



FREE SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTES

Please read ALL of these notes
BEFORE completing an application form.



Passenger
Transport
Group



Shropshire
Council



WHO IS ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL TRANSPORT?

The pupil must ordinarily be a resident in Shropshire and where the 'home' address is considered to be the place where a child normally and habitually resides.

A pupil is entitled to free school transport if attending full-time at the nearest or the local Authority's designated catchment primary or secondary school to the home address and living over 2 miles (for primary aged pupils) or 3 miles (for secondary aged pupils), measured by the shortest available pedestrian route. In relation to the shared Shrewsbury secondary catchment area, the local authority's designated catchment is determined using the 'nearest school' test as defined within the admissions code.

General advice about free school transport can be obtained by telephoning **0345 678 9008**, although it will not be possible to give a definitive answer over the telephone.

The Council will consider every application on its merits, within the context of the current legislation and all other relevant factors and determine whether discretionary school transport be provided by the Council or not.

Measurements made for determining whether home addresses are 2 or 3 miles from the school in question, or for determining the nearest school to a home address, are made from the nearest available gate of the home to the nearest available gate of the school, both from points where the nearest gate meets the public highway.

Existing transport networks already provide buses or cars from near to most homes. The pick-up point will be within a reasonable distance of the home. Door to door transport is not normally provided.

IMPORTANT:

A pupil's entitlement to transport can only be given by letter from the Authority following completion and submission of a Free School Transport Application form by the applicant and not by any telephone or verbal communication.

Transport is not provided for after school activities.



INCOME ASSESSED HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

If your child is of secondary school age (aged 11-16, school year 7-11) and you are in receipt of one of the below benefits, the Authority can provide transport assistance to one of the three nearest suitable schools to the home address, where the distance between school and the home is between two and six miles.

- Entitled to free school meals or
- Receiving the maximum level of Working Tax Credit (your working tax credit calculation within your award notice will say 'deduction due to income £0.00') and can provide a copy of the latest Tax Credit award notice or a recent letter from the Benefits Agency confirming receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit.



EXAMINATION GROUNDS

An application for transport assistance on Examination Grounds will be considered where a family move address during a child's examination year (year 10 or 11). In order for assistance on Examination Grounds to be granted, the pupil must have been attending the nearest or catchment area school prior to the address change.

Furthermore, the Authority will normally only provide assistance where the distance between the new home address and the school is over 3 miles, but no more than 10 miles. Where assistance is granted, transport will only be provided in the form of a bus pass for an existing school contract or public service vehicle. If there is no suitable transport already in existence, assistance by way of Parents Travelling Expenses will be provided.

Bespoke or taxi transport is not provided in these circumstances.



OTHER REASONS TO APPLY

As explained above, every application is considered on its own merits and therefore, should you wish to apply for any other reasons than those explained above, please submit a free school transport application for consideration, detailing your reasons for applying.

Parents who state a preference for a place at a school that is not the nearest or catchment area school, will be responsible for all school transport arrangements and costs during the child's school life.

Please note that, if you are eligible for free school transport to your child's existing primary or secondary school and you choose to move your child to another school, for whatever reason, free school transport eligibility does not automatically transfer with the change of school. You may find that your eligibility ceases when you make the transfer. For eligibility to be reassessed, a new free school transport application should be submitted.



UNSAFE WALKING ROUTES

The Authority will provide free school transport for those pupils who live over the statutory walking distance to their nearest or catchment area school. However, Shropshire Council may give help to those living less than the statutory walking distance to school, if the route has been assessed as 'unsafe' and there is no other, alternative route, below the walking distance.

Where an eligible pupil has been awarded free school transport because they live over the statutory walking distance, but concerns are expressed about the route between home and the designated pick up point, the Authority may also assess if the route is 'unsafe'.

To request an application form please write to;
Passenger Transport Group, Shropshire Council, 107 Longden Road, Shrewsbury, SY3 9DS or email Schooltransport@shropshire.gov.uk

Useful resources;

YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY
Available free from
Passenger Transport Group

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL ROAD SAFETY TEAM
www.shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/road-safety/

THINK! ROAD SAETY EDUCATION RESOURCES
www.think.gov.uk/education-resources/

What we take into consideration when assessing a route:

TRAFFIC VOLUME	AVAILABILITY OF REFUGE POINTS	FOOTWAYS AND VERGES	VISABILITY	ROAD ACCIDENT DATA
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Certain factors are not considered when assessing a route:

PERSONAL SECURITY OR SAFETY	WEATHER CONDITIONS	TRANSIENT EVENTS, SUCH AS ROAD CLOSURES	DIFFICULT / ARDOUS TERRAIN	PRACTICALITIES OR TIME TAKEN TO WALK THE ROUTE
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ABOUT MY APPLICATION



HOW DO I COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM?

