

An Information Guide for Parents on 'Home to School Transport'



General Information

It has been agreed that the education transport team, North East Lincolnshire Council will provide home to school transport support for your child.

The transport support will be provided in the most effective way bearing in mind the reasonable needs of your child, using either a local authority vehicle or private contractor. Please be assured there will be no compromise on safety. The transport provision will focus on the needs of each of the children for whom it is provided and not on other factors.

The route set out for each contract will, as far as is reasonably practical, be the most effective way of transporting your child to school. We are unable to accommodate individual requests to vary the routes and timings as the result of childcare arrangements, children attending school clubs or in cases where parents may also be responsible for taking other children to school.

If appropriate, a passenger assistant will be allocated to travel on the vehicle to ensure that all children on the vehicle arrive safely at their destination. The decision to provide a passenger assistant in all cases lies with the education transport team, who ensure that all passenger assistants are trained appropriately to undertake their duties in a safe and proper manner. It is important to note that passenger assistants are normally allocated to school routes, rather than to individual children.

It is recognised that as a child develops and/or their individual needs change, a review of their transport requirements may be necessary. Please note that changes of address, changes to medical condition, or the need for a larger wheelchair or car seat may mean a move to another more appropriate vehicle. If the vehicle cannot safely access your property you may have to ensure your child is brought to and collected from an agreed pick up point. However due to each child having individual needs, which are often complex, the education transport team may change a child's transport arrangements as it deems appropriate. Such changes are made at the discretion of the authority.

There may be other circumstances that could affect your child's transport routine which are beyond our control, for example, a driver or passenger assistant being ill or leaving the authority, which may result in your child travelling with a different driver or passenger assistant. Mechanical breakdowns, traffic accidents, school closures and road conditions may result in a temporary or occasional disruption to normal transport provision.

Before transport support commences, the education transport team will advise you of the following transport arrangements:

- The name and telephone number of the transport provider (contractor)
- The name of the passenger assistant (if applicable)
- The contact details for the education transport team. The general contact number for the team is (01472) 326291, option 2.

Please note the procedure for home to school transport will be as follows:

The Journey to School:

- Always have your child ready in the morning when the vehicle arrives.
- If a child is not ready in the morning, at the time stated, the driver will wait up to five minutes only.
- If the child is not ready after this time the vehicle will continue its journey and the responsibility for getting your child to school that day will rest with you.
- **Please note it is not the responsibility of the driver or the passenger assistant (if applicable) to come to the door and collect your child, you should bring the child to the vehicle.**

The Journey from school:

- An authorised adult must be present at your home address / designated drop off point to receive your child at the end of the school day.
- Please be ready to collect your child from the vehicle or designated drop off point.
- Please note it is not the responsibility of the driver or the passenger assistant (if applicable) to bring the child from the vehicle to your door.
- If there is no one at the home address / designated drop off point and there is no known emergency contact number / address the child will be taken to a place of safety recommended by social services.

How you can help us

You can play an important role in the smooth running of your child's transport arrangements by ensuring the following points are followed:

- Making sure that your child is ready for the vehicle (either at home or the designated pick up point) 5 minutes before pick-up time. In most cases transport will be shared with other children and it is therefore imperative that the vehicle runs on time. **Please be aware that it is not the responsibility of the passenger assistant or driver to alert you to the fact that the vehicle has arrived.**
- Always being at home or the designated drop-off point to meet your child at the end of the school day or agreed drop off time.
- Making sure that you keep the education transport team updated with any changes to your home and mobile telephone numbers.
- Making sure that we have an alternative contact name, address and phone number in the event that there is no one present at your home or drop off point due to unforeseen circumstances or in **the event of an emergency**.
- Telephoning the education transport team as soon as possible if your child is sick or unable to attend school for any reason. This saves unnecessary journeys and means that other children are not left waiting.
- **Advising the education transport team as soon as possible of any changes which may affect your child's transport, for example, a change of address or changes to a medical condition.** It can take up to five working days to make any alternative transport arrangements..
- **Ensuring that any changes (as mentioned above) are agreed with the education transport team and not with the transport provider or the passenger assistant.**
- Advising the passenger assistant and the education transport team if there may be a potential or particular difficulty with your child as it arises.

- Ensuring that, as far as possible, your child understands the standard of behaviour that is expected of them while travelling to and from school.
- Please be advised that your child is not allowed to eat or drink in the vehicle.

