856873535 extension 2427.

Email: education.leisure@orkney.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Responsibilities of Contractors

The safety and welfare of pupils is of paramount importance.

The School Transport Contractor will be contracted by Orkney Islands Council's Education Transport Service, to provide the safe conveyance of pupils between their designated pick-up / drop off point and the school site, and vice versa. The contractor's duties will be set out in full in its contract with the Council.

In summary, the operator will:

- Ensure that all staff are members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme for Children and hold an appropriate valid driving licence.
- Follow the route and schedule as agreed with the Council.
- Ensure that a suitable vehicle is provided and that all drivers and vehicles are suitably insured for the conveyance of school children.
- Ensure that all school buses display the correct service number and appropriate signage.
- Ensure school transport vehicles fitted with CCTV cameras have notices displayed to that effect.
- The same driver will be required to provide each service for a minimum of 75% of the time each school term.

Appendix 2

Advice to and Responsibilities of School Bus Drivers

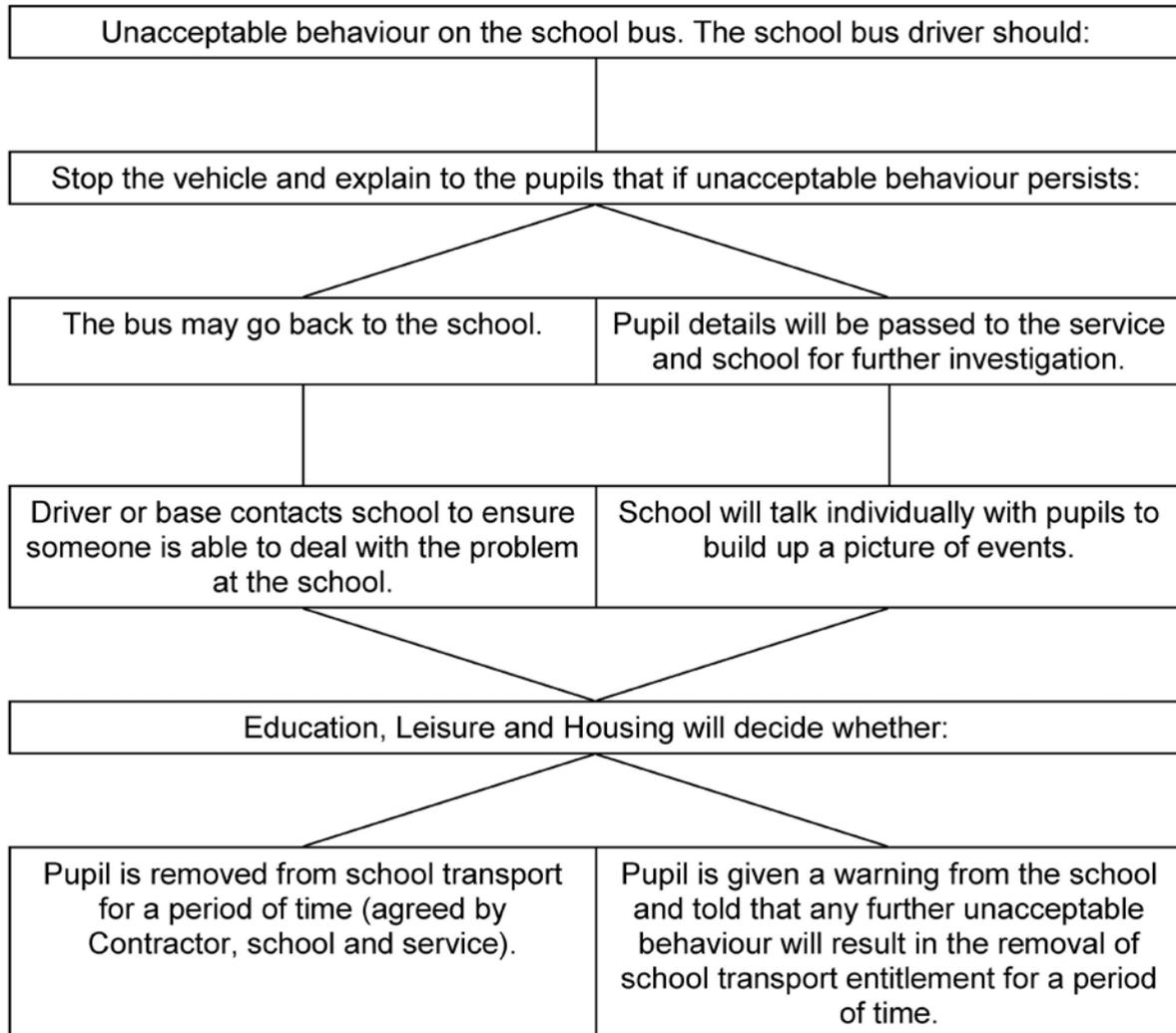
The driver should:

