

Guide - Travelling with First Essex Buses Ltd

This guide outlines simple rules, that students/parents & guardians should follow, to ensure the safety of all individuals whilst travelling.

WAITING AT THE BUS STOP

You, the passenger, are responsible for your own safety and behaviour before you get on the bus, during the journey and after you vacate the bus. You must therefore ensure that you are familiar with a safe route for getting to and from your pick-up/drop off point. You should ask your parents/guardians for advice if you have any concerns.

It is your responsibility and your parents'/guardians' responsibility to make sure that you are at the pick-up point in time for the arrival of the bus. It is recommended that you aim to be at the stop **five** minutes before the scheduled departure time of the vehicle (the departure time is shown on the bus timetable).

You should wait for the bus sensibly, without inconveniencing other bus users, local businesses, and residents.

BUS ARRIVAL

To ensure that the bus driver is aware that you are waiting for the bus, you should signal to them by extending an arm towards the bus. Wait until the bus has stopped before moving towards it; do NOT push or jostle. You must make sure that you have your bus pass before you leave home.

When the vehicle arrives, you should have the pass ready and show it to the driver, as you board, or pay the cash fare. You should board the vehicle and find a seat. In the unlikely event a seat is not available please stand and hold onto the available grab handles/poles.

Please stand well behind the bus driver's cab. You should not talk to the driver whilst they are driving, except in an emergency. Do not change seats during the journey or travel in the gangways, in the luggage areas or on the stairs.

If your bus is provided with seat belts, this MUST be worn. There are signs and window stickers around the bus to remind you. The driver will also give you a verbal reminder before starting the journey. Put your bags under your seat, as they will be safer there, and please do NOT obstruct the walkway.

WHILST TRAVELLING WITH FIRST ESSEX BUSES

We want you to enjoy your journey to school/college. However, please make sure that your actions do not distract the driver. This could put yourself at risk as well as the driver, fellow passengers, and other road users.

Your school/college and parents/guardians will be informed if you harass or bully others, fight, are a nuisance, are offensive, cause vandalism or throw objects. If you cause damage to the vehicle or other property, the cost of repairing the damage will be charged to your parents/guardians. Remember that you will lose your right to use the bus if you misbehave.

If you have concerns regarding the behaviour of other students, report it. Normal school/college rules apply on the bus, including no swearing or verbal aggression, no bullying, no fighting, no spitting, and no illegal substances. Smoking is not permitted.

Please do not eat or drink in the vehicle. If you do have litter, please put it in a bin. Never try to operate doors on buses/coaches unless it is an emergency. Do not get up from your seat until the vehicle has stopped moving and remember to take your personal belongings with you. Allow the bus to move off before attempting to cross the road - where possible - please use a pedestrian crossing.

If you forget something, take care when returning to the bus as the driver may be pulling away. If the bus has already left - please submit a lost property report to log the missing item by visiting:

www.firstbus.co.uk/essex/help-and-support/lost-property

LOST/DAMAGED TICKET

You are responsible for ensuring that your travel card is valid for travel, otherwise you will be asked to pay the prevailing on-bus fare by the driver. You may also be asked to produce your travel card to an inspector during the journey.

As the ticket holder you are responsible for its general condition. If you lose or damage your travel card it will be replaced at your own expense. Lost or damaged passes will be cancelled so that they can no longer be used. Replacement requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

A £20.00 administration fee will be charged.

To submit a replacement travel card, request please visit: www.firstbus.co.uk/essex/smart

We regret we cannot refund fares paid whilst awaiting a replacement ticket, but we do process replacement requests as a priority.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Please remember that you are responsible for the safety and behaviour of your children, and therefore you must ensure that they know how to get to and from the bus safely.

If the bus is late by 30 minutes or more, please contact our First Customer Service on **03456 460 707**. Whilst every effort is made to run to time; sometimes buses can be unavoidably delayed.

If the vehicle breaks down, students will be advised what action will be taken 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 note. In the event of severe disruption to service, i.e., major flooding on the roads or significant snowfall, it may be necessary for services to be cancelled in the morning or for pupils to be returned from their schools/colleges earlier than the scheduled times. If our buses are unable to operate due to adverse conditions, no refunds will be made. However, such a decision will only be made in consultation with the local authorities and schools. Emergency school closures will be announced on www.essex.gov.uk/emergency-school-closures and/or directly by the school/college.

In the case of any service cancellation being necessary, announcements will be made on our website www.firstbus.co.uk/essex found under **News and service updates**. Service updates will also be provided on Twitter **@FirstEssex**.

THE RESPONSE TO STUDENTS WHO FAIL TO OBSERVE THIS POLICY

First Essex Buses and the schools/colleges will investigate all instances of unacceptable behaviour and will take appropriate disciplinary action. Such action could include:

- An official warning
- Detention
- Exclusion, from the bus service, for an appropriate length of time
- Payment for any damage caused

Parents/guardians should be aware that we are increasingly using CCTV systems on our buses as a means of providing supportive evidence when necessary. Criminal damage or behaviour will be reported to the Police. Unacceptable behaviour through thoughtless or selfish action, which brings the school's/colleges' name into

disrepute, will not be tolerated. Parents/guardians are advised that if their child is excluded from using the bus service for a length of time, by either First Essex Buses or by the Headteacher of the school/ college concerned, they are not entitled to any refund in respect of their child's bus pass.

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 may be removed from the bus by the driver, inspector, or a police constable.

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

In the event of a problem on a journey, the passenger should attempt to resolve the situation with the driver before leaving the bus.

If the passenger is unable to resolve the problem with the driver, or wishes to raise an issue subsequently, please contact First Customer Service:

Live Chat & Phone Lines: **03456 460 707**

08:00 – 18:00 Monday – Friday

Twitter: **@FirstEssex**

Tweet Us between the hours of:

07:00 – 19:00 Monday – Friday

09:00 – 17:00 Weekends and Bank Holidays

The company will endeavor to operate punctually to the advertised timetable. However, passengers are reminded that, under the Company's Conditions of Carriage, the company gives notice that it will not be liable or accountable for any loss, damage, hurt, inconvenience, or injury arising from the failure of its services to start or arrive at the advertised time or place or at all and will not be liable for any consequential loss.

Information is correct at time of publication (August 2023)

