

Code of Practice

Never

- Never exchange mobile phone numbers, e-mail addresses, full names, home addresses etc.
- Never buy or give food or drink to passengers.
- Never accept or give gifts to passengers or parents/carers.
- Never use bad or inappropriate language.
- Never engage in conversation of a personal nature.
- Never enter in to any contact via multimedia i.e. Facebook.
- Never under any circumstances take pictures of passengers.
- Never allow children to sit in the front of the vehicle without our authorisation. Students must be over 135cm in height or over 12 years of age.
- Never enter into any kind of relationship or have social contact with the passenger or their family.
- Never make unnecessary physical contact.
- Never allow food or drink on the vehicle.
- Never become involved in an argument. If challenged, please give them the Suffolk Passenger Transport telephone number.
- Never leave the vehicle unattended.
- Never smoke. It is not acceptable when working on Suffolk County Council contracts.
- Never accept transport changes from your passenger, these must come through your office, via Passenger Transport (as a contract variation).
- Never be afraid to ask for help. If a passenger's behaviour is causing a problem, don't struggle alone. Ask the school/centre/or your employer for advice or contact Suffolk Passenger Transport (contact details are at the back of this booklet).

Always

- Dress appropriately.
- Report any incident that is 'out of the ordinary'.
- When transporting passengers, especially when alone, remember it is important to keep to the agreed timetable and route.
- Call the passenger by their name not darling, sweetheart, love or other 'familiar words'.
- Maintain clear appropriate boundaries and be professional.
- Report any concerns about a passenger's behaviour.
- Be aware that some passengers due to disabilities and medical conditions may require extra help and time.
- Record and report all incidents of inappropriate or disruptive behaviour without delay via your employer. Where possible, the journey should be completed. In a case of serious incident the vehicle should be stopped and the emergency services called.
- If you should have any concerns that one of your passengers shows any signs of abuse, then you must record and report it.

Contacting Suffolk County Council

 **Passenger Transport**
Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich
Suffolk, IP1 2BX

 **Customer Services (General Enquiries)**
0345 606 6173

Customer First
0808 800 4005

Emergency Services
Emergency Non-Emergency
999 **101**

 **www.suffolkonboard.com**

 **info@suffolkonboard.com**

Social media

 **[@suffolkonboard](https://twitter.com/suffolkonboard)**

 **facebook.com/suffolkonboard**



Safeguarding Guidance & Advice

Valid from December 2017



Safeguarding

In the course of your work your passengers may choose to talk to you about something which concerns them. It is important to:

- Never promise to keep a secret.
- Always take what the person says seriously.
- Listen but do not ask any questions.
- Tell the person that you will have to tell someone.
- Report and record all concerns, incidents of inappropriate and disruptive behaviour to the School/Operator or the Council.
- Be friendly but remember not to make particular favourites.
- If you are ever concerned about the welfare of a passenger, contact Customer First on 0808 800 4005 or dial 999 for police in an emergency or 101 for police for a non-emergency situation.
- When a passenger is hurt or falls and physical contact is necessary, always report incidents to the school/centre and record them with your employer.
- Be aware of how your actions may look when seen by someone from the outside. If you are in any doubt about how your action may appear to an objective observer then don't do it.

Abuse must be reported

- **Physical** e.g. shaking, slapping, pushing, kicking someone.
- **Sexual** e.g. any sexual activity that the person does not want, understand or agree to.
- **Psychological/emotional** e.g. threats of harm or abandonment or humiliation, intimidation or verbal abuse.
- **Financial** e.g. stealing someone's money or denying them access to their money or possessions.
- **Neglect** e.g. ignoring someone's medical or care needs, or withholding food, drink or aids to daily living.
- **Discriminatory** e.g. abusive remarks or actions regarding a person's age, race, religion, sex or abilities.
- **Domestic abuse** e.g. emotional and physical violence, bullying, threats, mental and verbal abuse, financial and social control over one person by another within the home or family.
- **Professional abuse** e.g. the misuse of power and abuse of trust by professionals, the failure of professionals to act on suspected abuse/crimes, poor care practice or neglect in services.
- **Institutional abuse** e.g. involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people.

Transport Drivers

If possible, the first time you meet the parents/carers, introduce yourself and ask if there is anything you should know about the person whilst he/she is in your care.

Additionally, each day you should try and liaise with the parents/carer/centre to see if there is anything you should know about the person that will affect their travel. All drivers will be checked by the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service). You should work together with your passenger assistant (if applicable) as a team to ensure that the people for whom you are responsible have a comfortable, safe and stress free journey.

Always

- Be punctual.
- Only stop at the designated pick-up or set-down point.
- Keep the door(s) closed until the vehicle is at a complete standstill.
- Hazard lights should be used when passengers are boarding or alighting.
- Check that no bags or clothing are caught in the door when closed.
- Where seat belts are fitted, always request that the passengers use them.
- Do not drive away until all the passengers are seated.
- On school transport the school bus signs should only be used when transporting pupils. When in use ensure they are displayed in an appropriate position.
- Always park so that passengers alight on the footway and not on the carriageway.
- Please be aware that if you are transporting school age children, your clothing, behaviour and language must all be appropriate.
- On school transport you should park on the same side of the road as the school entrance unless this is impossible.
- Beware of passengers running back for items they may have left on the vehicle.
- If passengers have to exit by the rear of a minibus you should supervise this operation.
- Reversing in and around schools should only be attempted when absolutely necessary and preferably with guidance.
- Bad behaviour should be reported to the school and a record kept.
- You should know how to use the fire extinguisher and first aid kit.

