



HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT
FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS,
DISABILITY OR MOBILITY NEEDS

LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL
MAY, 2016

Contents:

- A. Background
 - 3
 - i. Key principles
- B. Legal framework
 - i. Code of Practice 2014
- C. Independent Travel Training
- D. Eligibility
 - i. Preschool
 - ii. School age
 - iii. 16+
- E. Exceptions
- F. Assessment
- G. Additional Notes
 - i. Best practice
 - ii. Transport assistance frequency and timing
- H. Appeals
- I. Appendices
 - i. Appendix 1 - Eligibility criteria
 - ii. Appendix 2 - Timing and place of pick up
 - iii. Appendix 3 - Escorts
 - iv. Appendix 4 - Vehicles and equipment
 - v. Appendix 5 - Drivers
 - vi. Appendix 6 - Parent/carers agreement
 - vii. Appendix 7 - Code of behaviour – students
 - viii. Appendix 8 – Notes for parents
 - ix. Appendix 9 - Notes for schools/colleges/settings

Home to school transport policy for children with special educational needs and disabilities or mobility needs.

A. Background

Introduction

This policy details how Leicester City Council will assist with travel arrangements for children and young people with special educational needs (SEND), disability or mobility needs and outlines the responsibilities that parents and carers as well as the Council have in this process¹

The Council is committed to supporting the education and training of young people with special educational needs, disabilities and/or mobility needs. It is also committed to promoting the independence of these young people.

The Council endeavours to arrange educational provision as near as possible to a child or young person's home. Provision may be identified which meets a young person's needs which means that pupils and young people may have to travel several miles from home. This policy explains the context for providing support to meet the travel needs of those children and young people with qualifying special educational needs, disabilities or mobility needs who are offered an educational² place which is deemed suitable to meet their identified needs.

Key principles

The key principles underlining this policy are:

- i. This policy should promote and encourage the independence and social inclusion for children and young people.
- ii. Any transport assistance provided by the Council will be provided to support young people and children to follow an appropriate educational course.
- iii. The policy should support the Council's commitment to develop increasing independence of children and young people.
- iv. The policy should support sustainable travel options which minimise the impact on the environment.
- v. Any transport assistance offered by the Council should be the most efficient and effective in terms of both sustainability and cost.

¹ The relevant legislation is contained within the Education Act 1996 (section 508B and The Children and Families Act, 2014.

² "Educational place" includes schools, settings, colleges and other training providers.

- vi. Parents and carers have a responsibility to ensure their child attends the educational establishment identified for them.

B. Legal Framework

S508B and 508C of the Education Act (the “Act”) make provision for local authorities to ensure that suitable travel arrangements are made, where necessary, to facilitate a child’s attendance at school. The provisions apply to home to school travel arrangements and vice versa.

Under s444 of the same Act, parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly.

S508B of the Act deals with the duty on local authority to make such travel arrangements as they consider necessary to facilitate attendance at school for eligible children. Schedule 35B of the Act defines eligible children – those categories of children of compulsory school age (5 – 16) in an authority’s area for whom free travel arrangements will be required.

The categories of eligible children include those who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their mobility problems or because of associated health and safety issues related to their special education needs or disability. Eligibility, for such children, should be assessed on an individual basis to identify their particular transport arrangements.

In determining whether a child cannot reasonably be expected to walk the Local authority will need to consider whether the child could reasonably be expected to walk if accompanied, and if so, whether the child’s parent can reasonably be expected to accompany the child.

Code of Practice 2015.

The Code of Practice (Special Educational Needs and Disability 2015) indicates that transport should be recorded in an Education, Health Care Plan only in exceptional cases where the child has particular transport needs. It is the intention of the Council to identify the transport needs of children and young people in their EHCP and to clearly identify within the plan how those needs will be met.

C. Independent travel training³.

The Council is committed to promoting the independence of children and young people to support them in becoming adults who are:

1. Healthy and enjoy good physical and mental health.
2. Employed or in education, training or a meaningful activity
3. Connected with their local communities.
4. Living as independently as possible-freeing them to make the choices they wish to make.
5. Informed, engaged and participating in the decisions that affect them.

These are the five aims within the Council's strategic plan for Special Educational Needs and Disability.

