

KCC

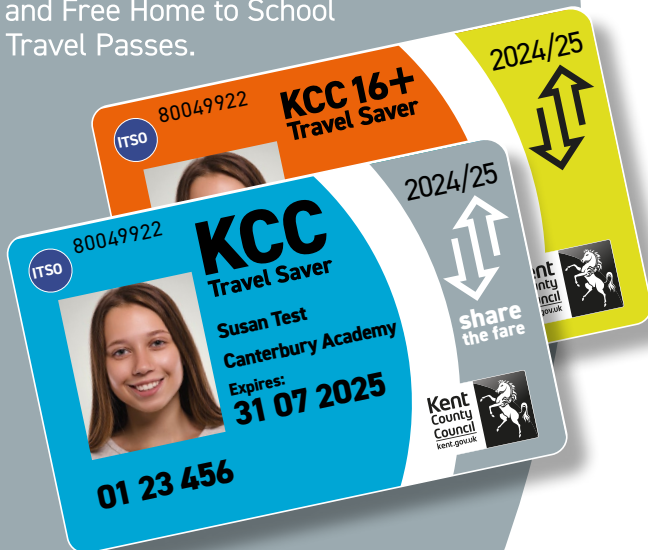
Travel Savers

Code of Conduct 2024/25

KCC Travel Saver, KCC 16+ Travel Saver
and Free Home to School
Travel Passes.



**share
the fare**



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2024

For more information visit:

kent.gov.uk/travelsaver

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By accepting a travel pass from Kent County Council you agree to abide by this Code of Conduct

Any travel pass we provide to a student for travel to and from school represents a partnership between us (the Council), students, parents, schools and transport providers.

Most young people behave well and are respectful of transport providers and of fellow passengers. It is important that we do not let any incident of bad behaviour by a pass holder jeopardise the experiences of other passengers or of our ability to continue to help students in this way.

We may confiscate any travel pass if students behave inappropriately. This document is designed to provide practical guidelines to help students manage their own behaviour and create a safer environment for everyone.

It sets out the required standards of behaviour and the disciplinary process applied when behaviour falls short of this standard.

Young people from the age of 10 can be held criminally responsible for their misbehaviour. The Crime and Disorder Act (1998) means that the Police, Community Wardens, Police Community Support Officers and other officials may have powers to act and intervene where necessary. Anti-social behaviour includes vandalism, bullying, or any other type of disorderly behaviour.

This Code of Conduct applies to all students who receive a travel pass from Kent County Council. It is, however, understood that for some students with particular disabilities, certain elements of the Code may not be relevant. This does not mean that misbehaviour will be accepted but allows for an individual's circumstances to be taken into account.

We want everyone's journey to be safe, comfortable and incident-free. Please help us to achieve this aim by reading this Code of Conduct and putting it into practice every day.

Key Partners

Parents/Carers

Parents and carers have a vital role to make sure that their children behave appropriately. Parents are responsible for planning a suitable journey for their child and ensuring that adequate services are available before applying for a bus pass. Students should not arrive at the bus stop too early; incidents of misbehaviour are more likely to arise where a large number of students are congregating for a prolonged period. Parents/carers remain responsible for their children's safety and behaviour while they wait for the bus.

Parents/carers should ensure that their child has their travel pass with them and that it is not damaged or defaced. Passes are often issued as smart products and should scan when placed against the ticket machine. Non-scanning passes will need to be replaced. Any student without a valid travel pass, or money to pay the appropriate fare, will usually be refused travel. We will not reimburse parents for any costs incurred when a pass cannot be produced or is not accepted by the driver. It remains the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that non-scanning or damaged passes are replaced without any delay.

Incidents of misbehaviour may be reported to Kent County Council by the driver/operator of the bus, an Inspector, school staff, other passengers or members of the public. We will respond to each reported incident based on its individual circumstances. It is very important that parents/carers support any action which is taken in response to misbehaviour; it is better to deal with minor incidents early rather than have to take more serious action in the future.

In cases where students are responsible for damage to property, including the vehicle itself, the bus company will hold parents responsible for meeting any costs incurred in repairing the damage. This is in addition to any action taken by the Police.

Key Partners

Students

A student's behaviour says a lot about themselves as individuals. Poor behaviour reflects badly on them, their parents/carers, their school and their friends. Whenever a student is in school uniform, they are seen as ambassadors of their school. Any misbehaviour is more likely to be reported to the school if the students are easily identifiable by their uniform or if they are on a bus which serves a particular school. All passengers have a right to travel in comfort and safety and no student's behaviour should cause offence to anyone else.

