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Brighton & Hove City Council Home to School Transport Policy April 2015

Brighton & Hove City Council

Home to School Transport Policy

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Home to School Transport Policy

Part 1: All Children

Introduction

1. This Home to School Transport Policy has been developed by Brighton & Hove City Council to explain when the council has a duty to provide home to school transport generally and for children with special educational needs. The document is written for parents of children aged four to 16, local authority officers and schools.

2. The policy applies to all state funded schools and to those pupils resident in Brighton and Hove. As a general principle it is the responsibility of parents to take their children to school or get them ready for the bus or hired transport if they have special educational needs or a disability and it is agreed that assistance with transport should be provided. This responsibility may mean parents need to make flexible working arrangements. Parents or carers will need to reapply for transport each year if children use supported or hired transport because they have additional support needs, for example a special educational need, and their need for transport assistance will be reassessed.

3. There is a separate policy for post 16 transport.

Statutory walking distance and eligibility for transport

4. The council has a duty to provide assistance with transport for children of compulsory school age (5-16) between home and school if:

- (i) the child is under the age of eight and lives more than two miles (3218 metres) from their nearest suitable school; or
- (ii) the child is aged between eight and sixteen years and lives more than three miles (4828 metres) from their nearest suitable school .

5. 'Nearest suitable school' in relation to primary education is considered to be the closest maintained school to the child's permanent home address that is suitable to age, educational needs and has a place available. In relation to secondary education it means the catchment area school (or schools in a dual catchment area) for those able to attend a mainstream school,

except for children whose family meets the criteria for low income, where the suitable school may be one of the three closest schools.

6. Distances are measured using the shortest available walking distance which is considered to be safe. The expectation is that a child will be accompanied by a parent where necessary, unless there is good reason why it is not reasonable to expect the parent to do so.

7. The council will make arrangements on a case by case basis for children with mobility problems or children whose safety cannot be guaranteed when walking because of health and safety issues relating to their special educational needs or disability. The arrangements for making assessments are explained in sections 19 – 30 of this policy.

Low Income Families

8. In addition, the council has a duty to provide free transport where pupils are entitled to free school meals or their parents are in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit if:

- the nearest suitable school is beyond two miles (for children over the age of 8 and under 11);
- the school is between two and six miles (if aged 11-16 and there are not three or more suitable nearer schools);
- the school is between two and 15 miles and is the nearest school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief (aged 11-16). See paragraph 6 below for further information.

9. If you think you qualify for help with transport because you have a low income, please contact the home to school transport team (contact details at the end of this paper). Please note you will need to provide documentary evidence that you meet the income requirements.

Measuring Distance

10. The council uses a Geographical Information System (GIS) to measure the distance (whether a child lives two or three miles from school or further.) The GIS system is accurate as a measure of walking distance and is based on Ordnance Survey Map Data. The walking routes may be different from routes taken by cars. The GIS system helps the council decide the distance from home to school and whether help with transport is necessary. No other measurement system, including a satnav (satellite navigation system) or Journey On, can be used unless a parent can prove there is a mistake with the GIS system.

Parental Preference or choice of school

11. The council will not provide help with home to school transport if the school chosen by parents is further away from the nearest suitable school. If a parent has any questions on this aspect, they should contact the home to school transport team.

Transport to a school chosen because of religion or belief

12. Free transport will be provided for children to attend a school based on the parent's faith or belief (usually a voluntary aided school) if:

- (i) they are eligible under the criteria that apply to all children, i.e. those who are attending their nearest school but who live more than the statutory walking distance from the school; or
- (ii) they live between two and 15 miles from the school and the family has a low income

Medical Needs of the parent or child

13. Short-term assistance may be provided in exceptional circumstances if a parent of a primary school child is unable to take their child to school for medical reasons and the child is attending the nearest suitable school. Parents requesting this assistance should contact the home to school transport team. A letter from the GP or consultant should be provided, stating the reasons why the parent is unable to take their child to school.

14. If a child has a medical condition and cannot travel to school using public transport with parental assistance, parents will need to complete the application form (Appendix 1) outlining why the child needs help with transport. Again a letter from the GP or consultant should be provided stating why the child is not able to travel to school.

15. This information will be considered by the Transport Panel, advised by the Home to school transport team. The council will seek professional confirmation that help with transport is needed and the length of time it is needed for. Parents can contact the home to school transport team if they have any questions on this matter.

Change of Address

16. If the child's address changes, parents must inform the home to school transport team immediately, as it may change entitlement to transport assistance. If parents do not tell the council when they change their address, and transport entitlement should have ceased, the council may seek to claim back the cost of providing transport assistance.