D. Eligibility.

Pre school age

Where a child has a statement of special educational needs or an EHCP, or disability/mobility needs, but is below compulsory school age applications for free transport will be considered as a matter of discretion.

The parent/carers will be required to complete an application form to demonstrate that the child has a special educational need, disability or mobility need. They will also be required to provide evidence from an appropriate professional to support the application.

School aged children.

Children with a special educational need, disability or mobility need will be assessed for free transport to the nearest qualifying school to their home if they are unable to walk to school safely even when accompanied by an adult. In circumstances where a child with a special educational need, disability or mobility need is able to use public transport they will be assessed using the same criteria as all other children.

The parent/carers will be required to complete an application form in order to demonstrate that the child has a special transport need. They will also be required to provide evidence from an appropriate professional to support the application.

When transport is agreed for a child with a statement of special educational needs or an EHCP the provision of transport will be named in the statement or

³ an independent travel training action plan is being drawn up and independent travel training will be promoted across the local authority to 13 dependent children and young people.

plan. The provision of transport will be reviewed on an annual basis at the statement/plan review meeting.

Free transport will not be provided where suitable arrangements have been made by the Council to enable the child to become a registered pupil at a qualifying school nearer to the child's home.

Young people over the age of 16.

The government now requires young people to continue in education or training until at least the end of the academic year in which they turn 18 years old. The government has been clear that raising the participation age is not about increasing the statutory school leaving age as young people will be able to participate through a range of options.

For those young people with special educational needs, who have a statement or an EHCP, which indicates a transport need, they will continue to receive assistance with transport between the ages of 16 and 25.

Students with special educational needs/disabilities/mobility needs will be provided with free transport in the following circumstances:

- Where the proposed further education course, or comparable course, or course appropriate to the level of needs, is at the nearest maintained school/college to the student's home address and
- the course is full-time⁴ and
- the shortest available walking route from home to school/college is 3 miles or more, or the transport needs are specifically detailed in a statement of special educational needs or an EHCP.

Transport must be an essential requirement to fulfil the learning outcomes identified in the EHCP.

E. Exceptions

Where transport is requested in circumstances which fall outside the Council's statutory duty, it will be refused.

Transport will **not** be provided:

- if the school attended is not the one which the Council deems to be the nearest suitable school/college or setting;
- where arrangements relating to travel in either direction between home and school are provided free of charge by any other person

⁴ a course is regarded as full-time when it consists of at least 540 planned hours per year. This might include non-qualification hours such as work experience which the provider has planned, organised and supervised.

- to extracurricular activities or between institutions within the school day. (For journeys of this nature the organising school or institution will be responsible for transport arrangements);
- to dental or hospital appointments, or other non-educational appointments;
- at a time other than standard school times e.g. home during the day or late after school, unless it has been agreed in advance;
- following misbehaviour occurring on transport, which threatens the Health and Safety of staff and/or other pupils. After three written warnings transport will be temporarily suspended and discussions will take place with the setting/school/college head and the parents. A decision about restoring transport will be made collectively following the discussions with the provider head and the parents;

F. Assessment

As part of the statutory assessment process, which may lead to an EHCP the Council receives written reports from a range of professionals, such as a school, educational psychologist and medical or clinical professionals. The Education, Care and health Inclusion Officer (ECHIO) will consider the information contained in these reports in order to determine whether pupils meet the SEND transport criteria.

It is essential that evidence is provided to the Council from a professional (external to the school and parents/carers) that indicates clearly the child's mobility difficulties or health and safety issues, **which are related to their special educational needs or disability**. If such information is not provided to the Council a decision regarding eligibility for transport assistance cannot be made.

It is the expectation of the Council that transport needs related to a young person's special educational needs or disability will be reviewed at the annual review of the EHCP and any changes to circumstances must be notified to the Council .

If a young person requires transport, in exceptional circumstances, where they do not have an EHCP a request to the Special Education Service (SES) must be completed. It is essential for evidence from a medical or clinical practitioner or professional such as an educational psychologist to be included with the request so a decision can be made. A decision cannot be made in the absence of such information. When transport is granted for a child who does NOT have an EHCP then this arrangement will be reviewed on an annual basis. If there is any change in circumstances for the child and family relevant to this transport arrangement the Council must be notified.

