

Clackmannanshire School Transport Policy

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Section 1: Roles and Responsibilities

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 sets out the responsibilities for parents and local authorities regarding support with travel to and from school for eligible children and young people.

Parents, children and young people

As stated in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, parents are responsible for their children getting to and from school safely. The local authority can support with travel via a designated vehicle or by providing parental mileage expenses for eligible children and young people. Where such support is being provided, parents are responsible for conveying their children to the designated pick up/drop off point.

The Pupil Acceptable Standards Statement below (see Section 3) outlines expectations of children and young people in Council provided vehicles.

Responsibilities of the Council

Clackmannanshire Council has entered a partnership with the Transport co-ordination Unit of Stirling Council to jointly provide transport services for children and young people. A division of key responsibilities and functions is listed below.

Clackmannanshire Council are responsible for:

- determining and reviewing the policy and eligibility criteria for access support with school travel for children and young people
- determining client specifications in relation to service level, quality and effectiveness in line with council policy, national legislation and the objectives of the transport service as defined by this policy
- assessing suitability of walking routes in line with safety route eligibility (see Section 3)
- responsibility for resolving any issues regarding pupil behaviour.
- processing payments for all contracts
- managing the day-to-day delivery and administration of Additional Support Needs transport services

The Transport Co-ordination Unit is responsible for:

- managing the day-to-day delivery and administration of mainstream transport services
- arranging for the specification, tendering and letting of school transport contracts in line with the agreed requirements of Clackmannanshire Education service
- monitoring and inspecting compliance of operators with contract requirements
- maintaining accurate records relating to the payment of all operators and monitoring variance in line with contract specifications
- determining distance entitlement in line with the council policy (Section 2) and ensuring that appropriate distance measurements are undertaken

- providing professional advice on transport matters to Clackmannanshire Education service
- liaising with Clackmannanshire Education service on all aspects of service delivery such as performance appraisal, policy developments/review, safety issues and pupil behaviour.

Section 2:

Catchment pupils travelling to Lornshil Academy

- Any pupil resident in the catchment area of Clackmannan PS, Craigbank PS, Fishcross PS or Deerpark PS; or who is resident in the catchment areas of Abercromby PS, Banchory PS or St Serf's PS and his/her residence is over two miles from the school, or from the nearest designated transport pick-up point, by the shortest suitable walking route.
- Pupils resident in Cambus will also receive free home to school transport.

Catchment pupils travelling to Alva Academy

All pupils who live in the catchment area of Tillicoultry, Strathdevon, Muckhart and Coalsnaughton primary schools are entitled to transport to Alloa Academy

Pupils travelling to St Modans

All catchment pupils from Clackmannanshire travelling to St Modans High School are entitled to transport. All pupils who left Primary 7 in St Mungo's Primary and St Bernadettes Primary and enrolled in S1 in St Modans are entitled to free transport to St Modans while they remain a pupil of St Modans

The above is an enhancement to Clackmannanshire Council's statutory responsibilities which states that children over the age of 8 years are entitled to support with travel where the distance exceeds 3 miles by the shortest available safe route. Children under the age of 8 years are entitled to support with travel if the distance from their catchment school exceeds 2 miles.

If a pupil lives in two or more places, transport is only provided to one address. The address used to assess eligibility will be the main address recorded on the pupil's school record.

If a child or young person is not eligible to receive support with mainstream travel to and from school based on distance entitlement, concessions to this may be made due to an individual pupil's exceptional circumstances such as medical requirements or statutory care circumstances. Please note that childcare, availability of public transport or parental work arrangements cannot be considered as an exceptional circumstance.

Parental Conveyance/Supervision

Parents/carers are required to make arrangements for conveying/supervising their child or young person to/from the nearest private road end, bus stop or uplift point for the school route. The Transport Co-ordination Unit will specify the recommended pick-up point.

Primary school transport

Support with travel will only be provided to the catchment primary school where the distance by the shortest safe walking route exceeds 2 miles.