Emergency change of address

17. If a child moves because of an emergency or is placed in emergency accommodation, which is beyond statutory walking distance from the school attended before the move the child may receive help with transport for up to a term in order that they can remain at the school.

Examples of an emergency might include flood or fire damage to the home, or structural failure which required the family to move temporarily to different accommodation. At the end of that period, if the school is more than statutory walking distance from the new home, the parents or carers should decide whether to a) keep the child at the original school and pay the travel costs or b) move the child to another, nearer school.

Children with dual residence

18. Some children may live at two addresses if their parents have separated. Transport will only be provided from one address which is the address registered with the school as the home address and the address where the child spends most of his or her time. In cases where parents split the child care equally, transport will normally only be provided from the address of the parent who receives child benefit.

Children facing Exclusion

19. If a child is excluded or directed to move schools and is enrolled at another school or is attending a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), the new school or PRU will be regarded as the 'suitable' school and the normal distance rules will be applied to decide whether the child is eligible for assistance with transport to the new school or PRU. Where a child is either excluded or at risk of exclusion and the child has special educational needs or a disability (SEND), the eligibility criteria set out in Part 2 and Appendix 2 will apply.

Looked After Children

20. The same eligibility criteria apply to children who are looked after by Brighton & Hove City Council as for other children. Where a looked after child has a special educational need or disability that requires particular arrangements these should be made and funded by the carer, as funding for this is provided in the allowances paid by the council to carers or to fostering agencies.

Work Experience

21. Parents must discuss travel to work experience placements with the school. The council will not make arrangements or provide funding for travel to work experience.

Public Transport

22. Most children will be given a bus pass for public buses if they are entitled to help with travel because of the distance to school or because the child's family has a low income. They will be expected to use the public service network to travel to and from school.

Lost Bus Passes

23. If a child loses a bus pass, they should contact Brighton & Hove Buses who will charge an admin fee of £5 to issue a replacement card.

Behaviour on Transport

24. Children travelling to school both on public transport and in hired vehicles will be expected to behave reasonably and treat drivers, other travellers and members of the public with courtesy and consideration.

25. Any unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with through the school's disciplinary procedures, and if serious, could result in the council reviewing a child's transport arrangements. In some cases that could mean the temporary or permanent removal of entitlement to travel on a particular route.

Part 2: Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Introduction

26. The Council policy is

- to promote independent travel for all secondary age children unless it is clear that following an assessment due to their special educational needs and/or disability they cannot be transported to school safely
- To support parents and schools/colleges to encourage and promote independent travel for children at secondary school age
- To develop sustainable methods of transport such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport to replace taxi travel to and from schools and colleges
- For schools and parents to work collaboratively to develop children's' and young people's independence by actively supporting independent travel trainers, as appropriate to work with children for agreed periods of time.

- To develop life skills, self-confidence and self-esteem of children and young people within their local communities

27. Where a child has special educational needs (SEN), a disability or mobility problems the Council must assess on an individual basis whether the child could reasonably be expected to walk to school. This applies whether or not the child has a statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

28. Subject to this individual assessment, parents or carers are responsible for ensuring that children with SEN, a disability or mobility problems arrive at school on time, safely and ready to learn. There is no automatic entitlement to transport assistance for these children. If the individual assessment concludes that the child could reasonably be expected to walk to school and is therefore not eligible for additional assistance, the usual statutory distance criteria (as set out in paragraph 4 above) would still apply.

How the Council will assess eligibility for additional travel assistance

29. In all cases children must be resident in Brighton and Hove and will normally have an EHC Plan or statement of special educational needs issued by this council.

The local authority will consider providing home to school transport assistance for children

- Who are of compulsory school age (this does not include children under 5 years of age or young people post 16)
- Who have special educational needs and/or a disability which affects their ability to walk, cycle or use public transport to school
- Who have been offered a place at the nearest suitable school and provided that this is more than the qualifying distance set out in paragraph 4 above or for low income families set out in paragraph 8 above
- However, where parents/carers have a preference for a school which is further from their home than the nearest suitable school, in accordance with paragraph 9.214 of the Code of Practice 2014 the local authority will NOT consider providing transport assistance

30. Where a child does not meet the eligibility criteria but where parents/carers consider that there are circumstances when transport assistance may be provided they can appeal against the Council's decision through the two stage appeal process set out in Part 4 of this policy.

31. If the parent or carer of a child with SEN, a disability or mobility problems considers that the child may be eligible for additional assistance with travel from home to school they must complete the home to school transport application form (Appendix 1) and submit this to the SEN Team. The form is intended to capture all the factors that may need to be considered in assessing eligibility.