If a passenger assessments/escort is required due to the child's special educational needs, disability or mobility needs this should also be detailed in the request for transport assistance.

When a new Education, Health Care Plan is issued a summary of the Council's transport policy will be sent to the parents/carers of the young person for their information with an agreement of transport conditions for the parents/carers to sign. (See appendix 6). If transport assistance has been agreed a risk assessment will be carried out by the passenger transport service who will recommend the best form of transport to the Council. Transport will be provided as soon as possible but it is important that these steps are taken to ensure the safety of young people being assisted by the Council.

The Council will ensure that the Council's employees or employees of contractors whose duties on behalf the Council involve a high degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults (involving regular caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of such people) are subject to a DBS check. This will include drivers and escorts. Details of the work instructions given to Council employees are available in a booklet called "community and special needs transport for adults and children-passenger assistance and driver-work instructions"

G. Additional notes.

Best practice

In providing home to school transport for those children and young people with qualifying SEN/disability/other mobility needs the Council will endeavour to follow established best practice. It will make arrangements to enable an eligible child or young person to reach school or college without such stress, strain or difficulty that would prevent them from benefiting from the education provided. The arrangements will be designed to allow the young person or child to travel in reasonable safety and in reasonable comfort.

Best practice suggests that the maximum each way journey time for a child of primary school age might be considered to be 45 minutes whilst a child or young person of secondary school age might be expected to travel 75 minutes each way (maximum).

However, a child's special educational needs/ disability might make such journey times impossible. Whilst the duty to make travel arrangements does not necessarily imply a door-to-door service arrangements will not expect a child or young person to walk an unreasonable distance to catch a public bus service, or a bus journey that ended an unreasonably long distance from the school or college. The maximum distances will depend on a range of circumstances, including the age of the child or young person, their individual needs and the nature of the routes they are expected to walk to the pickup or set down points.

Transport assistance and frequency

This policy deals with home to school transport, however it is possible for pickup and/or drop-off points to be somewhere other than the child's home. Any pickup or drop-off point that is not the child's home must be agreed in writing by the child's parent/carer and the Council. The Council will agree to drop or pick up a child from a childminder so long as this arrangement is for a reasonable period of time (for example at least one school term). The Council cannot, because of contractual and other arrangements, change the point of pickup or drop-off at a more frequent rate than once a school term.

Where help with travel is agreed it will be by one or more of the following, as appropriate to the child or young person's individual needs:

- A free place on a contract or school bus.
- by taxi, in exceptional cases only, usually for students with severe disabilities.

Where a child or young person aged 0 to 25 has travel assistance specifically mentioned in the statement or EHCP then the Council will provide such transport free of charge to the child or young person and/or the family.

The Council does not provide transport for school/college taster days or induction days and therefore providing transport for these will remain the responsibility of the parents/carers.

The Council will not provide transport for off-site educational visits, work experience placements or medical appointments and therefore providing transport for these types of purposes will remain the responsibility of parents/carers or schools/colleges as appropriate.

Transport is only provided for the beginning and end of normal school/college days. This may require students to arrive earlier than the start of the timetable and to wait at the end of the day until other young people have finished and are all ready to depart.

The Council cannot guarantee that pickup and drop-off points and times will be compatible with parents/carers other arrangements, particularly in relation to siblings or employment. However, the Council will do its best to discuss with parents the most suitable travel arrangements.

Where a student attends a residential school/college as a term time boarder, transport assistance will usually be provided at the beginning and end of terms only (i.e. 12 journeys per academic year) and for weekly boarders, transport will usually be provided at the beginning and end of the week only (i.e. Monday mornings and Friday afternoons). Parents/carers will be responsible for providing transport for any other purposes, including visits home and medical appointments that take place during term time/the week.

The Council will not take into consideration regular work commitments or domestic difficulties faced by the parents/carers of a child. Parents are fully expected to take responsibility in enabling the child's attendance at school.

It is the Council's ambition for all children, who have been assessed as requiring transport assistance because of their special educational needs and disability, to receive support for independence and mobility training as part of the school curriculum. This has the aim of both reducing their reliance on individual transport and increasing their independence in preparation for adult life.