Gaelic Medium Education

Local authorities in Scotland have a duty to promote and support Gaelic education, under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 – Section 15(6). Within the Clackmannanshire Council area, Riverside Primary School and Wallace High School in Stirling provide Gaelic education for Clackmannanshire pupils. Transport will be provided to Riverside Primary School, pupils attending Wallace High School will be expected to use Public Transport and their National Entitlement Card

Section 3: Mainstream Travel

Mode of Transport

The mode of support with travel offered to eligible children and young people travelling to school will be the most financially sustainable to Clackmannanshire Council within quality standards identified by Education.

The mode of transport offered includes the following:

- contracted school bus
- registered bus service
- private hire car
- parental mileage contracts

The offer of support with travel considers a child or young person's individual circumstances.

The offer of support with travel provided to families may change between academic years to ensure transport remains financially sustainable to Clackmannanshire Council.

Accessing Transport Services

In providing access to transport services, it may be necessary for a child to walk an aggregated distance up to the distances highlighted above. These distances include the home to pick-up point and the drop-off point to catchment establishment. For the avoidance of doubt the distances above apply for the morning and afternoon journeys separately.

Placing Requests

Support with travel will not be provided for children and young people attending school because of a placing request. For the avoidance of doubt this also includes non-denominational children and young people who choose to attend a Roman Catholic school other than those pupils leaving St Bernadettes or St Mungo's at Primary 7 and attending St Modans High school in Stirling

Alternative Placement

Where children and young people are unable to attend their catchment school due to capacity restrictions appropriate support with travel will be provided according to normal distance entitled eligibility criteria as defined above.

Route Disruption

In the event of disruption to regular school travel routes due to roadworks or road closures, the Transport Coordination Unit will endeavour to ensure minimal changes to travel arrangements for pupils. There may be occasions where changes to pick up/drop off times and/or locations are unavoidable and whilst every effort will be made to give as much notice as possible, changes may occur at short notice. Where pick up/drop off locations are temporarily changed, arrangements for children and young people travelling to the new meeting point will be arranged in line with this policy.

School Closure

Where a school is mothballed or closed permanently, relocated children or young people who reside in the catchment area will be provided with support with travel on the basis of the distance entitlement set out above, to their new catchment school.

Behaviour

Transport entitlement will be withdrawn in instances where a pupil demonstrates consistent or serious negative behaviour whilst on any vehicle used for the transport of children and young people. Withdrawal of provision including the period of withdrawal will be considered following consultation with the headteacher and families as required.

As a result of withdrawal of support with travel, it will be the responsibility of parents/carers to transport the child or young person to school at their own cost.

Acceptable behaviour standards are laid out on page 8 which includes the Pupil Acceptable Standards Scheme.

Change of Address

Parents/carers are obliged to inform the Transport Co-ordination Unit if they move address.

If they feel they are still eligible for support with travel, a new transport application form must be submitted.

Should the change of address mean a child or young person is no longer eligible for support with travel, their travel pass, if they have one, should be returned to the Transport Co-ordination Unit.

Safety Route Eligibility

In addition to distance entitlement, support with travel will be provided when a route is assessed as being unsuitable for a child or young person to walk to school whilst accompanied by an adult.

If the shortest available walking route is deemed unsuitable, then the next shortest walking route that is deemed suitable will be used in the calculation of distance entitlement. Safety route criteria can apply if no other suitable walking route exists that does not exceed the distance criteria.

Where a route is classed as suitable, a parent/carers can request a review of the route to be undertaken.

Where such a request for review is received Clackmannanshire Council will either:

- a) undertake a review of the route, or
- b) provide the parent with a copy of the most recent safety assessment of that route.

Safety route reviews should be completed within 28 days of the request. Where a route is deemed as unsuitable, support with travel will be organised. This may be in the form of providing transport or paying parental mileage. Safety route eligibility will be subject to review where network improvements take place.