32. When an application form is received, a risk assessment will be requested from the child's school, or if the child is not yet attending the school, from other professionals working with the child. Key factors in this assessment will be whether the child can travel to school independently (either accompanied or unaccompanied), whether the child can travel to school independently with support from a travel training plan, or whether the child is not yet ready to travel independently with any form of additional assistance.

33. The application form and the risk assessment will be considered by a Transport Panel of three officers drawn from the Home to School Transport and SEN Teams. They will consider this information against the eligibility criteria for additional travel assistance (Appendix 2). By reference to these criteria the panel will decide:

- whether the child is eligible for additional travel assistance
- whether it would be reasonable to expect the parent or carer to accompany the child to school
- if it is decided that the child is eligible for additional assistance, the form of assistance to be provided

34. The form of additional assistance to be offered may include for example arranging for a child to be met from a bus stop close to the school, escorted travel with a bus pass, a group of children travelling together by bus with an escort, taxi or minibus transport from a set meeting point, and taxi or minibus transport from home to school. Other forms of assistance may be offered – this is not an exhaustive list.

35. Where it is decided that a form of assistance other than a taxi or minibus direct from the home to school and returning to the home will be offered, the Home to school transport team will liaise with the school to agree a home to school travel plan for the child. The aim will be to identify a progressive plan with reduced additional support as the child grows in maturity, confidence and awareness. Safety and safeguarding will be paramount considerations.

36. The general expectation, in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance, is that the child will be accompanied by a parent where necessary, unless there is a good reason why it is not reasonable to expect the parent to do so. Reasons could include for example the parent's own disability or medical reason (supported by evidence from a medical professional), the age of the child and whether one would ordinarily expect a child of that age to be accompanied.

37. If a Motability car has been provided for the benefit of the child, consideration will be given as to whether, if parents or carers agree, this should be used to take the child to school. In such circumstances the agreed mileage rate will be paid (30p per mile).

38. This assessment process will normally take place alongside but separate from an initial SEN/EHCP assessment process or an annual review. This will allow time for independent travel plans or transport arrangements to be agreed and for the child and the family to know what the arrangements are and who will be providing them in advance.

39. Parents and carers of children receiving additional travel assistance are required to complete an application form each year at the time of their child's annual review and eligibility for additional assistance or changes to the existing arrangements will be assessed by the Transport Panel alongside the annual review process.

40. Additional assistance with home to school travel is for home to school and school to home journeys. Home to school transport will not be provided for other journeys which form part of the child's educational programme, such as reintegration visits or lessons based in other schools or colleges. Similarly, it will not be provided to improve attendance at school. Journeys such as these are for schools to arrange and fund from their own resources.

41. If parents require support with any aspect of their application for home to school travel, they should contact Amaze which is the Information, Advice and Support Service tel: 01273 772289.

How the Council will assist in developing independent travel skills

42. Normally, schools will be the key providers of independent travel training. They know the children and their needs best and are also best placed to liaise with families to ensure that they support and have confidence in the arrangements made for their child's travel to school. Independent travel training can be integrated by schools into the child's education programme.

43. It is expected that independent travel will normally be more cost effective than taxi or minibus transport and that costs will reduce as children become more confident in travelling independently. It is recognised that some arrangements, for example those which rely initially on the child being escorted for the whole journey, may be more expensive at first but that costs will reduce through the life of the plan.

44. The Council will discuss with schools any funding required to implement their independent travel training programmes and where agreed will make contributions from the home to school transport budget.

45. It is expected that over time all schools with eligible children, including mainstream and independent special schools, will develop the capacity to arrange and support independent travel training. The Council will work with schools to assist them in developing this capacity, through for example sharing the good practice of other schools.

Parental Preference for children with a statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan

46. If a child is eligible for assistance with transport, this will be provided to the nearest suitable mainstream or special school named in the statement or Education, Health and Care Plan. If parents prefer to send their child to a school that is further away than the nearest suitable school named by the local authority, transport will not be provided and parents will be required to make their own arrangements to ensure their child attends school. Parents have a right of appeal against any decision not to provide travel assistance.

Pick up points

47. Where as part of a package of travel assistance it has been agreed that a child will be picked up with other children from a specified point it is the responsibility of parents or carers to take their child to the pick-up point. If the child needs to be picked up from a different pick-up point or address, this must be agreed in advance unless the address is respite care. If the respite care is outside the city, parents need to contact their Social Worker.