H. Appeals

Should parents/carers wish to appeal against the Council's decision not to provide transport or against the mode of transport provided then they should write to:

Special Education Service: Transport Appeals.
York Road
Leicester
LE1 5TS.

Stage One: Review by a Senior Officer

A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the Council's home to school's transport decision to make a request asking for a review of the decision. This should detail why the parent believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and/or family circumstances that the parent believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed.

Within 20 days of receipt of the parent's written request, a senior officer will review the original decision and send the parent a detailed written notification of the outcome of their review.

Stage two: Review of an independent appeal panel

A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the Council's stage one written decision notification to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two.

Appeals will be heard by three independent panel members (two officers of the Council and one parent who has a child receiving assistance under this policy) appointed by the strategic director for this purpose. Panel members will consider representations from parents/carers, management representatives and professional advisers, including the SES EHClO.

Parents/carers can be invited to put their case in person if they so wish. Parents will be informed of the panel's decision in writing within 40 working days of receipt of the written appeal where possible.

Consultation

The transport policy statement is the responsibility of the local authority; however the local authority should try to achieve a consensus with other partners and stakeholders about its content and delivery.

Stakeholders include:-

- Other local authorities
- Other department in local authority
- Governing bodies of schools and further education institutions
- Passenger transport executives
- Parents and young people
- Any other person/organisation with an interest

Local authorities should consult widely on any proposed changes to their local policies with interested parties. Consultations should last for at least 28 working days during term time. This period should be extended to take account of any school holidays that may occur during the period of consultation.

The introduction of any such changes should be phased-in so that children who start under one set of transport arrangements continue to benefit from them until they either conclude their education at that school or choose to move to another school. This is in order that any changes do not impact adversely on individual family budgets.

The policy needs to be published by 31 May each year, made available on the local authority website and also information should be provided to young people through whatever channels are available.

Appendix 1.

Detailed eligibility criteria.

Eligibility for pupils in compulsory education.

All children with special educational needs will have their transport needs considered during statutory assessment. , The following evidence will be required:

written evidence from a range of sources, for example, an educational psychologist, medical or clinical practitioner that describes the child as having:

- **long-term severely restricted independent mobility** due to a physical disability, for example, severe cerebral palsy requiring the daily use of significant physical aids such as a wheelchair.
(Passenger assistance would not normally be necessary but may be needed where there are additional factors for example oxygen dependency.)
- **Long-term severely restricted independent mobility** due to medical conditions resulting in severe persistent pain and/or extreme fatigue. An example of this might be juvenile arthritis.
(Passenger assistance would not normally be necessary but this would depend on additional factors.)
- **Impairment resulting in severely restricted oral communication skills.** Examples might be profound hearing impairment or severe autism or severe language disorder.
(Passenger assistance may be a requirement where a child has no effective verbal communication at all. It may not be necessary in the later stages of education when independence skills are established.)
- **A sensory impairment resulting in severely restricted mobility.** An example might be a severe visual impairment.
(Passenger assistance is a usual requirement where a child is effectively without functional sight. It may not be necessary in the later stages of education when independence skills are established.)
- **Cognitive abilities within the range associated with severe learning difficulties.**
(Passenger assistance may be necessary if the pupil is known to demonstrate constantly challenging behaviours resulting in an identified risk to their own and others' safety during travel. However, depending on individual circumstances, access to an escort is not normally necessary for secondary aged pupils or older primary aged pupils with severe learning difficulties unless the pupil also has additional physical or medical difficulties.)
- **Severe behavioural, emotional and or social difficulties in comparison with other children of the age.** This may be linked with

cognitive ability or be as a result of a specific developmental disorder. Some children with moderate to severe learning difficulties are extremely vulnerable in social settings due to the lack of independence and social skills. An example might be a pupil with cognitive abilities at the bottom of the range associated with moderate learning difficulties who shows extreme vulnerability. Another example might be a secondary aged pupil with autism spectrum disorder who was known to have very little awareness of personal danger.

(Passenger assistance may be necessary if there are specific evidence of behaviour that poses an identified risk to their own and others' safety during travel.)

Additional transport requests (medical/mobility/disability ground).

