;

Code of Conduct – School Transport

Stephensons want your journey to and from school to be as safe as possible. Every student has a personal responsibility for their own safety during every journey. Parents/guardians also have an important role and following these simple rules will help keep everyone as safe as possible.

At the bus stop

You are responsible for your safety and behaviour before you get on the bus, during the journey and after you leave the bus. You must therefore ensure that you are familiar with a safe procedure for getting to and from your pick up/drop off point and ask your parent/guardian for advice if you have any concerns.

It is your and your parents'/guardians' responsibility to make sure that you are at the pick-up point in time for the arrival of the bus. We recommend that you are at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled departure time of the vehicle as shown on the timetable.

You should wait for the bus sensibly and safely without inconveniencing other bus users, local residents and businesses. Please give a clear signal to the approaching bus that you intend to board. Most bus stops are used by other buses too, please do not assume that you will have the same driver each day who might recognise you.
Please wait until the bus has stopped and the driver has opened the doors before moving towards it; do not push or jostle.

On the bus

You should board the bus and find your seat straight away. Do not change seats during the journey and do not walk up and down the stairs of a double decked bus whilst it is in motion. In the unlikely event that seats are unavailable you should stand well behind the driver's cab holding on to poles or grab handles provided. Do not sit in the luggage areas, on the stairs or on the upper deck of a double decked bus. Put your bags under your seat as they will be safer there, and do not obstruct the gangway, stairs or emergency exits.

Please make sure that your actions do not distract the driver as this could put you at risk as well as the driver, your friends and other road users. You should not talk to the driver whilst they are driving, except in an emergency. Never try to operate the doors on buses unless it is an emergency and the bus has stopped.

Please stay in your seat until the bus has stopped moving and remember to take your personal belongings with you. If you have to cross the road after getting off the bus, use a pedestrian crossing if available. Allow the bus to move away before attempting to cross the road.

Please do not eat or drink in the vehicle. If you do have litter, please put it in a bin. If you forget something, take care when returning to the bus as the driver may be pulling away; if so, do not attempt to stop them, but instead email us on customerservices@stephensonsofessex.com

All passengers are carried subject to the provisions of the PSV (Conduct of Drivers, Inspectors, Conductors and Passengers) Regulations 1990, as amended 1995. Any passenger who breaks these Regulations must give their name and address to the driver or inspector on request and may be removed from the bus by the driver, inspector or a police constable.

If the bus is late or delayed

Occasionally the bus may be late and this may be beyond the control of the driver. If the bus is running late you should wait at the pick-up point for 30 minutes before you make alternative transport arrangements for getting into school. Please make sure that you ask your parents/guardians what you should do if you are unable to board the vehicle or if the bus doesn't arrive within 30 minutes.

In the event of an emergency during the journey, such as a breakdown, the driver will judge whether it is better for you to stay on board or to leave the vehicle and you should follow their instructions.

Most of our routes also now offer live tracking, which can be accessed via the Stephensons and Nibs apps The apps are available for Apple and Android devices. Full details can be found at https://stephensonsofessex.com/download-our-app/ and https://nibsbuses.com/download-our-app/

Tickets, passes and fares

Season (termly) tickets and passes are either issued by ourselves, the CSSE or the County Council, according to the type of service. Daily cash single and return fares are also available from the driver.

If you have a pass or season ticket, you MUST make sure that you have your bus pass with you before you leave home. When the bus arrives, please have it ready and show it to the driver or scan it on the ticket machine as you board. If you cannot show your pass, you will be required to pay the cash fare.

You may also be asked to produce your ticket to an Inspector during the journey. Your pass/ticket is only for your own use and you should not lend it to anyone else.

Lost tickets

If you are unable to show a valid bus pass or ticket to the driver, you MUST pay the daily fare using cash or contactless

On all services there is a strict "no ticket, no ride" policy.

If your pass is lost or damaged it will need to be replaced. You should contact the organisation that issued it – either our office or the CSSE. Contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

An administration fee will be charged for replacement tickets. We will not normally agree to the issue of more than one replacement ticket per pupil in any school year.

Parents & guardians

Please remember that you are responsible for the safety and behaviour of your children so you must ensure they know how to get to and from the bus safely. We do appreciate that you may not be at home if your child is unable to board the bus, so you should agree with them who they should contact in the event of an emergency.