Transport at a different time of day

48. If pupils attend school at a different time of day or at a different site, schools should check that the travel arrangements can be changed but normally where changed arrangements relate to the child's educational programme (short or longer term) or assist in promoting attendance, extra costs should be met from the school's budget. Normally travel assistance will not be

provided to and from after school clubs unless this can be done at no additional cost and with no unreasonable disruption to the travel of any other children sharing transport.

Pre-school children

49. The council will not provide transport for children to attend nurseries and other pre-school settings.

Vehicle Escorts

50. Escorts will only be provided for children with statements of special educational needs or EHC Plans in exceptional circumstances and will be reviewed regularly. A full risk assessment will be carried out by the child's school before an escort is arranged.

Residential Schools

51. The SEN Code 2014 provides that where a LA names residential provision 'at some distance from the family's home' the LA must provide reasonable transport or travel assistance. If a child attends a residential school on a weekly, half-termly or termly basis, the request for transport will be individually assessed. Older children may learn to travel independently. An escort will not be qualified to provide any form of personal care and if this is likely to be required a parent or carer will need to accompany the child.

Changes in Arrangements

52. Any change of arrangements must be reported by the parent to the home to school transport team, for example change of address, change of respite arrangements or any other change.

53. The only exception is when a parent is cancelling transport because their child is ill. In this case, the parent should contact the transport operator first and then the Home to school transport team as soon as possible. The council must be sure that transport is only provided when it is really necessary.

Readiness for Travel

54. A child's parent or carer is responsible for getting them ready for school and taking the child to the vehicle. If the child is not ready, the transport will depart or leave without them and the parent will be responsible for getting the child to school. This is because the transport needs to keep to its timetable or schedule which may include picking up other children. The driver will only wait for a maximum of five minutes for any child.

Parents or Carers who are not at home

55. If there is no one to receive the child when they are taken home, drivers will on no account leave the child outside the house. Drivers may leave the child with a neighbour or relative, only where this has been previously agreed and or the contact information is given on the child's Pupil Information Sheet provided by the school or parent to the council. It is therefore essential that parents or carers inform the transport provider and the Home to school transport team of any changes in address or arrangements for receiving a child other than at home by posting or emailing the pupil information sheet to the Home to school transport team.

56. If there is no one at home to receive a child after school, drivers are instructed to follow the following procedure:

- Wait up to five minutes for the parent to arrive
- Take the other pupils home and return at the end of the travel route
- If there is still no one there, contact the office who will in turn contact the home to school transport team
- The home to school transport team will contact the school in case they have information
- The home to school transport team will next contact social care colleagues and or the Police

57. If parents or carers are unavoidably delayed and cannot get home on time, they are asked to contact the home to school transport team.

58. Drivers may also be concerned about leaving the child in other circumstances, for example where there was no adult at home, or the parent or carer appears to be unfit to care for the child. In those, or other circumstances, where there is concern of any kind and in order to safeguard the interests of the child, drivers are instructed not to leave the child but to contact the Home to school transport team immediately to take advice.

Administration of Medicine

59. The council and its staff including escorts, taxi drivers and bus drivers will not give medicine to children during the school journey because they are not trained doctors, nurses or health care assistants. Drivers will receive general training in equalities but they are not medically trained. Parents or carers must tell the home to school transport team if there is any possibility at all that a child will need medication or a medical procedure, during the journey to or from school. The reason for this is to keep the child safe. In exceptional circumstances, parents or carers can contact the Home to school transport team to seek advice about whether a different arrangement needs to be made.

Medical Emergencies of children

60. If there is a significant risk that a child may be unwell during the home to school journey, at school or when returning home from school, there must be an agreed, written emergency action plan in place. This emergency action plan will be agreed in advance between the parents/carers, the school, the home to school transport team and the transport provider. This will normally mean agreement about:

- a) whether in the event of a medical emergency the child should be taken home, to school, to hospital or to another healthcare setting. Often it will be the nearest place where medical help is available
- b) whether the child should be taken by the transport provided by the council, or whether the driver or escort should dial 999 for an ambulance if the child is in any way in danger

61. The agreement about medical emergencies will be written down on the pupil information form provided to the home to school transport team by the parent or carer.

62. In the most serious cases of life threatening conditions, the medical agreement should be written up as a formal protocol, agreed by the parents, school, transport operator and doctor. Where schools have sufficient concerns about a child to consider a protocol arrangement, they should contact the home to school transport team.