Where a child's normal transport arrangements are considered not inappropriate, perhaps as a result of an accident, planned surgery or an illness which results in a temporary inability to use the current transport arrangements on medical grounds the following must be followed:

- i. requests for revisions to the transport arrangements must be made in writing to the special education service-transport by the applicant or someone on their behalf giving a minimum of five days' notice.
- ii. Supporting medical advice must be provided with the request. The Council must be in a position to determine:
 - Full medical details of the condition, including timescales for recovery.
 - Written medical confirmation regarding the child's fitness to return to school.
 - The likely period for which revised transport arrangements may be needed.
 - The type of vehicle needed, where appropriate, for example, where a child is in a full body cast.
 - Any manual handling risks.
 - Any implications of escort.
- iii. Schools and health professionals should not give parents an expectation that requests for additional transport will be agreed automatically by the Council. All decisions will be based on objective facts provided to the transport manager (SES) who will consider each individual case, taking into account the needs of the child, the availability of appropriate transport and any significant increase in costs.

Specific circumstances.

1. House moves.

Parents of pupils currently receiving transport should provide at least one month's notice of a change of address to the Council. Eligibility will be re-assessed. The Council may offer to move people to the nearest suitable school bearing in mind any special circumstances, for example, students in the final year of the current school being the only school deemed appropriate. Should an offer of an alternative school be refused the current school may be deemed as a parental choice and not meet the criteria detailed above.

2. Exceptions.

Where transport is requested in circumstances which fall outside the Council's statutory duty it will be refused.

TIMING AND PLACE OF PICK-UP AND SET-DOWN POINTS

General principles

Pupils/students will be picked-up and set-down either from home, where their needs require this, or a convenient pick-up/set-down point. The Council's Operational Transport Team will notify these arrangements to parents.

By prior arrangement with the Operational Transport Team the pick off or drop off point may be at a childminders (or other suitable place). Any request to change the pick up or drop off point from the child's home must be made in writing by the parent/carer and agreed by the Council .

The child or young person's safety is the paramount concern of the Council. Where the Council receives a request from a parent/carer for a drop off point other than the child's home and it deems that this drop off or pick up may place the child in danger it will not agree to the drop off or pick up point being used.

Parents must take and collect their child safely to and from the vehicle (unless through prior notice and due to medical conditions they are unable to do so, which should be indicated on the application form).

Pupils/students are expected to complete a full day (09:00-15:00) and fit into the normal timing of transport. Where a pupil's/student's day starts or finishes earlier or later the pupil/student would be required to make other transport arrangements outside of the Council's provision, unless this is a regular variation made by the parent/school in agreement with the Council.

If parents/carers wish to request occasional variations to their daily arrangements they should first notify the Operational Transport Team. If such a request would result in an extension to the time that other pupils/students are on the vehicle, an alteration may not be possible.

If the variation is an extension to the existing route at the beginning and end of the day with additional financial implications the parent/carer may be asked to make a contribution to the additional cost.

The collection and set down arrangements will be reviewed annually and students will be encouraged towards independence.

ESCORTS

General

The provision of an escort is subject to evidence of need provided by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator or head teacher, and with the recommendation of the Council risk assessor.

For any child entitled to transport, an escort will be provided to accompany him/her to school if it is considered that the health and safety of the child, driver or anyone else travelling in the vehicle would be at risk if not provided. This arrangement will be reviewed at least annually, since the need for an escort may change, as the child grows older.

Escorts are normally provided only where the child has:

- a severe physical condition;
- a medical condition requiring immediate treatment;
- severe behavioural difficulties.

Training and quality assurance

Escorts are given a range of training, including first aid and manual handling techniques. The level of training is kept under review to ensure that the needs of all children carried can be met.

Escorts will have had an Enhanced DBS check for people working with children and vulnerable adults before taking up duty. They will display their ID badge at all times when on duty.

Escorts monitor pupils and ensure their safety while the journey is in progress. They familiarise themselves with the children and ensure good behaviour during the journey.

An escort transporting a child with medical needs will carry a folder containing the necessary medical information with advice on what to do in an emergency. This will be provided and updated by the Operational Transport Team.

In the event of a medical emergency, the escort (or if no escort, the driver) will administer first aid and where necessary summon the emergency services for assistance. The escort/driver will not administer medication, unless specifically trained and registered to carry out the particular procedure required. The escort should take notes on the pupil's well-being, care for them on site and report back to Operational Transport. (Operational Transport will notify parents, schools and the Special education Service as appropriate).

VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

General

The Operational Transport Team will determine the best form of transport for the benefit of the pupil within the resources available to the service. Vehicle types will vary.

All vehicles used by the Council will meet the necessary legal requirements and contract conditions, and carry a telephone or radio for emergencies.

Vehicles will be fitted with seat belts. All seat belts and special equipment, where fitted, must be used by all passengers and drivers, unless there is a medical certificate advising to the contrary. In such cases, other forms of safety protection will be considered, as part of the risk assessment process.

Passengers refusing to wear a seat belt may be refused transport. It will then be the parent's responsibility to make arrangements for getting the child to school.

Operational Transport will require prior notice of changes in any special equipment (e.g. wheelchair/buggy). If any changes are made without prior notice, it will be the responsibility of the parents/carers to transport the pupil to and from the school until the necessary operational changes can be made.

Only wheelchairs certified as being successfully crash tested will be permitted to have a passenger travel in their wheelchair on a vehicle.

DRIVERS

General

Drivers will hold an appropriate and valid driving licence for the class of vehicle and be free of any serious convictions and endorsements.

Drivers must meet the criteria laid down in the MIDAS training handbook document, a standard for drivers using vehicles at work, and be first aid trained.

Drivers employed and sub contracted by the Council will have had an Enhanced DBS check for people working with children and vulnerable adults before taking up duty. They will wear an ID badge at all times whilst on duty. These requirements form part of the contractual agreement and quality standards.

Drivers will receive some essential training to cover escort duties, so that they can transport children where an escort is not required.

In the event of a road accident the driver is responsible for exchanging details with other parties involved, and making out an accident report form for Operational Transport. Risk Management and Legal Services teams will be informed by Operational Transport where necessary.

Parent/Carers Agreement

Whilst my child is receiving transport to school, I agree to the following.

1. Ensure that my child is ready at the agreed time of pick-up when the vehicle arrives at our home or at the pick-up point. (Transport staff are instructed not to wait over 5 minutes).
2. Be there to meet him/her at the set down point on return, or agree in writing in advance that another responsible person will do this.
3. Notify Operational Transport of any alteration in the existing arrangements, giving five days' notice wherever possible.
4. Ensure that my child understands the standard of behaviour that is expected whilst travelling to and from school. This is set out in the Code of Behaviour for Pupils. (See Appendix 7).
5. Ensure that my child understands the need for safety and that the wearing of a seat belt or harness is essential.
6. Inform Operational Transport if my child is unwell and will not be travelling to school.
7. Inform Operational Transport of any change of equipment or travelling requirements, or any change in medical needs.
8. Ensure that the Special Education Service is informed of any change in address in advance.
9. Pay for any wilful damage caused by my child.
10. Supply Operational Transport with general and emergency contact details for getting in touch with me.
11. Only wheelchairs certified as being successfully crash tested will be permitted to have a passenger travel in their wheelchair on a vehicle.
12. Medicines must have the original label and packaging.
13. Money will be looked after by staff during the journey if it is bagged and clearly labelled with the child's name and the amount.

Furthermore, I understand that:

Escorts are not responsible for the administration of drugs or any medical procedures;

The transport may be withdrawn if my child's behaviour is persistently unacceptable

If the transport is withdrawn because of bad behaviour I must take him/her to school.

Signed.....

Name.....

For child

Date

Transport – Code of Behaviour for Pupils

1. Always be punctual. The transport has a time schedule to keep.
2. If waiting at a pick-up point, stay safe by keeping away from the road. All children with Special Needs should be supervised whilst waiting for the bus.
3. Children should get on or into the vehicle one at a time.
4. Wear a seat belt at all times and remain seated throughout the journey.
5. Bags must be kept out of the gangway.
6. Do not speak to the driver whilst he or she is driving, unless there is an emergency. The escort is there to help you.
7. Be reasonably quiet in the vehicle. Excessive noise can disturb the driver.
8. At the end of the journey, wait until the vehicle has stopped before getting out of your seat.
9. Do not eat, drink, smoke or drop litter in the vehicle.
10. Always follow the instructions of the driver or escort.
11. Be considerate towards other passengers and behave sensibly at all times.
12. If you cause damage, you (or your parents) will have to pay for it.

