

Code of Conduct for Pupils who use Home to School Transport

We want you and all other passengers to stay safe and travel in comfort. You must agree to the following code of conduct before we issue your bus pass. Your school and parents (or carers) will be alerted if you do not keep to the code and we may have to withdraw your transport assistance and your parents/carers will have to make alternative arrangements for your travel at their expense.

This code of conduct is for your safety and that of the other passengers and is based on Respect for others, please remember to be polite and courteous at all times and treat others as you would wish to be treated. You are representing yourself, your family, and your school. Don't let them down.

1. Your bus pass

- Carry your bus pass or smart card with you whenever you travel to and from school.
- Ensure that you show your smart card or bus pass to the driver. If you have a smart card, you must use it on the ticket machine to board where one is provided. If it cannot be produced or validated, the driver may refuse travel.
- Your pass is only valid on your allocated route.
- Do not use anyone else's pass or allow another person to use yours. It is your responsibility to protect your own bus pass, and it will be your responsibility to compensate the bus operator for any trips claimed fraudulently under your name.
- You may only possess one bus pass at any time. If you find a lost bus pass that you have since replaced, you must destroy the older pass.
- Our bus operators reserve the right to refuse any passenger who attempts to board their service using a defaced or damaged card.
 - If you lose your pass, you can obtain a replacement one for a fee by Selecting "Order a replacement pass" from the Gloucestershire County Council website - <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/applyforabuspass>

2. Your pick-up point

- You are responsible for getting to your bus's pick-up point.
- Arrive at the pick-up point 5 minutes before your bus is due. The bus will run to a timetable and will not wait if you are late.
- If a bus is late, be prepared to wait at the pick-up point for 20 minutes but no longer. Agree with your parents what to do if the bus does not arrive or if you fail to catch it. (e.g. return home or go to a friend's house to organise alternative transport).
- You may only board the bus from the pick-up point you have been assigned. If there are extenuating circumstances, please contact the Integrated Transport Unit to agree an alternative.
- In times of inclement weather transport may be unable to operate; please ensure you have a contingency plan for these occasions.

3. Disruption to services

There may be occasions (e.g., road closures) where you may be assigned a temporary pick-up point. In extreme situations, (e.g., weather) the service may be unable to operate at all. We will communicate this disruption and any alterations with as much notice as possible. In some cases we may be unable to make alternative arrangements.

4. Keeping safe when getting on and off the bus

- Queue sensibly, well away from the edge of the road.
- Allow passengers to leave the bus before you board.
- Get on and off the bus in an orderly way in single file so you do not hurt yourself or other passengers.
- If you need to cross the road once you have left the bus, wait for the bus to drive away so you can see other vehicles and their drivers can see you.

5. On the bus

- Stay in your seat once you are on the bus; you must wear a seatbelt if one is provided.
- Do not distract the driver unless there is an emergency.
- Do not stand in front of the driver, in the aisle or on the stairwell.
- Do not use emergency exits or doors unless the driver instructs you to or there is a genuine emergency.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke (including e-cigarettes) on the bus.
- Do not leave litter on the bus: take it with you and place in a bin.
- Foul, abusive language and bullying will not be tolerated, and no distinction will be made between bullying and “banter.” Light-hearted misbehaviour is no less dangerous or distracting.
- Physical aggression of any kind will not be tolerated.
- You must not engage in behaviours that may cause direct harm to other passengers.
- You must not engage in behaviours that will make other passengers feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Do not use of Mobile phones or digital devices to produce images, videos or audio recordings of the driver, other passengers or any other road or transport user.
- You must not deliberately jeopardise your own safety or the safety of other passengers.
- You must not encourage, coerce, or equip other passengers to do anything that may jeopardise their own safety or that of other passengers.
- Do not carry real or replica weapons.
- Do not throw items.
- Do not destroy, deface, or deliberately soil any part of the bus. If damage is caused not only will the police be contacted, but you will be liable for the full costs of repair and any fees incurred in recovering such costs. A ban will remain in place until full payment for damages is received, and potentially longer.
- If the bus breaks down or is involved in an accident, follow the driver’s instructions.

Please be aware that many transport operators use CCTV for the safety and security of passengers and other road users. CCTV footage may be used as evidence to investigate incidents that may occur on school transport.

Sanctions for Unacceptable Behaviour

From time to time it is necessary to impose sanctions on children and young people who fail to conform to an acceptable standard of behaviour.

A parent/carer must take responsibility for their children’s behaviour on the way to and from school. It is their duty to ensure that their children understand why it is essential to behave properly in the transport provided. Young people over the age of 16 are responsible for their own behaviour and we expect them to adhere to the code of conduct independently. Children and young people must understand that poor behaviour, especially which puts at risk the safety of any other passenger, driver or road user, will lead to a ban on use of the transport provided. In that case, the responsibility of transporting their child to school will transfer to the parent/carer without any financial support from the County Council.

