

Home to School Transport Behaviour code

Information for parents and schools



West Berkshire
COUNCIL

Introduction

Young people are entitled to safe travel. Whilst the majority of learners behave well whilst travelling to and from school, there are examples of poor and disruptive behaviour, which is a threat to safety and can have tragic consequences. West Berkshire Council will investigate incidents involving learner travellers to ensure that consistent standards of behaviour, enforcement and sanctions are adopted.

Our approach is to work proactively with learners, their parents and the community to promote positive behaviour. The Behaviour Code promotes safe travel for all learners, by setting out the standards of behaviour required. We hope that by working closely with schools, we can limit the use of sanctions so that they are only applied in the most serious of cases. This will also encourage a more appropriate and considered response to deal with reported incidents.

The Code sets out standards of behaviour expected of a learner when travelling to and from their place of learning. Transport operators and drivers will be familiar with the Code and the procedure to follow if a learner misbehaves.

Learners must comply with the Behaviour Code whilst travelling to and from school. The Behaviour Code links to the school's behaviour policy and Headteachers will ensure that pupils at their school are aware of and comply with the Behaviour Code. They will be able to take disciplinary action against learners who have breached the Code whilst travelling to and from school or between other schools.

Parents, as well as a learner, need to be aware of the implications if a learner does not follow the Behaviour Code. West Berkshire Council can withdraw an individual's entitlement to transport, or the school can take action against them. In the event that transport is withdrawn from a learner, it is the responsibility of the learner's parents to arrange suitable transport to and from school.

The Council will work in partnership with the school to make judgements about what is the most appropriate action to take in particular circumstances dependant on the severity of the misbehaviour. The Council and the school may decide that action under the school's behaviour policy is more appropriate to the incident.



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Roles and Responsibilities

Learners

- Must follow the instructions in the Behaviour Code leaflet when travelling to and from school

Parents

- Must ensure that the learner has understood the Behaviour Code
- Must accept responsibility for encouraging good behaviour and ensuring their children comply with the Code
- Should be aware of the implications of breaches of the Code and the effect this can have on their child's right to the provision of transport to and from school
- Should co-operate with the school, transport operators and the Council to enforce the Code
- Will be responsible for the learner's continued attendance at school if transport is withdrawn
- Must ensure that pupils are at the boarding point five minutes before transport is due and that young children are looked after until transport arrives
- Must ensure that young pupils are met when the transport returns from school
- Are responsible for their children before boarding and after alighting from school transport

What are Schools responsible for

- Should publicise and raise awareness of the importance of good behaviour and the consequences of failing to comply with the Behaviour Code
- Should incorporate the Code into their existing behaviour policy
- Should alert West Berkshire Council to alleged breaches of the Code and provide information and assistance that is reasonably required
- Should make learners aware of an appropriate person to talk to within the school about incidents of bad behaviour whilst travelling from home to their school
- Should work in partnership with West Berkshire Council in the handling of disciplinary action for breaches of the Code, including involvement in the interviewing of learners as part of any investigation
- Should ensure that contact details of designated staff responsible for handling all matters relating to the Code are made available to transport operators, learners and the Council
- Should report suspected criminal offences or child protection matters to the relevant authority

The Council

- Should publicise and raise awareness of the importance of good behaviour and the consequences of failing to comply with the Behaviour Code
- Should ensure that contact details of designated staff responsible for handling all matters relating to the Code are published on its website and in all the relevant correspondence with schools and transport operators
- Should train relevant staff in the content and application of the Code
- Should investigate suspected breaches of the Code where appropriate
- Should ensure that a record is kept of all reported incidents. All records of incidents should be copied to the relevant school
- Should regularly review and monitor the contractual arrangements entered into with transport operators to ensure that they are aware of the Code and their responsibilities under the Code
- Should work in partnership with the school in the handling of disciplinary action for breaches of the Code
- Should report suspected criminal offences or child protection matters to the relevant authority
- Should ensure that the use of sanctions under the Code is consistent

Breaches of the Behaviour Code

Breaches of the Behaviour Code will be investigated, and if proven, will be dealt with as follows:

Category 3 - Unacceptable behaviour

This includes, but is not limited to, minor incidents that may be irritating, unpleasant or offensive behaviour, but not dangerous. For example, eating or drinking (except where permission has been granted), shouting, littering, failure to show a travel pass (where appropriate) and rudeness.

Depending on any previous incidents that the individual may have been involved in, incidents in this category should be dealt with as follows:

1. First offence: the learner should receive a verbal warning from school and the Council should keep a record of the incident.
2. Second offence – the Council should write to the learner’s parents notifying them of the breaches of the Code and the consequences of continued unacceptable behaviour
3. Third offence or more - the Council should consider the withdrawal of learner transport

Category 2 – Dangerous behaviour

This includes, but is not limited to, where there may be the threat of physical danger to individuals. For example, harassing and bullying other passengers, verbally threatening the driver, pushing and shoving when boarding and exiting the bus, spitting, smoking and distracting the driver.

Depending on any previous incidents that the individual may have been involved in, incidents in this category should be dealt with as follows:

1. First offence – As a minimum, the Council should write to the learner’s parents notifying them of the breach of the Code and the consequences of continued unacceptable behaviour. The Council may decide that the withdrawal of transport is more appropriate
2. Second offence – the Council should consider the withdrawal of learner transport

Category 1 – Highly dangerous, destructive or life-threatening behaviour

This includes, but is not limited to, behaviours considered very dangerous to individuals and/or destructive, for example interfering with the driving controls or emergency doors, assaulting the driver, pushing others through doors or windows, and interfering with safety equipment.

The Council will investigate the incident and withdraw learner transport for an appropriate period of time. It is possible that the police will be involved in these instances.

Withdrawal of transport

Before a decision to withdraw travel arrangements is made, the learner and the parents of the learner will be given the opportunity to make representations to the Council. Representations must be in writing and within a time limit specified by the Council. The Council will consult with the relevant school about the decision to withdraw travel arrangements.

There is no statutory appeals process for the withdrawal of transport by the Council. However, the Council’s complaints procedure is available to learners and parents.