- Be presentable and courteous at all times.
- Be in possession of an appropriate licence to drive the vehicle being used to convey school children and be able to produce it on demand.
- Ensure that they adhere to the scheduled route, timings and any additional instructions as approved by Orkney Islands Council's Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Ensure that they are familiar with the routes and pick-up and drop off points before carrying out a route. Any driver assigned to a new route should receive appropriate 'route training' before they are assigned to it.
- Ensure that all pupils are seated with seat belts fastened before the bus departs from the school or moves off from a pick-up / drop off point.
- In the event of a vehicle breakdown, emergency or an accident on a school bus service, not leave pupils unless in situations of extreme emergency. Pupils should be instructed to stay on the vehicle until alternative transport arrives. If the situation is deemed to be dangerous, the pupils should be guided to a safe place by the driver or escort.
- Not have any physical contact with any pupil except to provide emergency assistance or in other exceptional circumstances. The driver must not enter into discussions of an inappropriate nature with pupils. A breach of these conditions may result in immediate suspension or removal from school transport provision.
- Only use an alternative pick up or drop off other than a designated stop when a pupil's safety is at risk.
- Never try to resolve any act of misconduct on the part of a pupil, unless a pupil's behaviour presents a danger to the vehicle or other passengers. In these circumstances, the driver should report the names of the pupils who have been misbehaving or carrying out acts of vandalism to the driver's headquarters, who should then pass the information on to the Education Transport Officer or the head teacher at the earliest opportunity. Under no circumstance shall any driver set down or leave unattended any pupil involved in an instance of misbehaviour, other than at the normal terminus of any such pupil's journey.
- Drivers should refer to the 'advice for drivers' flowchart in Appendix 3 for further information.
- NEVER give a signal to a pupil to cross – pupils should only cross when the vehicle has moved away and they can see clearly in both directions before they cross.

Appendix 3

Advice to Drivers Flowchart

In the event of:



Appendix 4

Advice to Drivers in the Event of a Breakdown or Accident

The driver should:

- Try to keep pupils in the vehicle unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Notify base as they will try and organise an alternative vehicle.
- Ensure base contact Education, Leisure and Housing immediately by telephone of the circumstances and be kept informed of developments.
- Always remain with the passengers.
- Impress on pupils that they should wait with the vehicle until alternative arrangements are made (unless it is unsafe for them to remain in the vehicle).
- Be alert to non-obvious injuries to pupils, including shock. Always call an ambulance if in doubt.

Appendix 5

Advice to and Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

Parents and Carers should ensure:

