

Further to the recent government guidance regarding the full reopening of schools from September, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is continuing to work with schools, colleges, local authorities and bus/coach operators to understand the implications for schools/college transport to effectively plan our schools' services network.

While the advice remains that students should avoid public transport where possible, there is still some uncertainty about how the recent guidance applies to school services, including whether social distancing will be required if they are open to multiple schools, how general bus services which carry school pupils as well as other passengers may be affected by the reduced capacity available, and how to ensure the limited resource we control is best utilised. We are currently exploring a number of different options to maximise the capacity provided however it is important to note that all services provided under contract to TfGM will need to be reviewed as part of this work and may be subject to change.

As noted above, it is essential that students are advised to consider all other travel options before using public transport. We advise parents of children who normally use school bus services to cycle and walk to school if possible. When planning alternative arrangements please contact sustainable.journeys@tfgm.com for assistance, who can provide guidance for journeys that can be made on bike or foot. If they must use the bus or public transport, pupils should follow Government guidance on safe travel by wearing a face covering; keeping their distance; and washing their hands regularly.

Important information relating to TfGM's Yellow School Bus Scheme

Under normal circumstances TfGM would by now have planned the Yellow School Bus services, notified schools and begun the process of allocating passes to students ready for the new academic year in September.

Despite the exceptional circumstances noted above it is our intention to continue to provide Yellow School Bus services, however, given the changing nature of the overall school service provision and ongoing uncertainty around the level of demand, we intend to remove the requirement for students to obtain a pass to travel on these services for September 2020. No current passes will remain valid beyond the end of this academic year.

While this may be a change from previous years, we believe the requirement to obtain a pass would be a significant barrier for some students, particularly those who may not have access to the internet over the summer holidays or whose circumstances may have changed in recent months.

Schools and parents/carers will be advised of the Yellow School Bus routes at the same time as their other school services.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

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