Applications can be made online via Shropshire Council's website, www.shropshire.gov.uk or over the phone with the Council's Customer Service Team by calling **0345 678 9008**. Paper application forms can be sent upon request.

WHAT DETAILS OF TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE SHOULD I GIVE?

If known, please give details of the transport that you want for your child. If more than one route is involved, please give details of both journeys if known. If you do not know what transport is involved leave this section blank.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR MY APPLICATION TO BE PROCESSED?

There is no set time for processing applications although, we aim for each application to take no more than 2 weeks to be processed.

If your application is being made in the spring or summer term prior to your child starting school in September, it may take longer for your application to be processed, due to the volume of the applications being received during this time. Please note that parents/carers are responsible for all travel arrangements prior to receiving confirmation of entitlement to free school transport and the child/children must not begin travelling on school transport until such confirmation has been received.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

Your application will be dealt with as quickly as possible and you will be informed of the outcome via email, where an email address is provided or a letter to your home address.

Where free school transport is granted, this is normally for the length of time that the pupil will be in attendance at the school that has been applied for. There is no need to reapply each September, the transport will continue as normal. New applications should only be submitted if there is a change of circumstances, such as a change of address or school. The Authority will be in touch with you if there should be any changes to the existing transport.

IF ANY OF THE DETAILS GIVEN BY ME ON THE APPLICATION FORM CHANGE DO I NEED TO NOTIFY ANYONE?

YES - It is vital that you notify the Entitlement Team as soon as possible. Either via email to schooltransport@shropshire.gov.uk or by calling **0345 678 9008**.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES (SEND)

If a pupil has an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) you will be required to complete a separate form, which will ask for details of your child's specific needs.

This can be done by following the web address of www.shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/travel-and-transport All associated information can be found here including options for SEND pupils accessing transport once they leave school.

If you require an application posted to you please contact special.transport.team@shropshire.gov.uk



APPEALS

If an application for travel assistance is not approved, or you're unhappy with the nature of the assistance being offered, you do have the right to appeal.

Appeals should be made in writing and should set out the exact nature and grounds of the appeal. Please note that during the appeal stages travel assistance will not be provided, nor will a change to existing travel assistance be made.

Any request for appeal should be sent in writing via email to schooltransport@shropshire.gov.uk or to the postal address,

Passenger Transport Group
Shropshire Council
107 Longden Road,
Shrewsbury,
SY3 9DS

WHAT IF MY CHILD LOSES THEIR TRAVEL PASS?

If your child loses the travel pass that they have been issued, or it is stolen or damaged, a duplicate should be ordered.

There is a £3 charge for duplicate travel passes and these can be ordered by calling **0345 678 9008**. Please note that, should your child travel on a public service vehicle, you will be responsible for paying any daily fares incurred prior to the issue of the new pass. Duplicate travel passes are sent to the school for collection.

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE TRANSPORT MY CHILD IS RECEIVING?

Please contact via email, schooltransport@shropshire.gov.uk or over the phone by calling **0345 678 9008** if you should have any concerns regarding the transport that your child is receiving.

CHANGES TO TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

It should be noted that transport provision can be changed with little or no notice where there are operational, safety, financial or other service reasons for doing so. We appreciate that change can be difficult and aim to keep such instances to a minimum and where at all possible, provide parents/carers with reasonable notice of any such proposed changes. We will also work with parents/carers and schools to make any transitions as smooth as possible.

JAN 2023

YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY

Code of Conduct for pupils using Shropshire Council's Mainstream Home to School Transport

A leaflet about safety on school transport is sent out to all pupils who have been granted free school transport.

A copy of this form can also be viewed following the 'Your Child's Safety' link on the website.

SAFETY FIRST!
ALWAYS FOLLOW THE GREEN CROSS CODE

STOP. LOOK. LISTEN.

Stay well clear of other traffic, whilst the bus is moving, until you have crossed when it is clear and safe to do so.

DO NOT go near moving vehicles, always stand well clear.

DO NOT cross a road in front or behind a bus.

In dark winter months be BRIGHT, be SEEN, be SAFE.

INTRODUCTION
Shropshire Council want your children to be safe when they travel to school. This Code of Conduct is issued to make sure they keep to simple rules that will keep them as safe as possible. Please make sure that your children know what is expected of them.