If you break these rules you may lose your entitlement to transport and your parents will have to make alternative arrangements to get you to school.

Notes for Parents

What transport assistance you will receive

Your Child may be given a free bus pass to use a school bus or public transport. If your child is unable to use this form of transport, then a Council mini-bus or contracted vehicle may be provided, with or without an escort. In certain circumstances, arrangements can be made to allow parents or carers to transport their child by car and the Council will then pay a mileage rate. Such arrangements will only be agreed where it is of lower cost than other forms of transport. The decision of which type of transport to be provided will be at the discretion of the Director of Children's Services delegated to the Operational Transport Department Manager and based on economic considerations and on the advice of the Risk Analysis and Health and Safety teams. When alterations to the normal provision of transport occur, parents will be consulted wherever possible and informed in advance.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare will always be the main priority. All vehicles used by the Council will meet the necessary legal requirements and will be fitted with seat belts. Each vehicle carries a telephone/radio link in case of emergencies. Escorts and drivers are trained to an approved standard. Your child is expected to behave in a safe and appropriate manner. If your child misbehaves persistently, transport may be withdrawn. Any damage incurred by your child whilst travelling will be your responsibility.

What you can do to help In advance

On the application form you will need to provide information on what the child likes to be called, the age of the child and emergency contact numbers, physical needs, medical needs, what the child likes and dislikes, what the child is sensitive to, or any fears that the child may have when travelling. This information will be held on file by the Operational Transport team along with days of attendance, escort requirements and special equipment required, including wheelchair needs.

If you want someone else to meet your child at the end of the school day on your behalf you should inform Operational Transport in writing, in advance.

Day to day

Make sure that your child is ready when the vehicle arrives and that you are available to meet your child at the set down point at the end of the school day. Please advise the escort/driver if there is a particular difficulty with your child on the day, and ensure that your child understands the standard of behaviour expected. Always inform Operational Transport (0116 221 1454 between 8 am and 5 pm, otherwise 0116 221 1451) if your child is unwell or unable to attend school for any reason and notify them in writing of any changes to arrangements, for example, a new wheelchair.

Concerns

If you have a concern with your child's transport you should first read the full Transport Policy for Children with Special Educational Needs, which is available from the Special education service. The policy contains details of people whom you can contact.

Notes for schools

Leicester City Council will help with the travel arrangements of children who qualify under distance or special needs criteria as set out in the General and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Home to School Transport Policies

- When arrangements have been made, parents will be informed in writing. The letter will explain the pick-up arrangements, the responsibility of the parents to ensure their children are ready on time, that a responsible adult will be there to receive them and that their children will behave in a responsible way.
- The safety of the child is fundamental to the policy. Seat belts are fitted and should be worn, escorts are trained and medical conditions are recorded.
- Where escorts travel with children they will:
 - inform the head teacher of the school of any incident, bad behaviour or accident involving the children;
 - take messages and medication between parents and schools;
 - report any notified absences or irregular incidents.
- When an escort or driver has a problem with a child the schools head teacher will be the first point of contact. The Council may withdraw transport if unreasonable behaviour is a problem.
- The school is responsible for the child from the time of getting off the vehicle until the time the child is returned to the vehicle. School staff should be available to help with the escorting of children to and from the transport. The school is responsible for ensuring that pupils are ready for the transport on time. Drivers are instructed to leave the schools punctually. Pupils who are to be kept back for any reason will be the school's responsibility to transport them home. Any traffic management systems or problems relating to transport of pupils should be directed to the Operational Transport department.
- Schools should:
 - accept the responsibility of ensuring that pupils understand the code of practice for safety on buses;
 - have in place a system that checks the arrival and departure of school buses;
 - have a teacher designated for dealing with all matters relating to school transport issues.

Plans to encourage independent travel must be put in place by the school and parents/carers working in partnership to mutually agreed targets and evidence of progress will be required at each subsequent annual review. Schools and parents/carers should encourage pupils to take up public/community transport options at the earliest opportunity. This step will be regarded as a positive achievement towards the pupil's progress in becoming an independent traveller