Standards for SEN transport provision

63. All transport operators under contract to the council to provide home to school transport receive guidance from the council on required standards for this provision. Performance against the contract is monitored by the home to school transport team and by schools. Key aspects of the guidance include:

- In accordance with Department for Education guidelines, all children attending schools within Brighton & Hove should be able to reach their school within 45 minutes for primary age children; 75 minutes for secondary age children and for children with SEN a shorter time may be desirable
- Drivers will be licensed and drivers of large vehicles will hold a PSV licence
- All drivers and escorts will hold a current Disclosure and Barring Service check. This will be updated every three years

- All passengers will wear seat belts and wheelchair users will have properly fitted webbing restraints to hold the chair securely. Child door locks and window locks will be used in vehicles where they are fitted
- Children may need a special harness as identified through the risk assessment process. Where this need is identified, the transport provider will ensure that the harness is correctly fitted to the vehicle and the child
- Parents will have contact details for the council's Home to school transport team and for the driver or switchboard of the transport provider who takes their child to school. They will be given information about drop off and collection times
- All drivers and escorts should carry ID and show it to parents upon request
- If a parent is considering changing the wheelchair for their child or there are other changes in the child's circumstances that may affect their transport to and from school, they should inform the Home to school transport team as soon as possible using the contact details provided because it may affect the type of transport provided
- Wherever possible the drivers should be the same to ensure continuity for the children. This should also be reflected in the length of contracts awarded to transport providers

Post 16 Transport

64. There are separate arrangements for students aged 16 and over who need help with travel costs. This applies if students want to continue their education in a school sixth form, sixth form college or further education college. The post 16 transport policy is published separately here: [Brighton & Hove Post 16 Transport Policy](#).

Part 3: Where transport is NOT provided

Distance

65. Transport is not provided for children who live within the statutory distances as measured by the home to school transport team (see paragraphs 2 - 4). No discretion may be applied to these measurements e.g. if the distance is 2.99 miles.

Independent Schools

66. The council does not provide help with travel if the parent or carer decides to send their child to a private or independent school. However, assistance may be provided if an independent or non-maintained special school is named in a child's statement or EHCP. In these cases the process for assessing eligibility will be the same as for children with a statement or EHCP which names a special or mainstream school in the city.

Nursery and Early Years aged children

67. The council will not provide transport for children to attend nurseries or other pre-school settings.

Part 4: Performance, Complaints and Appeals

Contacts

68. The home to school transport team can be contacted by telephone on: **01273 293501** or by e-mail at: HometoSchoolTransport@brighton-hove.gov.uk. New requests for special educational needs (SEN) transport should be made via the SEN Team. The special educational needs team can be contacted on: **01273 293552** or by e-mail at: sen.team@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

Complaints

69. If parents are unhappy with any aspect of the transport service, they should talk to the council home to school transport team. The council will liaise with the taxi drivers or Bus Company on behalf of parents. The home to school transport team at the council can be contacted by e-mail: HometoSchoolTransport@brighton-hove.gov.uk or on 01273 293501.

70. If parents complain to the child's school, the school will inform the council and ask them to investigate the complaint. If a complaint about a transport provider is upheld, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken by the transport provider or in extreme cases the contract with a travel company may be terminated.

Right of Review/Appeal

71. If parents are refused an application for transport after the child's needs and distance from home to school have been assessed, they are entitled to ask for a review of the decision. Any request for review should be made in writing or by email to the Home to school transport team within 20 working days of the council's decision. Within 20 working days of receipt of the parent's request a senior officer within the council will review the decision.

72. If a parent is unhappy with the outcome of the review they may within 20 working days appeal further to an independent panel of officers. The panel will be made up of three officers of the council who had no involvement in the original decision to refuse help with transport. The

appeal panel will review the appeal within 40 days of receipt of the request. The Panel does have the power to reach a different decision in individual cases.

73. Parents have the right to make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) if they consider that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules or if they consider there to have been any other irregularities in the way the appeal has been handled. The internal review/appeals process must be completed before making a referral to the LGO.

74. Parents may seek support from Amaze for any part of these complaints, review and appeal procedures - tel: 01273 772289.

Quality Assurance

75. The Home to school transport team may check the condition of hired vehicles, their arrival times, and that drivers and vehicle attendants are those listed by the transport provider without notifying this in advance. Unannounced visits to schools are one way of conducting these checks. Visits to drivers and travel companies are also undertaken to check the driver, vehicle and insurance documentation and to ensure that all aspects of the transport contract are being delivered as agreed.

Legislation

76. This policy has been developed in line with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education in July 2014 entitled "Home to school travel and transport guidance". The statutory duties placed on Local Authorities are mainly contained in sections 508A - 508C, section 509AD and Schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996, as amended.