HEALTH & SAFETY
It should be noted that parents are fully responsible for the safety and care of their children until they board provided transport at the designated pick-up-point, and on the return journey, from the moment they alight from the vehicle at the designated drop-off point. Children who do not abide by this Code may have their travel passes withdrawn. Where this occurs, appropriate arrangements to transport their children to and from school to ensure their attendance. Parents of children not attending school may be subject to legal action. The school transport operator also has a code of conduct for operators.

LATE BUSES & TAXIS
Occasionally buses and taxis can be late or may not turn up. Parents need to have appropriate arrangements in place to deal with such events. It is good practice for children to have details of an emergency contact with them at all times. Pupils should normally wait at least 10 minutes after the scheduled pick up time before making alternative arrangements determined by their parents. Prevailing circumstances and weather conditions are important factors in deciding how long beyond 10 minutes pupils need to wait. Where there is a problem in the afternoon, pupils should report to a member of the school staff who will initiate arrangements to get children home as soon as possible.

TWO JOURNEYS A DAY
Transport will only be provided at the start and end of the regular school day, between the registered pick up point and school. Pupils will be required to make alternative arrangements for attendance at after school clubs, child care or detentions.

Passenger Transport Group
Shropshire Council
1107, Longdon Road,
Strewsbury, SY3 1BZ
0345 678 9008
www.shropshire.gov.uk/school-transport

BEFORE THE JOURNEY

Accompanied to and at the pick-up-point unless parents do not consider this necessary.	Be at the pick-up point in good time.	Keep clear of other traffic.	Board the school bus or taxi when stationary, one at a time and in an orderly manner.	Go to their seats immediately and sit down properly.	Secondary aged pupils must make sure that they carry a valid travel pass (or travel may not be allowed).
	Walk in an orderly manner.	Keep well clear of moving school buses or taxis.		Normally wait for at least 10 minutes if the bus/taxi is late.	

When crossing the road, pupils should follow the Green Cross Code.

In dark winter months, pupils should wear appropriate light, fluorescent and reflective clothing.

In severe weather or other major emergencies, school transport may not operate or schools may close. Parents/carers should be aware of this and they may need to make appropriate arrangements to look after their children at home. Parents/carers need to ensure that schools have their up to date emergency contact telephone numbers in case children have to return home early. Parents who take their children to school in bad weather should also bring them home in the afternoon. Local radio will give you what advice and information it can.

Parents need to have contingency arrangements in place to allow children to return home early, where transport has failed to operate for any reason in the mornings or for any other emergency, such as an evacuation from school during the day. Children should be familiar with these parental contingency arrangements, as problems can occur at any time, without warning.

Please note: When the Council provides transport, parents are fully responsible for the safety and care of their children until they board the provided transport at the designated pick-up point and, on return home, from the moment they alight from the vehicle at the designated drop-off point.

ON THE JOURNEY

Stay properly seated; do not stand up whilst the vehicle is moving (unless having to stand on a public service - if so hold tight)	Follow the drivers instructions if there is a breakdown or emergency	Keep luggage/bags out of aisles	Do not distract the driver or be discourteous	Treat other pupils with care and respect and do not misbehave	Do not attempt to operate doors or emergency exits (unless in an emergency) or any other mechanisms	Do not carry any offensive weapons, real or replica
	Report any concerns about the journey to the driver and/or the school	Do not smoke or vape	Do not endanger people's safety or damage the vehicle	Wear seat belts where fitted (this is a legal requirement)		Do not carry any offensive weapons, real or replica

END OF THE JOURNEY

Ensure that you have all of your belongings and that clothing (i.e. luggage) can be particularly dangerous) or bags do not become entangled/snagged in door mechanisms

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

BUS PASSES
Majority of students will be issued with a pass to access the school bus to and from school. If your child loses the travel pass that they have been issued, or it is stolen or damaged, a duplicate should be ordered. There is a £3 charge for duplicate travel passes and these can be ordered by calling 0345 678 9008. Please note that, should your child travel on a public service vehicle, you will be responsible for paying any daily fares incurred prior to the issue of the new pass. Duplicate travel passes are sent to the school for collection.

TAXIS & MINIBUSES
Taxis and minibuses are organised on a shared basis and as such majority of our passengers will share the transport with other students accessing the same educational facility.

On some vehicles CCTV is in operation, this is for the safety and security of passengers and transport staff.



YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY



Passenger Transport Group