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|  | Terry ClarkHead of Commissioning and Health Integration |
|  | Tel: 020 8770 5000Date: 28th August 2020 |
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Dear Parent/Carer

Assisted Transport for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

I am writing to you following my previous letters about assisted travel for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. I want to ensure you are updated on the latest developments before the return to school next week and make sure that you have all of the information you need.

It is important that we all work together to make sure that children are as safe as they can be whilst going to school and coming home again. The new term will mean a new routine for everyone and we recognise the role that transport plays in this for your child. The travel assistance team and transport providers will be working with you to make sure that the start and end of the day for your child is a positive one and that all children get to school safely, in a calm state and ready to learn.

You should have received a letter from the travel assistance team advising you of the provider and crew who will be taking your child to school. Your provider should also have contacted you to introduce themselves and to update you on pick up and drop off times. If you have not heard from your provider, please contact the transport team who will make sure that your provider calls you.

As you will be aware, hand hygiene is an important part of reducing the risk of transmission. You can help keep all of the children safe on shared transport by making sure your child washes their hands before leaving home. You can help keep your family safe by making sure your child washes their hands when they return home from school.

Wearing a face covering can reduce the risk of infection. If your child is aged over 11 and is able to wear a face covering they can help keep other children safe on the vehicle by wearing one. If they find it uncomfortable during the journey they can remove it but it would be great if they could put it back on once they feel comfortable to do so. The Driver and Passenger Assistant will be wearing face coverings so please remind your child of this.

We have worked with providers to make sure that they are following the latest government guidance for transport of pupils and will be closely monitoring them to make sure that all providers are following this guidance. If you have any concerns, please speak to the transport team.

When schools open there is likely to be more traffic on the roads. I envisage that some parents and carers may decide to drive their children to school and there is the likelihood of increased traffic on the road. This may cause some delays initially, and any delays may be more significant if the weather is poor. Our providers always try to anticipate delays and work around them, but if your transport is delayed, the provider should call you to let you know. This will particularly be the case in the first weeks of term until things settle down.

You may decide that you wish to take your child/children to school using your own transport. If you do, I’d like to remind you that we can give you a Personal Travel Budget of £0.45 per mile. If you would like to switch to a personal transport budget, please contact the Cognus Transport Team at SEN.Transport@cognus.org.uk. If you decide to take a Personal Travel Budget during the current circumstances, you can go back to the council arranging assisted travel provision, although we will need at least 2 weeks notice so we can arrange this.

We will keep you informed of developments as they happen and will update the Local Offer web pages ([https://www.sutton.gov.uk/localoffer](https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200611/suttons_local_offer)) with up to date information. I am also attaching a revised copy of the FAQs that were previously sent to you.

If you have any questions or concerns you can email the Children's SEN Assisted Transport Team SEN.Transport@cognus.org.uk or call them on 020 8323 0460.

We wish you and your child all the very best for the return to school,

Yours sincerely

**Terry Clark
Head of Commissioning and Health Integration**