77. This policy has been developed with due consideration to the council's duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Public Sector Equality Duty ensures that public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work – including shaping policy and delivering services. We have assessed how the provisions of this policy may impact on people, linked to their legally protected characteristics, and aimed to increase opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between groups, and to reduce and eliminate discrimination. Further information about the public sector equality duty can be found [here](#).

This form must be completed by parents/carers who wish to apply for travel assistance for pupils with Statements of SEN/or EHC plans

There is no automatic entitlement to free school transport for children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs/EHC plan and independent travel is encouraged if appropriate. If you think your child needs transport then evidence will be needed for the Transport Team to consider your request.

This transport form will need to be completed when you get your child's statement/EHC plan and at each annual review. If at any time you feel you may be entitled to assistance with transport to school you can contact the SEN team on (01273) 293552 or by email SEN.Team@brighton-hove.gov.uk. Please complete this form as fully as possible as this will help us to make the right decision about transport assistance for your child.

For general information about transport, you can visit our School Transport page or follow this link <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/secondary-admissions-booklet/school-transport>.

Please note that it is the legal responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure their child attends school regularly, including the period during this application process.

Data Protection statement:

All personal information collected on this application form for the purpose of School Transport is treated in confidence and complies with the requirement of the Data Protection Act 1998. The information which you provide will be stored electronically and may be shared by Brighton & Hove City Council with other transport operators and law enforcement officers. The Council has an obligation to assist in the detection of fraud and the prevention of crime and we will therefore generally supply specific information which we are asked to provide to the police or other crime/fraud detection agencies, provided we are satisfied that the request is connected to an investigation and that disclosure would be proportionate. The Council may also verify information you have provided by contacting other departments of the Council who maintain appropriate records. Where information provided is different from that held by them, they may use the information on this form. Data will be held for up to 6 years after the student has reached statutory school leaving age (16) to comply with contract and audit requirements, after which time it will be securely destroyed.

Child's Details:

Full Name of Pupil:

Male/Female:

Date of Birth:

Year Group:

Home Address (including postcode) :

Names of parents/carers living at the same address:

- 1.
- 2.

Landline telephone number:

Mobile telephone number:

Email Address:

Name of school to which Travel Assistance is required

Current School (if different)

Does your child have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan?				Yes	No
Family Circumstances:					
We need to be certain that we are providing services for those families who really need it. If your family circumstances prevent you from ensuring that your child gets safely to school, please answer the following questions:					
Are you in receipt of Disability Living Allowance?				Yes	No
If so, which rate?				Higher	Lower
Are you in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit <i>(please provide evidence of your full Inland Revenue Award Notice)</i>				Yes	No
Is your child entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) <i>(Entitlement to FSM is taken as a measure of low income and this is taken into account in deciding the level of transport assistance, if any)</i>				Yes	No
Does your family have a car?				Yes	No
Can the family car be used to transport the child to/from school in return for mileage payments? <i>(if no, please provide reasons below)</i>				Yes	No
Has your child received transport assistance before? <i>(If yes, please provide details below, e.g. door to door transport, Scholar Bus Pass, etc.)</i>				Yes	No
Do you have to take other children to nursery/primary school? If yes, please provide details below				Yes	No
				School times	
				Start	Finish
Name of child	Age	Year Group	Nursery/Primary School		
Does the parent/carer or other child in the family have a significant medical or physical disability which prevents you from ensuring your child gets safely to their school?				Yes	No
If yes, please provide more information (including medical evidence from your doctor which explains why you are unable to take your child to school) <i>(Please continue on a separate page if necessary and include your completed application form):</i>					

Please use this space to provide any relevant additional information about your family circumstances you think may help the assessment panel when considering your application for transport assistance
(Please continue on a separate page if necessary and include your completed application form):

Student's Needs:

Please tick 'yes' or 'no' against each of the types of need below – this will help us decide the kind of transport assistance that we should provide, if any – for example, the kind of vehicle needed, or whether an escort may be required

Emotional/behavioural/social difficulties?	Yes	No
Learning Difficulties?	Yes	No
Speech and Language Difficulties?	Yes	No
Physical and neurological difficulties?	Yes	No
Visual Impairment?	Yes	No
Hearing impairment?	Yes	No
Medical condition e.g. epilepsy?	Yes	No

Any other information about your child's Special Educational Needs which you would like us to take into account
(If yes, please provide details below, continue on a separate page if necessary and include your completed application form)

Does your child have any mobility issues which will affect accessing transport? (If yes, please provide details below)	Yes	No
In your opinion, is your child able to travel on public transport safely? For example, does your child use public transport for journeys other than home to school?	Yes	No
Does your child have a concessionary bus pass?	Yes	No
Is your child a wheelchair user?	Yes	No

If yes, please provide details below (this will help us decide the kind of vehicle needed, if any, and whether any additional driver/escort training is required).