For the purposes of defining the suitability of walking routes an assessment of the following criteria will be taken into account:

- Footpaths
- Availability
- Condition
- Width
- Lighting
- School crossing patrols
- Road traffic management
- Speed limits
- Frequency and type of vehicles

In assessing the suitability of any route, the assessment is made on the basis that a child or young person is supervised by a parent/carers. Where a parent/carers allows a child to walk unsupervised, the parent/carers is still responsible for the safety of that child.

In assessing any route the combination of the above factors are reviewed. What is acceptable for a road with high traffic volume is different from what is acceptable for routes with low or very low traffic volume.

Assessments will be undertaken by Education with advice and assistance from Transport Co-ordination Unit, road safety experts, and the police where necessary. Assessments are normally undertaken using mapping software.

Privilege Pass Scheme

Clackmannanshire Council runs a Privilege Pass Scheme to allocate surplus spaces on vehicles. Privilege Pass places only exist where there are surplus spaces remaining after all children eligible for support with travel have been allocated a space.

Privilege passes can only be provided where surplus capacity exists

Additional capacity cannot be added to the transport provision and routes cannot be amended for non-entitled children and young people.

How to Apply for a Privilege Pass

Applications for Privilege Passes should be made via the Clackmannanshire Council Website.

Should there be any spaces left after allocation to pupils in the first group, they will then be allocated to pupils in the second group according to the distance between their home address and the school they attend.

Any pupil unable to be allocated a Privilege Pass on their first application is able to reapply throughout the course of the school year to find out if any spaces have become available.

If a new eligible pupil requires a space, a surplus space may require to be surrendered. The council will endeavour to give reasonable notice, not less than 2 weeks, if a privilege pass place requires to be withdrawn.

Acceptable Behaviour

The Education service works in partnership with the Transport Co-ordination Unit to provide transport services for children and young people.

All children and young people travelling on Clackmannanshire Council provided transport are required to adhere to the Pupil Acceptable Standard Scheme (PASS). PASS details the rights and responsibilities of children and young people failure to adhere to PASS may result in the withdrawal of entitlement to transport. The PASS standards are as follows:

Our Aims

Clackmannanshire Council works with many different transport operators to provide its school transport service. We want to ensure that everyone using this service is satisfied with it. You can expect that:

- We will provide safe, fit for purpose transport
- We will aim to provide service that run on time and are not over full

- We will provide a safe, welcoming environment so that the journey is pleasant for everyone on the vehicle – pupils, employee and members of the public
- We will encourage transport operators to ensure that all staff are properly trained, helpful and courteous
- We will investigate and complaints quickly and take appropriate action
- We will monitor behaviour on all vehicles using various methods, including CCTV, and work closely with operators, schools and parents if any pupil travelling on school transport is found to be misbehaving
- We will, where possible, integrate school transport and local bus services to benefit not only pupils but also local communities

Your Responsibilities

- You should only use your allocated vehicle, arrive at your pick up point on time and always carry your bus pass
- You must not distract the driver and once the journey has started you should remain in your seat at all times, wearing a seatbelt where this is provided
- You must not smoke or consume food or drink on the vehicle, and should ensure that you do not leave litter or your personal belongings on the vehicle when you leave
- You should ensure that the aisles are kept clear of any baggage
- You must not damage or misuse any part of the vehicle. You and your parent/carer may be held liable to pay for any such damage
- You should always listen to instructions given by the driver or other members of staff
- You must not shout, annoy, bully or harass any other person on the vehicle, Bad behaviour on the school journey will not be tolerated

Your Rights

- You have the right to feel safe and secure on your school journey. If you have concerns about behaviour on the vehicle or any other difficulties, you should report this to your school as soon as it happens so that action can be taken
- You have the right to expect a high quality service. If you feel that this is not the case, you or your parents should contact the operator of the service
- If you are not satisfied or if you wish to report any issues on safety or behaviour that have not been resolved by the operator, please contact Transport Coordination on 01786 237503 or email transportcoordination@stirling.gov.uk. Issues about pupil behaviour should be reported to the school

Antisocial and Bad Behaviour

Most pupils behave well on school journeys, but unfortunately there are a few who misbehave and put the safety of others and the vehicle at risk. The transport provider is required to report instances of any antisocial or bad behaviour on school transport

directly to the school who will deal with any issues raised. The school will fully investigate any reports. Parents/carers will be contacted and in serious cases, the police. Parents/carers may be held liable to pay for any damage caused to any vehicle. If appropriate, misbehaving pupils will be refused school transport and it will then become the parent/carer's responsibility to provide transport to and from school.