In return, we will ensure that contracts are monitored to ensure compliance with the law and the contract offered. We will investigate any complaint received from any other party and be seen to act against anyone who contravenes the policies and agreements entered into. We recognise that the decision as to whether or not to carry a child or young person is for the operator, although we will encourage that operator not to take such a step before discussing any proposed action with the County Council and the head teacher of the school involved.

As part of its commitment to providing a safe environment for the transport of children and young people to and from school, we have determined a procedure for dealing with cases of poor behaviour reported to us and have adopted the following list of sanctions that may be applied in certain circumstances. This is not an exhaustive list, nor is it a definitive statement that in every

case the sanction indicated will be applied regardless of other circumstances. Each case will be considered on its individual merits, in consultation with the school and operator. The sanction will be applied jointly by the Review Officer and Lead Officer, Integrated Transport Unit/Travel Assistance Team. Any appeal will be considered jointly by the Admissions & Travel Assistance Manager and Transport Operations Manager, whose decision will be final.

Guidelines for First Offences

The table below is just an example of the length of bans that can be given for incidents, although each incident is looked at individually. GCC reserves the right to apply sanctions depending on the situation, ie a permanent ban may be used for serious misconduct or repeated incidences of misconduct

<u>TYPE OF BEHAVIOUR</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>	<u>SANCTION</u>
Unhygienic Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Consuming or spilling food or drink</i> ▪ <i>Littering</i> 	1 Day Ban
Dangerous or Anti-Social Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Distracting the driver</i> ▪ <i>Spitting</i> ▪ <i>Misuse of the bell</i> ▪ <i>Not wearing a seatbelt (where seatbelts are available)</i> ▪ <i>Leaving the seat when the vehicle is moving</i> 	1 Week Ban
Severe Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Distracting the driver</i> ▪ <i>Bullying other passengers</i> ▪ <i>Misuse of the emergency exit</i> ▪ <i>Chronic and on-going poor behaviour</i> 	1 <u>Month</u> Ban
Critical Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Assault of driver or another passenger</i> ▪ <i>Possession of drugs</i> ▪ <i>Any form of damage to the vehicle</i> ▪ <i>Using or intending to use weaponry</i> 	1 Term Ban Or possible permanent ban

Criminal Offences

Any criminal offences that result in a ban may also be reported to the police. The following behaviours are likely to result in criminal investigation.

- Damage to vehicle, e.g. graffiti, vandalism.
- Gaining fraudulent access to the vehicle (using an expired pass, another pupil's pass, etc.)
- Possession or use of drugs.
- Possession or use of offensive weapons (including replicas).
- Assault on driver, GCC pass holders or other fare paying passengers.

Notification

Operators will report any unacceptable behaviour to the County Council who will investigate the incident, including the recovery of any CCTV footage. The County Council will enforce an appropriate ban as outlined above, if warranted. Parents will be notified of this action by letter, or where an instant ban is justified, by telephone and later confirmed in writing. It is the responsibility of the parent /carer to transport the child to school whilst the ban is in place.

Reporting Unacceptable Behaviour

The Code of Conduct exists to ensure that pupils feel safe on-board transport provided by GCC, so it is important to us that if you have a concern about behaviour on one of our services you can easily report it.

If you are concerned about behaviour on your (or your child's) school bus, please send your report to the e-mail address mainstream@gloucestershire.gov.uk. Your report should include:

The name of the school
The name of the operator
The date and time of the journey on which the incident occurred
Your child's name

Please note that although Gloucestershire County Council does co-operate with the school to investigate reports of poor behaviour, transport bans are at GCC's exclusive discretion. Reports submitted to your child's school do not always reach us for investigation, so it is important that you communicate directly with us.

All reports will remain anonymous; the name of the complainant will not be disclosed to other transport users.

Updates to the Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is a live document and will be updated routinely over the course of a school year. Updates will usually be issued in June and December but may be published at any point. It is the responsibility of each transport user to ensure they have read and understand the most recent copy of the code before travelling. The latest edition will always be available via our website – visit www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/h2score.

If you would like to withdraw from home-to-school transport following an update to our terms, please contact mainstream@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

Submitting an Appeal

If your child has been banned under the code of conduct and you feel it has been applied unfairly or incorrectly, you can submit an appeal by e-mailing mainstream@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

Contact:

Integrated Transport Unit:

Enquiries relating to transport arrangements, routes, replacement bus passes, and purchasing bus passes via the Spare Seat Scheme.

Tel: 01452 425387

Email: mainstream@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Travel Assistance and FSM Team:

Enquiries relating to entitlement to assistance with transport for pupils aged 4-16 and free school meals:

Tel: 01452 425390

Email: transportmainstream@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Enquiries relating to entitlement to assistance with transport for pupils aged 16+ and pupils with special educational needs:

Tel: 01452 426770

Email: sen.transport@gloucestershire.gov.uk