

01/06/2022

COVID-19 Safety Measures Pertaining to School Buses and Transit for both Woluwe & Evere school site

Belgian Authorities require that specific measures be applied to all school transit and transport as of September 2020. These measures are designed to ensure the highest possible level of safety during transit to and from school and forestall the spread of COVID-19: they include a mix of social distancing, cleaning, and protective behaviours.

1/ GENERAL RULES ON HOW TO BEHAVE DURING THE HEALTH CRISIS

- Keep abreast of a fast-evolving situation. Use the usual public information channels, such as [COCOM](#), commune administration communications, [SPF Public Health](#). Heed and abide by all safety instructions communicated by the Belgian Authorities. Do not volunteer your own ideas or your own initiatives.
- Inform and/or report to all relevant staff and personnel to help prevent the further spread of the pandemic, both within the school premises and outside, especially as regards cleanliness and hygiene issues.
- Keep all parents informed of all decisions taken by your department as the situation evolves. In particular, should the necessity arise, a renewed period of lockdown may have to be considered.
- Ensure that all the measures that aim at ensuring cleanliness and hygiene are well-known, continually improved, and heeded at all times by all. These measures include, but are not limited to: observing social distancing, washing hands with soap for at least 30 seconds, coughing or sneezing into one's elbow and then washing hands again, and disposing of used paper tissues into an appropriate disposal bin only.
- Always ensure and control that, common surfaces are kept properly cleaned at all times.
- Communicate with and confirm to your Establishment's Health Service which measures are in force and keep them informed of any difficulty you might experience in applying such.
- All APEEE personnel has signed a sworn statement, confirming that the health measures imposed by the Belgian Authorities are being fully complied with.
- All personnel working for or on behalf of APEEE are conforming to all requisite safety rules, which include wearing a face mask where mandatory and regularly washing hands.

Specifically, the following rules apply onboard school buses:

2/ SAFETY RULES IN FORCE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AS OF SEPTEMBER 2020

- A procedure is in place upon **both boarding and getting off the bus**, ensuring that social distancing rules are upheld, both between passengers and with respect to drivers and any proctors or accompanying staff.
- Social distancing must be upheld as much as possible whenever passengers leave their seats. Therefore, only one passenger, whether getting on or off the bus, may stand at any given time. Children will be enjoined by the accompanying proctors and/or the driver to refrain from horseplay or skylarking and to avoid physical contacts.
- In compliance with the new CODECO decision on 20th May 2022, it is no longer compulsory to wear a mask throughout the ride. However, it is still highly recommended to wear a mask when essential safety measures aimed at protecting students on the bus, the driver, and any staff present on board cannot be respected.
- **For all pupils, wearing a face mask during the ride is highly recommended:** a Covid risk assessment study was performed by IDEWE [Accueil | Groupe IDEWE](#), the external prevention office of the APEEE.
- If the bus has two separate doors, both boarding and getting off the bus shall occur through the rear door.
- Buses are carefully and thoroughly cleaned with disinfectants as per the stipulations of the COVID protocol that all bus companies must sign.
- Disinfectant gel dispensers are available at the bus parking entrance. Proctors also carry gel for use on board buses

3/ SAFETY APEEE Tracking system against Covid-19

- In compliance with the new regulations [8500/8501](#), the tracking system is not applied anymore. Pupils are allocated a seat and are kindly asked to sit at the same seat.
- The positive COVID-19 cases are registered in our system.
- The [COCOM](#) deems school transit a weaker contamination risk, therefore the presence of a case or suspected case shall not automatically lead to the isolation of the other pupils on the bus.
- In accordance with COCOM recommendations, a bus is quarantined when COVID cases reach 25% of the pupils seated in the bus.

4/ RULES SPECIFIC TO BUS COMPANIES AND TO DRIVERS

A reminder of the binding rules which apply to drivers:

- Drivers are no longer required to wear a mask while driving, however it is still recommended.
- If the bus has two doors, getting on and off the bus shall occur through the rear door.
- If there is only one door, pupils will enter and exit by the available door.

- The full convention protocol for bus companies is attached (addendum).

5/ ACCOMPANYING PERSONNEL ON BOARD

- Accompanying personnel are seated at the back of the bus and/or move about in the bus to ensure that all pupils are correctly seated. They must ensure that pupils use their assigned seat number every time.

6/ RULES AND HEALTH RULES PERTAINING TO THE PARKING AREA

- Upon arrival, the pupils seated at the back are the first to leave the bus via the rear door. Accompanying staff must ensure that order and social distancing be properly maintained when exiting the bus.
- Disinfecting gel and spare face masks are also available to APEEE staff in the booth.
- Gel dispensers are available at the bus parking area entrance.
- Measures will be in place to ensure the smooth flow of circulation and prevent any thronging or bottlenecks during access to the parking area.

7/ IF AND WHEN A CASE OF PUPIL INFECTION IS SUSPECTED

- **In case of a suspected case within a class:** the school shall abide by the Case Management Protocol stipulated in document [8500/8501](#) of Wallonia-Bruxelles (attached).
- **When a pupil develops symptoms for the first time when on board a bus:**
 - Accompanying staff must isolate the child at least 1.5m away from the other children, if at all possible.
 - The Transport Office shall be notified immediately by accompanying staff and the child will be handed over to an **EEB2** proctor, who will take the child to the infirmary.

Upon arriving at School, the School shall abide by the Case Management Protocol as stipulated in document [8500/8501](#) of Wallonia-Bruxelles (attached).

Should a pupil develop symptoms before boarding or upon boarding a bus in the afternoon: a School proctor shall take the child to the infirmary or to School management. Thereafter, the School shall abide by the Case Management Protocol as stipulated in document [8500/8501](#) of Wallonia-Bruxelles (attached).

- **Should a pupil develop symptoms after the afternoon bus has left:**
 - Accompanying staff must isolate the child at least 1.5m away from the other children, if at all possible.
 - Accompanying staff must immediately notify the Transport Office.
- The Transport Office will then contact the parents to inform them.
- The pupil is then handed over to the parents or as the case may be goes home.
- The Transport office notifies the nurses and a member of the school administration or a school representative of a suspected COVID-19 in the affected child.

Note: The test results shall not be communicated to the parents of the pupils who use the same bus of the suspected case, in conformity with the Case Management Protocol [8500/8501](#).

8/ AT RISK CONTACT

The APEEE School Transport will follow the protocol implemented by the School Management, the which can be found here:

[EEB2 Protocols](#)

Note: This document shall be updated should any further measures be taken by either the Belgian Authorities or School management.