Please observe the Highway Code and do not park in a marked bus stop, this could impact on the safety of the bus, passengers and other road users.

If the bus breaks down or is delayed in a traffic jam, students will be advised what action to take by the driver. Students must remain seated unless told to leave the vehicle by the driver. If any student leaves the vehicle against the driver's advice, they do so at their own risk.

Please be aware that in the event of severe difficulties such as flooding on the roads or significant snowfall, it may be necessary for services to be cancelled in the morning or to miss out some stops. It may also be necessary for students to be returned from their schools earlier than the scheduled times. Such a decision will only be made in consultation with the Police, Local Authorities and schools, on safety grounds.

If our buses are unable to run because of adverse weather conditions, no refunds on season tickets will be made. Parents/Guardians are also advised that if their child is excluded from using the bus service for any period of time by either us, the CSSE, the County Council or by the Headteacher of the school concerned, they are not entitled to any refund in respect of their child's bus pass.

Maintaining good standards of behaviour

We want you to enjoy your journey to and from school. If you have concerns regarding the behaviour of other students, report it. Normal school rules apply on the bus, including: No swearing or verbal aggression, no bullying, no fighting, no spitting, no smoking and no drugs.

Your school and/or your parents/guardians will be informed if you harass or bully others, fight, cause a nuisance, are offensive, cause vandalism or throw objects. Such issues are treated seriously. Thoughtless or selfish behaviour, which brings either the school's or Stephensons name into disrepute will not be tolerated. If you damage our bus or other property, the cost of repairing the damage will be charged to your parents/guardians. Remember that you maylose your right to use the bus if you misbehave.

We, the CSSE, the County Council and schools will investigate all instances of unacceptable behaviour and will take appropriate disciplinary action, which could include:

Official warnings
Detentions
Exclusion from school
Banning from the bus for an appropriate period of time Payment for any damage caused.

You should be aware that we have CCTV systems fitted to most of our buses for public and employee safety as well as the prevention and detection of crime. Criminal damage or behaviour will be reported to the police. CCTV images are used in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations.

By working together and supporting this policy we can maintain good standards of behaviour on school buses and provide a comfortable, stress free and friendly environment, which will be enjoyed by all.

Comments and complaints

If you have a problem during a journey, please attempt to resolve this with the driver before leaving the bus.

If you are unable to resolve the problem with the driver or wish to raise an issue subsequently, you should always do so in writing or by e-mail to Stephensons at the Boreham office address shown at the end of this leaflet.

We will use our best endeavours to operate punctually to the advertised timetable. However, you are advised that, under the Company’s Conditions of Carriage, we will not be liable or accountable for any loss, damage, hurt, inconvenience or injury arising from the failure of our services to start or arrive at the advertised time or place or at all and will not be liable for any consequential loss.

About us

Stephensons of Essex Ltd has been trading for over 50 years, and we operate bus services across Essex and in parts of Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. The safety of students on our services is of paramount importance. We are licenced by the Traffic Commissioner for the Eastern Traffic Area, licence number PF0000454. We operate in excess of 100 vehicles,they are serviced on a six-weekly schedule, and safety checks are carried out by our drivers before starting service every day. All our school bus drivers are subject to checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Some of our services are operated on behalf of Essex, Suffolk or Cambridgeshire County Councils and others are run in conjunction with the Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex (CSSE), whilst many routes are commercially provided. Slightly different rules may apply for the sale or issue of tickets and passes according to the type of service.Please refer to the relevant service page on our website www.stephensonsofessex.com for further information.

Contacts

Stephensons of Essex Ltd
Head Office:
Riverside Industrial Estate
South Street, Rochford, SS4 1BS

Stephensons Ticketing Office
& Customer Care (Boreham office)
Industrial Estate
Waltham Road, Boreham
CM3 3AW
01376 503050 (office hours)
CustomerServices@stephensonsofessex.com

Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex (CSSE)
PO 3087
Chelmsford
CM1 3SY
01245 281194
transport@csse.org.uk
Office open in school term times only

Essex County Council
Passenger Transport
County Hall
Chelmsford
CM1 1QH
0845 603 2200
passenger.transport@essex.gov.uk

Details correct as of July 2026.