Students should remember that they must arrive for their bus at the correct time, wait in an orderly fashion, show their pass on request and abide by the Conditions of Carriage applied by the bus operator. Buses are expected to leave on time and will not be able to wait for passengers who are late. Conditions of Carriage may prohibit eating and drinking on the vehicle and it should be remembered that it is illegal to smoke or vape on a bus.

Transport Operators, Drivers and Staff

Operators are private companies that run their services on a commercial basis. Each operator has their own Conditions of Carriage that apply to all passengers, in addition to the requirements of this Code of Conduct. Students may have sanctions applied by the bus company in addition to any applied as a result of a breach of this Code of Conduct.

We ask that operators report incidents of misbehaviour in order that appropriate action may be taken. Please note that no operator is obliged to carry any passenger and may ban a student from any or all of their services. Transport operators must make sure their staff report all incidents of misbehaviour, no matter how minor, in order that appropriate action can be taken. It is unhelpful if a number of incidents are ignored as that demonstrates to students that unacceptable behaviour is being tolerated. Operators will report faulty, non-scanning passes to KCC who will then contact the pass holder to arrange a replacement. Parents should not depend on bus operators to report a pass as damaged or non-scanning.

Driving staff, in addition to having the responsibility for the safety of the vehicle and their passengers are responsible for the day-to-day management of students travelling on the vehicle. Staff must therefore ensure that they respond to incidents of misbehaviour in accordance with the requirements of this Code of Conduct. Staff must present a positive image and always act in accordance with the highest professional standards in order to maintain the respect of the passengers.

Schools

Schools and learning providers play a key role in ensuring that students remain aware of the need to behave appropriately when travelling between home and school. In some cases, the school curriculum can incorporate many of the points raised in this Code of Conduct.

Schools also have the power to exclude students from school if they behave inappropriately when travelling between home and school. Schools can provide considerable support if it becomes necessary to investigate serious incidents of misbehaviour and can also suggest approaches to managing behaviour in consultation with bus operators, parents/carers and KCC.

Kent County Council

We are responsible for processing your application and issuing your pass. Any reports of bad behaviour directed to us will be followed up and sanctions applied where necessary. Any reports of serious or repeated misbehaviour may result in withdrawing a student's pass, temporarily or permanently.

KCC will also support parents in resolving matters of poor service performance or breaches of the Code of Conduct relating to operators and their services.

Key Responsibilities

We all have a role to play to ensure that public transport operates safely and comfortably. By keeping this Code of Conduct at the forefront of students' minds, and making swift responses to incidents of inappropriate behaviour, we can continue to make journeys safe and reliable.

Students should:

- Look after their pass and ensure that it is replaced if it is damaged or does not scan
- Arrive for transport punctually and with a valid pass or the correct fare
- Act in a responsible manner when awaiting the vehicle – not congregating in large groups or standing in an unsafe place
- Board the first available vehicle for which they hold a valid pass going to their destination
- Show their pass to the driver, Inspector or other official, when asked
- Occupy seats (on both the lower and upper decks) before standing (if permitted on the bus). Standing passengers must do so safely, on the lower deck, rearwards of the driver's cab and must not distract the driver. Bags and equipment must not be placed on seats
- Remain seated during the journey and do not inconvenience other passengers
- Comply with all instructions from the driver, Inspector or other official at all times, especially in an emergency
- Disembark safely and cross roads with care.

Parents / Carers should:

- Ensure that their child is ready for the transport at the right time
- Ensure that their child has a valid pass or the correct fare

- Pay the bus operator for fares due when a valid pass was not shown by their child
- Arrange for a responsible adult to meet their child at the end of the day, where appropriate
- Co-operate with transport providers in responding to incidents of inappropriate behaviour including meeting the costs of any damage caused by their child
- Remind their child of the requirements of this Code of Conduct and the need for them to behave in a safe and responsible manner
- Ensure that their child is aware of what to do if they lose their pass or if the bus fails to operate.