Further information about PASS can be found on the Council website.

Concerns and Complaints

Contracts to provide vehicles required to support pupils travelling to school are procured by the Transport Co-ordination Unit on behalf of Education.

Any queries over the operation or timing of a service should be made initially to the operator of the service.

Where an unsatisfactory response is received, a complaint should be made to the Transport Co-ordination Unit which will liaise, where necessary, with Education to investigate and address the concerns raised.

Concerns regarding behaviour of children and young people using a provided service should be addressed directly to the relevant school. Schools will take active steps to investigate and address issues of negative behaviour raised with them. In extreme cases, access to provided transport may be withdrawn in line with PASS.

Concerns about the conduct of any transport operator or employees of transport operators should be made to Transport Co-ordination Unit. Concerns about school transport escorts should be directed to Education services.

Section 4: Additional Support Needs (ASN) Travel

ClackmannanshireCouncil may provide supported transport arrangements for children and young people who have been assessed as requiring it due to additional support needs or medical conditions.

ClackmannanshireCouncil places a strong emphasis on including pupils with additional support needs within their local schools and communities, and the transport policy reflects that commitment.

Eligibility Criteria for ASN Transport

Support with travelling to and from school is provided on the grounds of:

- distance entitlement
- additional support needs.

The distance criteria outlined in Section 2 applies to all children and young people, including those with additional support needs. However, some children and young people who live within the mileage distance may be considered for support with travel under the criteria for ASN.

Support with travel may be provided to children and young people with additional support needs where:

- the child has a disability which prevents them from accessing the transport generally available to take other children and young people from that area to school
- the child has a physical or sensory impairment or a severe, profound or multiple learning difficulty which requires specialist transport arrangements or supervision
- the child attends a specialist provision or special school as agreed by the Resource Allocation Group (RAG).

Process for Assessing Eligibility Criteria

It is acknowledged that some children and young people with additional support needs will require supported transport arrangements because of their additional support needs. Many children and young people will be able to make use of mainstream transport, which ensures their inclusion and encourages independence.

The main assessment process for children and young people who may require transportation due to their additional support needs is through Staged Intervention. The team around the child is best placed to assess individual needs, and to evidence those against the criteria set within the policy.

In determining eligibility for support with travel individual needs will be assessed using information from school staff, educational psychology, community health and allied health professionals as appropriate. Information from parents/carers will be crucial to this process.

If those present at a Staged Intervention meeting agree that support with travel should be considered as part of a child's support plan, consideration will be given to the following conditions:

- distance to be travelled
- safety of route
- ability for independent travel
- ability to use public transport
- viability of foster carers to provide transport when a child is accommodated away from home in foster care
- journey duration
- physical and psychological capabilities
- requirements for supervision.

If there is no reasonable means of transport available when the above conditions are considered on balance, support with travel will be offered based on availability and appropriate level of service on the basis of need.

Requests for ASN Transport

Most requests should come as a result of a Staged Intervention meeting, and request forms submitted by a member of senior management from the child or young person's school. The assessment on the need for support with travel should include all professionals working with the child as well as information from parents.

Request for support with travel must be reviewed on an annual basis as the needs of the child or young person may change. All requests for support with travel to commence in August should be sent by the end of March each year.

Requests from Other Sources

Requests for support with travel may come directly from the school, educational psychologists, and health professionals or by parental request through staged intervention/transition meetings if:

- the child is new to the authority
- temporary or emergency transport arrangements are sought (see below).