Manufacturer:

Model:

Size:

Weight:

Can he/she transfer to a fixed seat in a vehicle?	Yes	No
Does your child travel with any medical equipment e.g. oxygen cylinder or walking frame? <i>(If yes, please provide details below)</i>		
Does your child require any medical support whilst being transported? <i>(If yes, please provide details below)</i>	Yes	No

Other Agencies/Professionals:

Please list any professionals involved with your child and indicate that you are happy for us to contact them for further information if necessary. Please include details of health care professional, social worker, family support workers etc.

Name of Agency/Professional:	Contact Name:	Contact details <i>(telephone/email address)</i>

Parent/Carer Declaration:

I declare that the information provided on this form is correct at the time of submission. If any of the circumstances change, I agree to notify the council immediately. If the council agrees to provide travel assistance for my child, I understand that:

- Following this assessment, the council will decide what form of travel assistance will be offered
- Any travel assistance agreed will be reviewed at least once a year
- Any change of circumstance (e.g. change of address) that may affect my child's present entitlement to travel assistance, will result in a review of the type of transport assistance provided
- The council may review the travel assistance provided if the behaviour of my child presents a health and safety risk to themselves, or others, while travelling on the transport
- The council is trying to make the best use of limited resources and therefore will apply a principle of lowest cost option for any child receiving transport assistance. The lowest cost option may vary depending on individual family circumstances and may be one of the following: a mileage allowance for parents/carers to transport their child using their own vehicle; a bus pass; mini-bus transport arranged by the Local Authority transporting a number of children; taxi arranged by the Local Authority transporting one or a number of children.

Parent Name:

Relationship to Student.....

Signed

Date:

Please return your completed application to:

SEN Team, Brighton and Hove City Council, Children's Services (Education & Inclusion) Room 300,
Kings House, Grand Avenue, Hove, BN3 2LS

For office use only

Transport team comments
Panel decision
Mileage from home to school
Annual cost including bus / taxi / mileage payments
SEN Caseworker Additional Comments

SAMPLE

Appendix 2

Transport assessments for children with special educational needs, a disability or mobility problems: eligibility criteria

In accordance with the council's home to school transport policy and the Department for Education Statutory Guidance, the starting point for assessment of eligibility for assistance with travel is that as far as possible parents should accompany their children to school or that children should make their own way to school. For children with SEN, a disability or mobility problems this may mean that some additional support is provided or that they may at least for some time travel by taxi or minibus.

Assessment for transport assistance is a two stage process, with the two stages overlapping to some extent:

1. Is the child eligible under distance or SEND criteria? (Steps 1 – 3)
2. What is the appropriate form of assistance to meet the child's circumstances or needs? (Step 4)

Eligibility criteria

Step 1 - distance:

Does the home to school distance, measured by the shortest safe walking distance, exceed three miles (or two miles for children aged under 8), and is the school the nearest suitable school in accordance with the policy?

If the family has a low income (i.e. the child is eligible for free school meals or the family receives Maximum Working Tax Credit, does the home to school distance exceed two miles, and is the school the nearest suitable school in accordance with the policy?

If the child meets either of these criteria, a bus pass will be provided except where the child's needs are assessed to be such that he or she could not travel to school by public transport and unaccompanied.

Step 2 – capability:

Are the child's learning difficulties or disabilities such that it could not be reasonably expected that the child could walk to school? (NB Step 2 is not dependent on 'yes' to Step 1.)

Evidence sources:

- Statement or EHCP
- Application form
- School risk assessment

The circumstances for each child must be considered individually. In assessing evidence the panel will need to be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that the child will be safe when travelling to and from school and will complete the journey successfully.

Step 3 – other factors

Other factors may be taken into account in deciding eligibility for assistance, but do not of themselves provide a reason for providing a particular form of assistance. These are examples and other factors may arise in individual cases which need to be taken into account:

- Having to take other primary age or younger children to a different school or pre-school
- Because of fixed employment patterns there is no parent or carer able to take the child to school
- A parent or carer who has a disability or medical condition themselves which means they cannot accompany their child to school
- Length and/or complexity of the journey and whether manageable public transport routes are available

Step 4 – appropriate form of assistance

Depending upon the conclusions from Steps 2 and 3, the available sources of assistance include:

- A bus pass plus escort for some or all journeys (or part of journeys) as part of a programme of independent travel training

- An escort to assist with walking or cycling to school as part of a programme of independent travel training
- Mileage allowance paid to the parent or carer
- Taxi or minibus transport shared with other children
- Taxi or minibus transport with an escort and shared with other children
- Travel alone in taxi or minibus, normally plus an escort

Under the council's home to school transport policy, the presumption is that especially for secondary school age children and young people the child will if at all possible travel independently or be participating in a programme of independent travel training.

