



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills



School Transport Scheme – Plans for Services to Operate as Normal for the 2020/21 School Year Aligned to Public Health Advice and Guidance

Dear Parent/Guardian,

You may be aware that the Minister for Education, Norma Foley TD, recently announced plans for a full return to school for all pupils from the end of August 2020.

We continue to plan actively for the re-opening of schools in late August/September, which will be based on public health advice and which will put the best interests of our school community first. We are contacting you to advise you about the plans for the operation of School Transport Scheme services for the 2020/2021 school year.

We are continuing to work with Bus Éireann to ensure that we provide a safe transport service for children that will operate in line with the recently published health advice from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC). We wish to advise School Transport Scheme services for the 2020/2021 school year will fully operate as normal, but with additional measures and hygiene requirements in place.

The plan to run school transport services as normal takes account of the fact that school transport is different from public transport in that each transport service carries the same children on a daily basis to their school. Because of this, the number of people using the service and their identities are known. This would facilitate contact tracing if it were required.

We will ensure every effort is made in our continued attempts to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and to provide a transport service for children and school transport staff that is aligned to public health guidelines.

It is important that every child observes hygiene requirements and that children observe the rules on limiting interaction while travelling on school transport services.

We ask that the following guidelines be adhered to by children on school transport services:

- Do not use school transport services if they are displaying obvious symptoms.
- Maintain physical distancing while waiting for transport.
- Always sit in pre-assigned seating and next to a sibling or child from their class group (this should be the same child at all times).
- Use hand sanitiser on boarding the bus.
- Observe respiratory etiquette at all times while waiting for and on-board transport services.
- Disembark the bus one by one in an orderly fashion.
- All other children aged 13 years and over are required to wear facemasks while waiting for and on-board transport services (with the exception of children who for medical or special educational needs reasons are not in a position to wear a facemask or face covering).

Planning for normal resumption of school transport services in August/September is based on the most recent public health advice.

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We will be in further contact with any updates as they occur and with more detailed information over the coming weeks and before the start of the new school year.

Please visit gov.ie/backtoschool for more information.

*School Transport Section,
The Department of Education and Skills*