In each case, information on additional support needs will be requested from the team around the child, and evidence of medical grounds sought from health professionals.

Temporary or emergency ASN transport may be provided for a time limited period where:

- A child suffers an injury or medical condition that impairs their ability to walk or use standard transport. This will be subject to ongoing review, and provided for as long as is reasonably necessary.
- A child is displaced from home due to domestic violence/crisis and it is necessary to ensure continuity of education. Any support with travel provided under such circumstances will be reviewed every 2 weeks, and will continue for no more than 6 weeks.

Other exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis and be negotiated depending on individual need. In each case the final decision lies with the Service Manager, ASN and Wellbeing.

Requests for support with travel must be made using the appropriate ASN Transport Request Form.

Review of Individual ASN Transport Arrangements

In all cases, support with travel offered under this policy will be subject to annual review. The provision of ASN transport may change or cease as the child grows older or becomes more able to travel independently.

Such decisions will be made with the team around the child and will take full account of the child's needs.

Children Starting School

Prior to a child with additional support needs starting at an educational establishment, requests for support with travel should be discussed at planning meetings to determine the support required to meet needs. The educational psychologist or a member of senior management from the child or young person's school should submit the request, seeking information from the team around the child.

Change of Educational Establishment

Children and young people who transfer to another establishment or who move from primary to secondary school, will not automatically receive ASN transport. Transport arrangements should be considered during Staged Intervention and transition planning meetings, and new requests for support with travel submitted where appropriate.

Where a child or young person is moving from nursery to primary or primary to secondary school as part of an enhanced transition programme and ASN transport is already in place, requests for support with travel may be supported for visits to the receiving school as part of the support plan agreed.

Transport to College/Alternative Placements/Integration

Where a child or young person attends college or a place other than school as part of their educational package, and ASN transport to school is already in place, requests for support with travel can be submitted by a member of the senior management team from the child or young person's school or support co-ordinator as part of the support plan agreed at staged intervention meetings.

School Excursions

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to arrange appropriate transport for school excursions taking into account the needs of children and young people who receive ASN transport. Only in circumstances where this is not possible should additional requests be made.

ASN Transport for Placements outwith Clackmannanshire Council

Transport arrangements for children and young people who are placed in educational settings outwith the authority will be considered as part of the RAG process, and reviewed by RAG.

Children and young people who are placed in an educational establishment outwith Clackmannanshire Council as a result of a placing request by parents/carers will not be eligible for ASN transport.

Use of Pupil Escorts

Pupil Escorts are generally arranged to look after children and young people travelling by contract transport who are assessed as requiring supervision. This may be due to medical needs or for safety reasons.

The provision of a escorts can be recommended by the team around the child and the final decision on the provision of escorts lies with an Education Senior Manager.

Recruitment – Recruitment of pupil escorts is the responsibility of Clackmannanshire Council and is undertaken in line with the Council's agreed procedures.

Equality

In all decisions, the ability and age of the child will be considered along with any other factors which may be relevant to ensure equality of access to educational provision.

Mode of Transport

Where support with travel is awarded, access to mainstream travel provision will be provided unless this is deemed unsuitable for the child or young person's needs.

If mainstream transport is deemed unsuitable, the Transport Co-ordination Unit will determine the most appropriate travel arrangements for the child or young person in accordance with the criteria set out in the introduction of this policy.

To assist with this process, the Transport Co-ordination Unit should be notified of any special requirements on the request form. The provider of transport will be informed of these to ensure that the child's needs are met.

The mode of transport offered includes the following:

- Clackmannanshire Council in-house transport vehicle
- private hire car
- parental mileage contracts.

A parental mileage allowance may be paid to a parent who transports their child if the Council is unable to provide a suitable or more financially sustainable alternative.

Current legislation regarding the safe conveyance of wheelchair users is enforced. Current guidelines regarding the safe transportation of oxygen is adhered to.

The mode of support with travel offered to families may change between academic years to ensure transport remains financially sustainable to Clackmannanshire Council.