April 2015

Appendix 3

Examples of Independent Travel Training

The following are some examples of how schools can work with children and families to promote and develop independent travel training(ITT) .The starting point for any discussion about independent travel training for children who have been transported to school is to have discussions between the parents/carers and the child's school to develop and ascertain readiness for ITT. These may include

- Initial assessments by the child's school about the ability to travel to school using public transport
- Discussions with parents /carers
- Discussion about how the child travels around their community at weekends and during holidays

Following these discussions a timetable to develop independent travel may be developed. This may conclude

- Some children will be ready to travel independently within a short period of time (a few weeks) using bus passes
- Some children may take longer to be able to travel independently and for these some form of travel trainers/support will be used , such as escorts in travelling to school, children using a “ buddy” system, children meeting ant an agreed rendezvous point and travel to school as a group with an escort
- Other forms of ITT may be offered

Each case will need to be considered separately but the key aim is to develop a child's independence and ensure that they can travel to and from school safely. Schools will be provided with funding as required to provide ITT trainers to support this development either by using existing staff from within the school or by employing external staff. The latter would be subject to the normal checking arrangements.

Appendix 4

EMERGENCY TRANSPORT PROTOCOL

Dear Parents.

Firstly we would say that emergencies do not occur very often, but we want you to be aware of the procedure should it happen on a Home to School vehicle.

A meeting was held between representatives of East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council, West Sussex County Council, Chailey Heritage School and an NHS school nurse.

The meeting discussed a number of issues regarding the transport of children and we would like to make it clear at this point how seriously we take our work and the care and attention we give to children.

In an effort to further safeguard your children whilst being transported, it was decided that drivers will be asked to take the following action should a medical emergency occur whilst children are travelling in their vehicle.

The following scenario provides an example of when the emergency transport protocol will be used and how it will be implemented:

If, whilst being transported to or from home, a child has a medical emergency, e.g. epileptic seizure:

- the driver will stop the vehicle in a safe location
- the driver or escort will call an ambulance dialling 999 and await its arrival. This will be done without delay
- a note will be made of the time the incident started, in particular in relation to any seizure
- after calling the ambulance the driver or escort will inform the transport office, the taxi office and parents/carers of the situation and keep them updated
- if the incident occurs whilst en route to a school/day centre they too will be notified

It is important to note that drivers/escorts are not medically trained and therefore will not administer any medication to children.

The only exceptions to this guidance will be where the vehicle is within two minutes clear driving of the child's home address, two minutes' clear driving of arrival at their destination, or two minutes driving of a hospital with an A&E department.

Revised July 2014

Appendix 5

Safeguarding Protocol for Drivers

- Drivers who transport otherwise unaccompanied children and vulnerable adults are first required to undergo Police and Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) checks in addition to the usual appointment procedures.
- If during the course of your work you become aware that a child or vulnerable adult is displaying unusual or abusive behaviour or you feel they are at risk please contact your office as soon as possible.
- If a child or vulnerable adult moves home, please contact your office to inform them of the change.
- Drivers must always take the child or vulnerable adult to the agreed destination and return them to the address specified with no diversions unless agreed with your office. It is part of your role to assist the child or vulnerable adult in and out of the vehicle and to escort them into the school/centre and hand them over to a member of staff or responsible adult. If a child or vulnerable adult requests an alternative drop off point you must not agree to this but contact your office for advice immediately.
- When dropping off a child or vulnerable adult please make sure they are received by a responsible adult and that you see them enter the property of the address you have been given.
- If no one is at home please contact your office immediately to inform them and request instructions. Your office may then contact the Council's Home to School/DTS Transport Team for advice. Under no circumstances may you leave the child or vulnerable adult without a responsible adult being present to receive them. Whilst waiting for instructions it may be possible to continue with the other children or vulnerable adults in the vehicle. Return to the home address and if there is still no reply contact your office for further instructions. Please be aware you may be requested to take the child or vulnerable adult back to the school/centre, the nearest Social Services office or the Police Station.
- Never leave a child or vulnerable adult on their own at the home address.
- Always contact your office regarding any issues regarding the child or vulnerable adult in your care.
- These instructions are for your safety as well as for the children or vulnerable adults. If in any doubt regarding any issues with your passengers please contact your office.

