



**Our Ref:** SF/HB\*

**Your Ref:**

**Contact:** Shane Fitzpatrick

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**Date:** 20 August 2020

Dear Sir or Madam

**Education re-start: Re Think Travel information and advice**

Further to my letter dated 11 June, I am writing to you again to provide you with the latest information regarding public transport services as we all prepare for schools to re-open from September.

If your school works with us on dedicated bus services then you will also have already received information regarding this. In effect, as these services specifically serve your school then social distancing measures can be reduced on these dedicated services in line with DfE guidance.

Merseytravel has been working with transport operators, partners and the Government to not only provide these essential services, but also important information and advice to help everyone plan for September and get to and from school as smoothly as possible.

Walking, cycling or scooting should be encouraged where possible especially for those who live within a mile or two of your school, leaving public transport available for those who live a little further away.

Buses and trains are running but capacity may be reduced due to social distancing. As it is difficult to predict demand across every service, our advice is to check directly with rail and bus operators for the last service information, timetables on a regular basis as things may change.

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An important message is that pupils aged 11+ must wear a face covering (Exemptions do apply, visit the Government website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) - safer travel guidance for passengers section - for more details).

Transport staff and drivers are not required to, but some staff do wear them if they choose to. Whilst we may not always visibly enforce the wearing of face coverings, we do monitor this and gather intelligence. Any feedback on particular services is welcomed.

Please be reassured that Police Community Support Officers are deployed on the transport network offering advice and can respond to any issues or complaints.

Together with transport operators, we have also been working really hard to put a range of key measures in place to help keep everyone safe.

This includes enhanced cleaning regimes that focus on things like touch points such as doors, handrails, seats and ticket machines. We are also encouraging contactless payments and pre-paid tickets rather than cash.

We're suggesting that if parents/pupils haven't used public transport for a while then they may want to before the start of term to help understand the changes in place and familiarise themselves with the route and services.

Together with transport operators we have worked really hard to provide the best level of services we can in what have been and remain very challenging circumstances. We will be monitoring demand across the transport network particularly during the first couple of days of term, so we can address any concerns issues and provide additional capacity if necessary.

Where possible, we will look to enhance the service provision on busy routes and your feedback is important to us to manage this. We will also have staff placed across the network to monitor demand and deal with issues.

We also appreciate that arrangements for different colleges and universities will vary, so we are also advising students to check with their own institution to understand any local arrangements being put in place.

All of our key information and advice is being promoted through our Re Think Travel campaign which can be found online [www.merseytravel.gov.uk/Coronavirus](http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk/Coronavirus) and on Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/Merseytravel>

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I have included a summary of our key information below along with some simple digital assets. Please feel free to share this information with your parents, pupils and staff through your own website and communications channels, directing them to ReThink Travel.

Yours faithfully



Shane Fitzpatrick  
**Interim Director of Integrated Transport**  
**Liverpool City Region Combined Authority**

### **School bus services**

Dedicated school bus services are running. Social distancing is not required on these services but is encouraged.

On our usual commercial services, used by various passengers, then social distancing is still required and as a result capacity is restricted.

We will be monitoring demand and by working with operators we will be able to add some extra buses on busy routes as needed.

Our key aim is to get children and students to and from school and college safely to support the education restart.

### **Key advice**

Please remember to follow this advice which is there to help keep everyone safe:

- Remember that children aged 11 and over must wear a face covering\*
- Plan ahead and check timetables
- Leave more time for your journey in case services are busy
- Pay by contactless or buy pre-paid tickets if you can – our young people's bus Solo and Term Time Tickets are now available on [MetroSmart cards](http://www.metro-smart.org.uk/solo-term-time) ([www.metro-smart.org.uk/solo-term-time](http://www.metro-smart.org.uk/solo-term-time))
- If paying by cash, try to have the exact fare as drivers are not giving change
- Be mindful of social distancing
- Allow passengers to get off before boarding
- Some seats on the bus are not in use, please respect this. They will be clearly marked out.
- Try to travel with the same group of friends each day and where possible sit in the same seats.

- Be respectful to other passengers and staff
- Do not travel if you have any symptoms of Covid-19, or family members are showing symptoms

| \*For exemptions please visit the [Government website](#)