



# CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

What Parents & Carers need to know  
regarding Special Educational Needs  
& Disabilities (SEND) home to school/  
college travel assistance



Passenger  
Transport  
Group



Shropshire  
Council



# INTRODUCTION

The Specialist Travel Team is here to help facilitate your child's attendance at school, we are responsible for the eligibility, commissioning, and management of school travel assistance provision for all children and young people with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The team also commission and manage transport services for adult services, respite, short breaks and looked after children (LAC) when requested by the relevant departments.

This code of good practice provides guidance for parents and carers and their families of what to expect from the service and to ensure we operate safe and effective travel assistance.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

We ask that parent and carers ensure their child/young person is ready for the vehicle to arrive and looked after appropriately until they can be handed over to transport staff. Please ensure an appropriate adult is ready and waiting to receive passengers on their return journey.

If parents and carers are going to be late, please contact the specialist travel team as soon as you can so we can contact the relevant transport operator/crew.

Drivers and passenger assistants will not leave any passengers unattended and will hand over to school staff on arrival.

Please be aware members of the specialist travel team will travel on school contracts routes to ensure routes are safe and appropriate for all, they will regularly make on site visits to schools to observe the transport network.



## TIMINGS

Passengers should be ready (including wearing coats and shoes, with bags ready) when the vehicle arrives to collect them. The driver will only be able to wait 5 minutes past the allocated pick up time. We do understand that pupils may find transitions difficult, and we will do our best to accommodate and support if required, we also need to ensure that all pupils arrive at school on time ready to learn.

Drivers do not alert passengers of their arrival, passengers need to be ready and looking out for their transport provision, suitably accompanied.

Occasionally buses and taxis can be late or may not turn up for exceptional reasons e.g. bad weather or a breakdown, in such cases parents must have appropriate contingency arrangements to deal with such events to get their child to/from school/college. If possible, it is good practice for children and young people to have details of an emergency contact with them at all times.



**Passenger Transport Group  
Shropshire Council**

107 Longden Road,  
Shrewsbury, SY3 9DS



[special.transport.team@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:special.transport.team@shropshire.gov.uk)



## TWO JOURNEYS A DAY

Travel assistance will only be provided at the start and end of the regular school day, between the registered home address and school.

Parents will be required to make alternative travel arrangements for attendance at breakfast/after school clubs, childcare, detentions, examinations or temporary bespoke/transition timetables.



## 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.



## WEATHER, EMERGENCIES & OTHER ISSUES

In severe weather or emergencies, school transport may be disrupted or not operate and schools may close. Parents should keep in touch with the school and their transport operator for the latest information. Parents who take their children to school in bad weather will be expected to return them home at the end of the day.

Parents need to ensure that their school and in some cases, the transport operator, have their current emergency contact telephone numbers and parents should be aware of these situations as they develop.

Breakdowns and delays can occasionally disrupt the transport service, and whilst we will endeavour to provide replacement services there may be occasions where buses and taxis do not operate. Parents need to have arrangements in place to deal with such events.

If a passenger is taken sick in the middle of the school day, it will be parents responsibility to organise collection of their child.

On rare occasions there may be an issue with the passenger refusing to get on the vehicle or displaying unsafe behaviour which means it is not possible for them to travel at that time. We ask operators to wait a short period to see if the situation improves, but they may have to leave without the passenger onboard. In that event, parents would be responsible for collecting their child.



## ENSURING TRANSPORT IS SAFE

Safety is of paramount importance and parents must ensure they encourage safe behaviour whilst on school transport.

We always take into account children's individual special needs and certain behaviours that they display as part of those needs.

On rare occasions transport staff may deem it a risk to transport a passenger for the safety of the child concerned, other passengers or themselves and may be unable to transport that passenger. The responsibility for providing transport will fall to the parent/carer. We will work closely with parents to try and seek an alternative provision, normally in the form of a 'Personal Transport Budget'.



## CHANGES TO TRANSPORT

Please note that whilst we aim to provide consistency for passengers, transport arrangements may be subject to change at any time due to re-tendering, review and changes to individual passengers' needs.

Drivers and Passenger Assistants may change with little or no notice for many reasons including sickness, leave, personal reasons or service delivery.

We appreciate that change can often be difficult for passengers with Special Educational Needs, and we aim to work with parents and schools to make any transitions as smooth as possible and minimise any disruption.

## QUICK FACTS

The specialist transport team transport approximately 1100 children and young people to school/college every day!







## SUPPORTING UNSAFE BEHAVIOUR

We are aware that children and young people can display an array of different behaviours due to their individual needs.

We rely on parents to ensure we know as much as we can about your child so we can manage and hopefully deescalate any scenarios that may cause overwhelm.

We may contact you and your child's school to also assist us if/when required.

There may be rare occasions that a child's needs become unsafe for them to remain on transport, in those instances we will offer travel assistance in the form of a Personal Travel Budget (PTB).

We ask that parents work with us sensitively and respectfully to ensure everyone's safety.