Transport providers and staff should:

- Ensure that all vehicles are correctly licensed, clean, in a good state of repair and compliant with relevant legislation
- Ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified, licensed, trained and checked as necessary
- Act in a professional manner, including being of smart appearance, courteous and punctual, obeying all regulations and not smoking or vaping.
- Drive safely and considerately
- Check all passes on every journey and only allow those students to travel who hold a valid pass or pay the appropriate fare
- Report non-scanning passes to Kent County Council
- Never leave a pupil stranded away from home
- Provide a point of contact for parents/carers, schools and Kent County Council
- Report all incidents of misbehaviour and comply with the requirements of this Code of Conduct
- Comply fully with any investigations undertaken by Kent County Council, the Licensing Authority or Police.

Kent County Council Staff should:

- Ensure that all applications are processed promptly
- Monitor the bus services and liaise with bus operators where necessary
- Process complaints and ensure that appropriate action is taken where necessary
- Liaise with statutory agencies to ensure that appropriate legislation and regulations are followed
- Issue replacement passes promptly in accordance with published timescales when reported as lost or stolen.

Schools and learning providers should:

- Have a named contact for all student transport matters
- Supervise students when alighting/boarding at school
- Respond to concerns and complaints regarding school transport issues, in conjunction with Kent County Council
- Regularly raise school transport issues with students at assemblies, induction events and so on.

The Code of Conduct

We recognise that it is important that all students are made aware of the behaviour which is expected of them whilst using transport. To do this, we have set out basic expectations of behaviour and what students must do to comply with the Code of Conduct. All students who follow this Code of Conduct should have a happy and safe journey between home and school. Students who choose not to follow this Code of Conduct will receive sanctions which may include temporary or permanent bans from travelling. In most cases, students will receive a warning before any ban is applied; however, in more serious cases, it may be necessary to issue a permanent ban with immediate effect. In the most serious of cases, or cases where it is considered that there has been a breach of the law, it is expected that the transport provider will report the incident to the Police.

The following explains behaviour which we all expect from the young people who receive travel assistance from Kent County Council. Of course, we believe that all young people will want to behave appropriately when away from the family home and we trust that, once students are made aware of the expectations placed upon them, they will respond positively.

The main points to be remembered are:

“Arrive for the transport punctually and with a valid pass or the correct fare”

Make sure you know the time that the bus is due to arrive – be there on time! Make sure you have your pass and that it is not damaged or defaced and scans when presented to the ticket machine. Drivers may confiscate an invalid or damaged pass and require you to pay the appropriate fare. If you do not have your pass, you must pay the appropriate fare. If you use someone else’s pass, or allow them to use yours, it will be treated as fraud. In that case, you may both be refused travel and the Police will be informed. If you need a replacement pass, one can be obtained from us for a fee (currently £10). Please remember that up to three replacement passes can be issued. If your replacement pass is lost, stolen or damaged, you will need to purchase a new pass and pay the appropriate fee.

“Act in a responsible manner when awaiting the vehicle – not congregating in large groups or standing in an unsafe place”

Don't get there too early, as large numbers of students congregating in one place can be unsettling for local residents who might be disturbed by excessive noise. More importantly, make sure that you wait in a safe place and do not attempt to board the bus until it has come to a stop. Remember that pushing and shoving will not help you get to your destination any sooner and will only cause delays; it is also very dangerous. Of course, if you arrive too late, you might miss the bus. In some cases, where there is only one service per day, you will have to make other arrangements to travel that day.

“Board the first available vehicle for which you hold a pass”

It is important that you board the first available bus going to your destination. This will ensure that you can get to your destination in good time and will also help to ensure that you can make any connecting service where this is necessary. If you deliberately miss the first bus, you may find that later services are already full and you may not be able to get on.

“Show your pass to the driver, Inspector or other official on demand”

All students should have a valid pass for the journey and it is part of the driver's duty to inspect passes regularly. Sometimes, there will be Inspectors who will also want to check passes. This helps us to monitor the number of students travelling to ensure that vehicles are not overloaded and that only students who are entitled to travel are doing so. You cannot rely on the driver to remember that you usually have a pass and let you onto the bus if you do not have it with you when asked. Students who travel on the wrong bus, or without a valid pass, may be banned from travelling.

“Occupy seats (on both the lower and upper decks) before standing (if permitted on the bus). Standing passengers must do so safely, on the lower deck, rearwards of the driver's cab and must not distract the driver. Bags and equipment must not be placed on seats.”