- Their child has read and understood the pupil Code of Conduct (see Appendix 6) and that both parent and pupil have signed and returned the appropriate section to the Council.
- Their child arrives at the pick-up point safely, in good time, and where appropriate that they are looked after until the vehicle comes. Ensure that their child reaches home safely from the drop off point in the afternoon. It is advisable that parents / carers wait at their child's drop off point and accompany them across the road if necessary as parents / carers are responsible for their child's safety after they have left the school transport vehicle.
- They are responsible for advising their child in road safety.
- They are ultimately responsible for the proper and safe behaviour of their child when getting on, whilst travelling and getting off the transport provided. They are also responsible between home and the pick up and drop off point, immediately prior to boarding school transport each morning and again following the afternoon journey.
- Where necessary ensure that their child is met when the vehicle returns from school. In the case of younger children they often forget road safety as they leave the vehicle.
- Should their child be unaccompanied between home and the pick-up / drop off point, make sure that he / she knows and follow the safest route and uses the safest crossing points.
- If the vehicle stops on the opposite side of the road parents and carers should, cross over with, or to meet their child, do not expect them to cross the road to meet you.
- Walk the route with their child at least once and talk about the hazards.
- If the transport fails to arrive on time parents and carers should, agree a length of time, such as 20 minutes, that their child waits for transport before returning or contacting home. Make sure their child knows what to do if the vehicle is late, or does not arrive.
- Ensure their child is suitably dressed for the weather. They should always wear something bright, preferably with reflective and fluorescent strips or panels.
- Ensure their child is expected to use a seat belt on school transport. All buses are fitted with seat belts and the service expects pupils to use them.
- Ensure their child is aware that in the event of an accident or if the bus breaks down, they should follow the driver's instructions and stay in the bus until another one arrives or other alternative arrangements are made.
- If their child is involved in anti-social behaviour or causing damage while on school transport may have their entitlement to school transport temporarily suspended or permanently withdrawn. Parents / carers may have to meet the costs for repair or replacement of equipment or property damaged as a result of their child's actions.

- If their child is either temporarily or permanently removed from school transport, it is their responsibility to make alternative arrangements and to ensure that their child continues to attend school.

Appendix 6

School Transport Code of Conduct

- The Code of Conduct will be issued to all pupils and parents / carers. Pupils and parents / carers must read and agree to the Code of Conduct before the Council can grant access to school transport.
- Pupils who do not behave on the journey between home and school may have their right to travel withdrawn.
- School transport contractors are instructed to report any serious incident of unacceptable behaviour to the school or service.
- If a pupil is withdrawn from school transport, it is the parents / carers responsibility to make alternative arrangements to ensure their child's attendance at school.
- Returning the agreement to the Code of Conduct means that both the pupil and parent / carer understand the contents of the Code of Conduct and agree to the terms.

Code of Conduct for Bus Users

Before the Journey

Pupils should:

- Ensure that they are at the pick up point on time and before the bus is due to stop.
- Wait in an orderly, courteous and calm manner.
- Keep away from the kerb and well clear of other traffic.
- Keep clear of moving school buses.
- Only board the bus when it is stationary.
- Not try to get on or off the vehicle until it has stopped.
- If transport fails to arrive on time, pupils should agree a length of time with their parent / carer, such as 20 minutes, that they wait before returning or contacting home.
- Pupils should make sure they know what to do if the vehicle is late, or does not arrive. Parents / carers should advise of the appropriate course of action under such circumstances.

At the End of the School Journey

Pupils should:

- Be careful not to get coats, bags, or scarves caught in the doors.
- Not use hand held mobile devices when leaving the vehicle (to avoid distraction).
- Stand back from the road as the bus moves off.
- If you need to cross the road, only do so once the bus has moved away and the road is clear in both directions so you can see other vehicles.
- Never take a signal from any driver to cross – they may not be able to see if the road is clear in both directions.

During the Journey (for all modes of transport)

Pupils should:

- Treat the drivers / operators with respect and follow their instructions.
- Remain in their seat and always use the seatbelt provided.
- Not distract the driver / operator, except in an emergency.
- Not open the emergency exits except in an emergency.
- Treat other passengers or members of the public, with care and respect and not bully other pupils.
- Not smoke.
- Not drop any litter or food.
- Not throw things.
- Note that vandalism on school transport or to other people's property will not be tolerated. If damage has been reported parents / carers may have to pay for the damage.
- If the transport breaks down or is in an accident, follow the instructions given by the operator.
- Report any incidents of inappropriate behaviour to the driver / operator or school.