Guide for Parents - Travel by Bus

If your child travels by bus and you take them to a pick up point, please help us by following the guidelines below:

- Look after your child until the bus arrives
- Always meet them when the bus returns from school
- Teach your child about safety rules. An excitable child often forgets road safety as they get off the bus. Remember you are responsible for the safety of your child at this time.
- Remind your child that fooling around at bus stops and on buses can cause accidents and injuries.
- Encourage your child to always wear their seatbelt at all times whilst travelling on the bus.

Wheelchair travellers

Please note that only appropriately tested wheelchairs may be transported and the education transport team must ensure that the appropriate restraints are available on the vehicle. Some wheelchairs are not suitable for transport and cannot be used on vehicles.

Transporting a wheelchair is normally a straightforward arrangement provided that the wheelchair is properly tested, any appropriate modifications to facilitate the fitting of restraints have been made and the restraints are readily available from our suppliers. However parents / carers should be very careful in their choice of wheelchair, especially those purchased privately, as not all wheelchairs are suitable for transport whilst others cannot be used to transport seated occupants. Some electric wheelchairs may not be transported in some vehicles due to their weight or the need for specialised restraints. There are weight restrictions on ramps or passenger lifts. Some manufacturers restrict their “crash testing” to a particular vehicle, with the seat in a particular position, and with particular restraints. This could mean that it is not possible to transport the wheelchair (as adapted for your child’s needs) on the home to school vehicles. If you are planning to change the wheelchair then you should contact the education transport team with full details of the proposed replacement wheelchair **before it is ordered**.

Pupils with medical needs, including epilepsy

Please note that the passenger assistants are not medically trained and are not permitted to administer medication of any description.

Where a child has a known, potentially life-threatening medical condition that may require intervention during transport an individual risk assessment will be carried out which will identify the action to be taken.

For children with epilepsy, unless a particular risk has been identified regarding for example, the frequency or severity of seizures and the time spent of home to school journeys, where bespoke arrangements are put in place, the general arrangement for children with epilepsy is that: where the child has a healthcare plan, this will be obtained from the school and relevant details shared with the transport provider/crew; in the event that the child presents with seizures that could

require the administration of rescue medication, the crew will directly transport to the nearest point of administration, that is home, school or call the emergency services. The crew will notify the parents and/or school in readiness.

What you can expect from home to school transport

You may feel worried about your child travelling on home to school transport, particularly if your child has not travelled without you before. It may reassure you to know that whatever form of transport is provided, your child's safety and welfare are always our first priority.

- Please note that transport is provided from home to school and return journeys only.
- The responsibility for any further transport, for example hospital appointments, lies with parents/carers.
- Please also note that only authorised children may travel in the vehicle. Brothers, sisters and friends will not be permitted to travel. However, permission to do so may be considered, but only under exceptional circumstances.

The education transport team will always ensure that:

- All drivers and passenger assistants have undergone Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks.
- Three point inertia seat belts are used on all vehicles.
- Special seats and harnesses are provided if required.
- Wheelchairs, if transported, are securely restrained.
- Your child will not be left at a drop-off point unless there is a responsible adult there to meet them, or unless it has previously been agreed with the education transport team and the school that alternative arrangements have been made.
- Your child will never be left in the care of other children.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if the transport does not arrive?

- If your child's transport does not arrive you should contact the education transport team so we can investigate and make alternative arrangements where necessary. If this occurs before the office is open (8.00a.m.) you should contact the contractor.

What if the transport arrives without a passenger assistant?

- If the transport arrives without a passenger assistant you should contact the education transport team immediately. On occasions of sickness or unforeseen circumstances, an alternative passenger assistant may be provided. Please note that all passenger assistants have an ID badge and fluorescent yellow waistcoat which they should wear at all times. If you are in doubt, you should contact the education transport team at the earliest opportunity. Do not allow your child to travel. We will investigate and make the necessary arrangements for alternative transport together with an appropriate passenger assistant.

What if your child does not travel to school in their usual vehicle, but you subsequently take them to school?

- You will need to telephone the education transport team in order to arrange transport home for your child. Do not contact the contractor directly.

What if you have a problem with the transport provider's performance or the service provided?

- As part of the council's commitment to provide a 'quality' service, the transport providers' performance is monitored on a regular basis. Therefore, we would welcome your views and/or any comments or concerns on the service provided for your child at any time.

If you feel there is a problem with your child's transport please do not let it continue, contact the education transport team on (01472) 326291, select option 2.

The education transport team

Telephone: (01472) 326291, Option 2

E-mail: schooltransport@nelincs.gov.uk