While on the vehicle, sit quietly and ensure that bags and possessions are stored in a safe place e.g. under the seat or in a luggage rack. Do not block aisles or gangways. On buses, it is a legal requirement that you stand away from the driver's cab and do not distract him/her. Anyone who distracts a driver, either by talking/shouting or by attempting to interfere with the controls, is putting the safety of all passengers at risk.

“Remain seated during the journey and do not inconvenience other passengers”

Whilst travelling, remain seated and try not to make too much noise or otherwise cause inconvenience to other passengers. Do not put your bag or your feet on the seats. If you do need to stand, do so in a safe place. Remember that the law applies to you when you are on a bus in the same way as if you were in any other public place. Do not damage the vehicle, light fires, write graffiti or act in any way that will cause damage. Many vehicles may be fitted with CCTV and evidence obtained may be admissible in a Court of law. Any person found to be responsible for damage will be reported to the Police in addition to any action taken by the bus company and Kent County Council. Any damage caused must be paid for.

“Comply with all instructions from the driver, Inspector or other official at all times, especially in an emergency”

Sometimes it may be necessary for drivers to instruct students to sit in a particular seat or to leave the vehicle at a different stop. In an emergency, the driver will know exactly what to do and will give you clear instructions. For your own safety and the safety of others, it is very important that you follow those instructions carefully.

“Wear seatbelts, where fitted”

Some vehicles are fitted with seatbelts for your safety. It is important that you wear the seatbelt and ensure that it is not damaged. Report any damaged belts to the driver. Remember that if you refuse to wear your seatbelt, the driver may refuse to allow you to travel.

“Disembark safely, at the correct stop, and cross roads with care”

Do not try to get off the vehicle until it is safe to do so. Wait until the vehicle has stopped before you stand and then leave the vehicle in an orderly manner. Remember to take all your bags and equipment with you and do not leave any litter behind. Do not get off anywhere other than at the correct stop. After leaving the vehicle, do not walk across in front of it; the vehicle may move away suddenly and without warning. Cross only at a safe place, using pedestrian crossings where possible. Don't run!

Responding to the breaches of the Code of Conduct

Drivers must report all incidents of misbehaviour to their supervisor/manager who will forward details to us. All transport providers are provided with 'Incident Forms' which enable incidents to be reported accurately and promptly. All reports are followed up and we will decide what action to take. In most cases, we will discuss the matter with the transport provider and may involve the school in determining the appropriate action to take. The response to misbehaviour will take into account the particular circumstances surrounding the incident and, in particular, the extent to which the safety and welfare of others may have been jeopardised. We will also consider the age of the student, whether other students were involved and whether the student has misbehaved whilst travelling before. Parents/carers will always be notified when there has been a report about their child's behaviour on a vehicle.

All sanctions will be applied fairly and consistently. Similarly, students should be aware that sanctions will be applied and will be applied swiftly. In most cases, there will be a warning before a student receives a ban from a bus or has their pass withdrawn. There will, however, be cases where an immediate ban is applied. If a student's pass is confiscated, it is the parent/carer's responsibility to make alternative arrangements for their child to travel, including paying any fares which will not be reimbursed.

It is important to remember that the driver may not observe every incident of misbehaviour but will report all that are observed. Students are expected to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and any consequences of misbehaviour. Therefore, excuses such as "I wasn't the only one doing it" or "I only hit them because they hit me" will not be accepted as justification for misbehaviour.

We know that parents will want to support us in trying to ensure their child behaves appropriately and we seek their support in reinforcing those sanctions at home. Where a student is banned from travelling, either for a fixed period or permanently, the child's parent/carer will become responsible for making alternative arrangements for their child to travel. Any such arrangements would be at the parent/carer's own expense.

Transport operators should co-operate with Kent County Council in any investigation. In addition to the above, all operators have, in accordance with their Conditions of Carriage, legal powers to refuse anyone from travelling on their services.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct are dealt with in accordance to their seriousness and we have therefore identified four separate categories of misbehaviour. To promote fairness and consistency, sanctions will be applied depending upon the category of misbehaviour which is identified.