## FOOD & DRINK ON TRANSPORT

Due to choking risks and allergies of certain passengers, there is a strict policy of no food or drink to be consumed on any vehicle provided by Shropshire Council. This is to ensure the safety of all our passengers accessing our service.



## PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Parents and Carers are responsible for the safety of their child or young person until they safely boarded the vehicle. Once the vehicle arrives back home after the school day parents will need to be available to receive their child from the vehicle. We will not release a child to an empty home or to an unidentified person not familiar to transport staff or approved by the parent.

If a child is not appropriately received by a parent we will contact the parent/carer to ensure they are on their way, the local authority should not incur additional costs from transport providers for late or unavailable parents and as such your transport provision will be reviewed if this regularly occurs. Please make contact with our department if you believe you are likely to be late or delayed receiving your child. In extreme cases we will have no choice but to involve the police until parents/carers can be located.



## NEW OR REVIEWED TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

We currently have a framework of approved operators and drivers and use the allocated time to determine the suitability of operators matched to a passenger(s).

Once eligibility has been approved and we are aware of the type of travel assistance parents would like it can then take up to 20 working days to commission and finalise travel arrangements.

If you require updates, please make contact with our team who will be happy to provide you with the information.



## USE OF DEVICES ON TRANSPORT

Any device, including tablets and mobile phones, that is used on transport is done so at passenger and parent's own risk.

It is parental responsibility to ensure appropriate safety measures, such as parental locks and age-restrictions, are applied to devices.

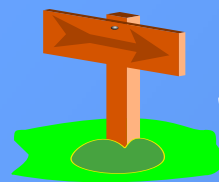
The taking of photos, videos and voice recordings is strictly not allowed on transport.

## YOUR CHILDS PASSENGER PROFILE

We do ask you to share as much as you can about your child's individual needs, their behaviours, their likes, and dislikes.

We want to make their journey to and from school as happy as possible, knowing as much as we can helps us create a full passenger profile as well as feeding into their individual risk assessment.

It is parent/carers responsibility to keep us updated to any changes to their child's needs, medical needs, their behaviours or support needs as well as ensuring we have up to date contact details and emergency contact details.



## JOURNEY INFORMATION

We are able to offer two journeys per day between home and school/college, at the start and end of the normal school day.

Whilst we understand that every child/young person's needs are different, we don't offer assistance for the following;

- 1 Children or young people taken ill during the day.
- 1 Any type of appointments including medical or any other specialists.
- 1 Children or young people who have been excluded during the school/college day.
- 1 Breakfast or after school /college clubs /any form of childcare.
- 1 Journeys from / to alternative addresses / placements
- 1 Journeys between different campuses of the same school or college
- 1 Individual pupil timetables
- 1 Any off site provision
- 1 Bespoke transport for examinations
- 1 Inductions, transitions or 'taster days'
- 1 School trips if departure and return times sit outside the normal school drop off and collection time



# DRIVERS & PASSENGER ASSISTANTS



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Our drivers will have all of the necessary licences to drive the vehicle under contract. Our transport staff will be trustworthy, suitably experienced and responsible individuals who have an understanding of the individual needs of the passengers. All drivers and passenger assistants will have received all appropriate background checks and deemed suitable to provide transport on Shropshire Council contracts.

Transport staff should carry a Shropshire Council identification badge at all times, which should be presented upon request by Parents/Carers/ School staff.

Please be aware that Passenger Assistants are not immediately provided for each passenger. The decision on whether one is required for a passenger will be made by the Specialist Travel Team based on the information provided. They are usually provided due to a medical need such as the administration of Rescue Medication (Buccal Midazolam) in the event of a prolonged seizure or due to the amount of passengers on board at one time.



## ZERO TOLLERANCE

We operate a zero-tolerance policy regarding violence and aggression towards transport staff.

No member of staff should be subjected to violent, threatening, and abusive behaviour. Transport employees have the right to work and carry out their duties in an environment free from violence, threatening or abusive behaviour.

We may review your eligibility to access council provided transport if there are serious or repeated occasions of abusive behaviour towards transport staff.



## CCTV

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



## PERSONAL TRAVEL BUDGETS

Personal Travel Budgets (PTB) are provided only for Statutory aged students (5 to 16 years old) attending an educational facility full-time.

A PTB is a sum of money allocated to parents/carers to enable them to make their own arrangements, one that suits their families needs.

Payment is calculated on an individual basis, taking into consideration the child's needs as well as the current cost to the local authority for transporting your child to school. Once agreed, 11 monthly instalments over an academic year will be paid into a nominated bank account at the beginning of the month.



## KEEP US INFORMED

Please inform the Specialist Travel Office Team if transport is not required (due to illness/holidays/medical appointments).

Please provide as much notice as possible to avoid unnecessary charges (an operator is unable to charge if provided with over 24 hours' notice).

If you have made alternative arrangements for your child to travel to school but a return journey is required by the transport operator then you will need to let us know as soon as possible.

Please email [transportrequests@shrops-hire.gov.uk](mailto:transportrequests@shrops-hire.gov.uk) to notify us if transport is not required.