Seating on Private Hire

Where it is unavoidable, the use of the front seat of a contract vehicle is permitted as long as an approved restraint or adult seatbelt is used with a booster cushion where

necessary. In such circumstances contractors will be instructed to ensure that older children and young people are seated in the front seat.

Statutory guidelines and approved codes of practice must be followed by all contractors providing ASN transport.

Pick Up and Drop Off Arrangements

Due consideration must be given in the first instance to the individual needs of the child. Generally, the operator will collect the child from the home location or a designated uplift point.

The Transport Co-ordination Unit has responsibility for designating suitable uplift points in accordance with the needs of the child.

Headteachers have responsibility for designating school drop-off points suitable for children and young people's use, in conjunction with the Transport Co-ordination Unit.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to have the child ready at the appointed time at the place of pick up.

Emergency Pick Up

Where it is necessary to change the time of a pick-up from educational establishment, (for instance, due to illness of child) a member of the Senior Management Team should contact parents and/or the Transport Co-ordination Unit directly.

Operators and escorts are not authorised to make any changes to normal transport arrangements unless directed by the Transport Co-ordination Unit.

Cancellation of ASN Transport

It is essential that parents contact the operator if their child does not require transport due to illness or other reasons to avoid unnecessary journeys. Repeated failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of transport arrangements until the matter can be resolved.

School staff must inform the Transport Co-ordination Unit of any pupil absences.

Nobody at Home

The duty of care of children and young people assumed by the Council in its provision of transport services is delegated to operators for the duration of the journey.

Parents are expected to be at home after school when the operator drops children and young people off.

Where a parent or carer is absent, operators must immediately contact the Transport Co-ordination Unit for further guidance and wait with the child until other arrangements are agreed or the parent/carer attends.

Behaviour

Children and young people with additional support needs may sometimes display challenging behaviour, and this should be taken into account during the risk assessment process. Measures should be put in place to ensure that the risk of misbehaviour on transport is minimised.

Consistent and serious misbehaviour by children or young people whilst on any vehicle should be reported to the headteacher and may result in withdrawal of transport. This decision will be made by the Education Service Manager.

Administration of Medication

Medication cannot be administered by operators or escorts under any circumstances unless they have been fully trained and authorised by Education to do so in respect of specific children or young people.

It is essential for operators and escorts to know of any medical condition that may adversely affect a child or young person during a journey. If medical confidence requires parental permission for transport staff to be informed, then this may be a condition on which support with travel is provided.

Accidents

In the event of an accident, the driver must abide by guidance contained within the Highway Code. The operator must immediately (by telephone) advise the Transport Co-ordination Unit or Council Contact Centre of the incident and, within three working days, supply a full written account of the circumstances.

Details of the information that must be provided are listed in the contract specification. If any party involved in the accident suffers injury, however minor, the incident must be reported to the police as soon as possible, and in any case within 24 hours.

Monitoring and Improving Performance

It is recognised that travel to and from school is an important part of a child's educational experience, and good relationships between operators, escorts, parents, children and young people is essential to ensure that this experience is positive. Continuity of travel arrangements and staff will be taken into account whenever possible to support this process.

The effective operation of contract transport can best be achieved by a partnership between Transport Coordination Unit, operators and escorts, school staff and parents.

Specific monitoring systems are in place to ensure that ASN transport arrangements meet individual and service needs. Guidelines for operator and escorts, schools and parents are available in addition to this policy.

The views of parents and carers with regard to ways in which their child or young person can be helped by transport staff are welcomed.

The implementation of this School Travel Policy is to be strictly adhered to. Appeals or complaints regarding:

- Delivery of service – in the first instance, complaints should be made to the operator, if there is no resolution after this, or the issue is repeated, then it should be brought to the attention of the Transport Coordination Unit who will investigate as appropriate and advise the Service Manager, ASN and Wellbeing.
 - Policy or eligibility criteria should be brought to the attention of the ASN Officer who will investigate and advise Service Manager, ASN and Wellbeing who will have the final decision.
-