Category 1 – Nuisance or offensive behaviour

This includes irritating and unpleasant behaviour which, while not necessarily a threat to safety, may significantly impair the comfort of others including:

- Failing to respond appropriately to the driver or inspector, such as refusing to show a pass or pay the appropriate fare
- Eating or drinking on the vehicle
- Spitting
- Using foul or abusive language
- Making excessive noise
- Putting your feet on the seats

Category 2 – Dangerous behaviour

This includes behaviour which may present some potential or actual threat to the physical safety of others and includes:

- Standing on the vehicle steps or in the doorway
- Leaning out of the window or door
- Harassing or verbally abusing other passengers or the driver
- Smoking or vaping

- Bullying
- Running around inside the vehicle or climbing on seats

Category 3 – Destructive or very dangerous behaviour

This category includes behaviour which causes or has the potential to cause physical injury to others or damage to the vehicle, such as:

- Fighting
- Threatening physical violence to other passengers or the driver
- Throwing objects around or out of the vehicle
- Breaking windows
- Interfering with the operation of the doors or emergency exit
- Graffiti, including etching glass
- Spraying aerosols
- Damage to seats, seatbelts or other equipment

Category 4 – Highly dangerous or life-threatening behaviour

This category includes behaviour which is likely to cause serious injury to others and includes:

- Physical assault on the driver or other passengers
- Lighting fires including igniting aerosols
- Threatening physical violence with a dangerous weapon
- Interfering with the vehicle controls
- Indecent Exposure

Each reported incident will be dealt with on its own merits. However, the course of action to be followed when considering the sanction to be applied will follow the procedures described overleaf.

Category 1

First incident: The bus operator submits a written report to Kent County Council. After discussion with the bus operator, school or other party if necessary, we may give a **written warning** to the student via their parent/carer. The school and transport provider also receive a copy of the warning for their information.

Second incident: As above except that the warning is a **final warning**.

Third incident: The student is issued with a **fixed period ban** from using their pass for up to one week.

Fourth or subsequent incidents: The student is issued with an **extended or permanent ban** from using their pass of up to one month, the duration of the ban being determined on the nature of the misbehaviour.

Category 2

First incident: The bus operator submits a written report to Kent County Council. After discussion with the bus operator, school or other party if necessary, we may give a **written warning** that the student might receive a ban from the vehicle if behaviour doesn't improve. The school and transport provider also receive a copy of the warning for their information.

Second incident: As above except that the warning is a **final warning**.

Third incident: The student is issued with a **fixed period ban** from using their pass for up to two weeks.

Fourth or subsequent incidents: The student is issued with an **extended or permanent ban** from using their pass of up to one term, the duration of the ban being determined on the nature of the misbehaviour.

Category 3

First incident: An **immediate fixed period ban** from using their pass of up to one week whilst any further information is collated. This might lead to an **extended ban** from using their pass of up to two terms. After discussion with the bus operator, school or other party if necessary, we may give a **written warning** that the student might receive a permanent ban from using their pass if behaviour doesn't improve.

Second or subsequent incident: An **extended ban** or a **permanent ban** from using their pass may be applied.

Third incident: a **permanent ban** from using their pass may be applied.

Category 4

First incident: An **immediate fixed period ban** from using their pass of up to two weeks while any further information is collated. This might lead to an **extended ban** or a **permanent ban** from using their pass.

Second or subsequent incident: a **permanent ban** from using their pass may be applied.

Other Useful Information

Lost passes

You can order a replacement pass online by logging into your KCC Travel Saver account at **kent.gov.uk/travelsaver**. You will need a Credit or Debit Card to pay £10.

An administration fee of £10 will be charged for a replacement pass. You will be liable to pay any fares until your replacement pass is received. No fares, or other costs incurred whilst awaiting your replacement pass, will be refunded. Only three replacement passes can be issued per scheme year; thereafter you may make a new application at our discretion and the appropriate application fee will apply.

Adverse weather or school closures

Notice of school closures due to adverse weather or other special circumstances are usually broadcast on local radio, so you should make sure that you listen out for any information. The Headteacher of the school will usually decide in advance if a school should not open due to bad weather, heating failure etc or if the school needs to close early. The school should always try to give parents/carers and bus operators as much warning as possible, although sometimes decisions have to be made immediately.

Transport providers are advised to use their discretion in bad weather. If they believe that part or the entire journey might be hazardous and might put the safety of passengers at risk, they will reserve the right not to operate the service. Transport providers should use their best endeavours to provide information in such circumstances.

Further information about the scheme is available at:

www.kent.gov.uk/travelsaver or
www.kent.gov.uk/16plustravelsaver

phone: **03000 41 84 84**

or email: **KCCtravelsaver@kent.gov.uk**

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