Drivers and Passenger Assistants

The information given in this booklet is for your safety and guidance. We cannot cover everything that you may encounter on a day to day basis, but if you are not sure about anything you can always ask Suffolk Passenger transport or ask your employer to contact us.

Equipment

Although it is the driver's responsibility to operate tail lifts and wheelchair clamps, passenger assistants must ensure they have an understanding of how this and other safety equipment works. If a child is too big for a car seat or harness let Suffolk Passenger Transport know. Make sure seats are fitted correctly.

Parent/Carer Not At Home

In the event that no-one is at home when you return in the afternoon, on no account must a passenger be left alone or with a neighbour. Prior arrangements with the parents/carers are therefore essential. If applicable, ring the school so that they can contact the parent/carer immediately.

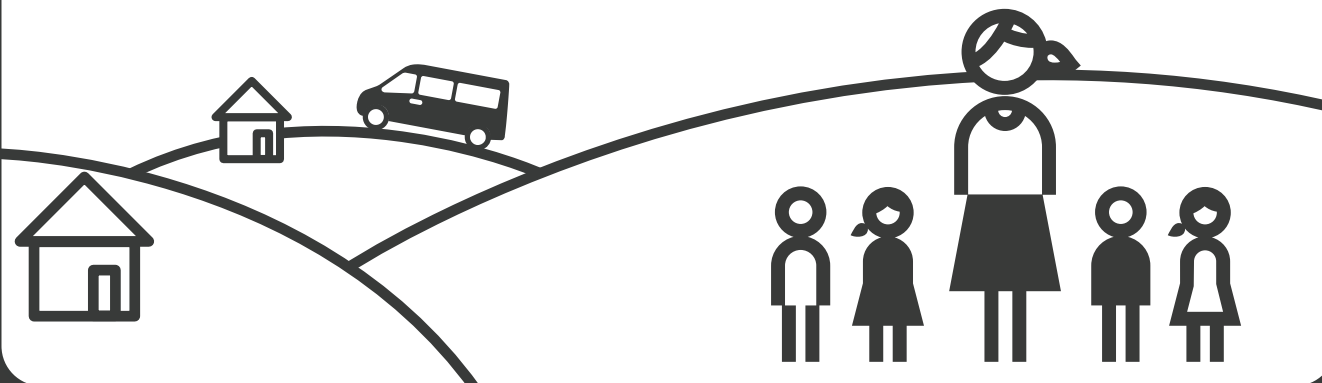
If there are other passengers on the vehicle they should be returned home first and then the vehicle should return. If there is still no-one at home, contact Customer First on 0808 800 4005 or the police in an emergency.

- It is the responsibility of parent/carer to take the passenger to and from the vehicle, although there may be occasions when this is not possible.
- Always pick up and drop off at the arranged address.
- Waiting time should be limited to approximately 5 minutes.
- Always display your identity badge.

Accidents, Breakdowns & Emergencies

In the event of a breakdown or if a passenger is taken ill you must act to ensure the safety of all your passengers.

- Pull over to a safe spot on the road and switch on headlights and hazard warning lights.
- Call immediately for an ambulance if any of your passengers need medical help. If an ambulance is summoned be concise and accurate about the location of the incident.
- Make the passenger comfortable and ensure that they are not at further risk.
- Assess whether it is safe for passengers to stay on the vehicle until help arrives.
- In the event of a breakdown summon help from your company/breakdown organisation.
- If your vehicle is causing a serious obstruction, summon the police.
- Do not allow passengers off the vehicle unless there is a serious risk to them if they remained on board.
- Consider your own safety, put on high visibility before leaving the vehicle.
- If passengers must be taken off the vehicle they should (if possible) use the nearside door and move to the front of the vehicle or to a safe area.
- Passengers should not cross lanes of traffic or be put at further risk.
- Enlist any nearby help or responsible passengers to ensure that everyone stays safe while you deal with the incident.
- Once you are satisfied that passengers are safe - Advise your employer and the school or day care centre so that parents and carers can be informed. Contact Suffolk Passenger Transport to advise them of the incident.
- Do NOT attempt even simple repairs, wait for help and ensure the safety of all passengers.



Passenger Assistants

If possible, the first time you meet the parents/carers, introduce yourself and ask if there is anything you should know about the person whilst he/she is in your care.

Additionally, each day you should try and liaise with the parents/carer/centre to see if there is anything you should know about the person that will affect their travel. All passenger assistants will be checked by the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) and will need to attend an information day. You should work together with your driver as a team to ensure that the people for whom you are responsible have a comfortable, safe and stress free journey. You should agree in advance with the driver on how to handle any exceptional or unexpected difficulties.

Personal Appearance

We recommend smart, casual and comfortable clothing that is appropriate for the role. For example: Flat shoes (no flip flops) can help to avoid ankle injuries and minimal body jewellery can help to avoid accidents involving items being caught on clothing or students pulling on them.



Who to contact

You should contact your employer who can then liaise with Suffolk County Council Passenger Transport, Schools or other agencies.

Produced jointly by Suffolk Passenger Transport, Children and Young People Directorate and the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board. This leaflet has been designed to complement the Code of Practice in the County Council's 'Education Transport' booklet provided to operators. That code is repeated within this leaflet.