

## **Application form for free travel for a pupil with Special Educational Needs**

If you would like help to complete this form, please contact your Named Officer in the SEN Assessment Team.

**Name of pupil: Date of birth:**

**Address:  
Post code**

**Name of parent/carer:**

**Telephone number:**

**School/pre-school setting attended currently:**

**School/pre-school setting to which transport is required if different from above: \_\_\_\_\_**

**How does your child travel to school currently?**

- Walks
- Cycles
- Travels by bus
- Travels in my car
- Travels in someone else's car
- Not yet attending school

**What is your reason for requesting transport? (Please tick all that apply)**

- Distance from home to school**
- Physical difficulty**
- Learning difficulty**
- Health difficulty**
- Behaviour difficulty**
- Age**
- Other**

If you think that there are other factors that we should take into account when deciding whether to provide transport, please write them here:

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If we do agree to provide transport, it would be helpful to know the following information:

- Approximately, how far is it from your home to the school by the shortest route?
- Please tell us briefly what your child's physical difficulties are:

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Is your child able to board a vehicle without assistance?

Does your child have a wheelchair/mobility aid which will need to be transported to school?

Does your child need to travel in a wheelchair

If yes, what is the make/model of the wheelchair? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child need to wear a harness (other than a standard seatbelt) when travelling?

- Does your child take medication?  
If yes, please tell us what medication this is \_\_\_\_\_

Will your child need medication during the journey between home and school?

- If your child is of pre-school age, what is their approximate weight in kilogrammes? \_\_\_\_\_ kg
- Please tell us your child's approximate height \_\_\_\_\_ cm

Declaration:

In making this application I confirm that the information I have provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the information I have provided will be used to make the decision as to whether transport can be provided under Lancashire County Council's Transport Policy.

I understand that I may be required to provide documentary or other evidence to support this application.

I agree that Lancashire County Council can share the information I have given with other relevant agencies in order to assist in making its decision.

Signature of parent/carer:

Please print your name :

Date:

Please return your completed form to your local SEN Assessment Team at the Area Education Office.

**Data Protection Statement:**

The information that you have supplied on this form will be held by Lancashire County Council and will only be used for the purpose of providing transport for your child. The data controller in respect of this information is Lancashire County Council.

This information will not be shared with any other party without your prior consent and the data will be stored on a database accessible only by the SEN Assessment Team.

## **SEN TRANSPORT POLICY**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **GENERAL RULES FOR TRANSPORT**

**1. *What are the general rules for eligibility for transport?***

Generally, if the pupil attends the nearest suitable school and the distance is more than 2 miles for a child aged up to 8, and 3 miles if more than 8 years, transport assistance will be provided.

In addition, for pupils aged between 8 –11, whose parents are on low income, transport assistance will be provided if the pupil attends the nearest suitable school and it is more than two miles from home.

‘Low income’ means parents who are on free school meals, or are receiving the maximum level of Working Tax Credits.

**2. *How do I apply for home to school transport?***

Application forms are available from the Pupil Access Teams in the Area Education Offices in Accrington, Lancaster and Preston.

**3. *What is meant by the ‘nearest suitable school’?***

This means the nearest school with places available that provides education appropriate **to the age of the child**, and any special educational needs that they child may have.

Denominational reasons for choosing a school are taken into account in assessing applications for assistance with transport, provided the pupil has met the denominational criteria for admissions to that school.

**4. *What if I choose a school which is not the nearest suitable school?***

Parents and carers who choose to place their child in a school which is not the nearest suitable school will normally undertake to make their own travelling arrangements and bear the full cost.

**5. Does it matter how far away the nearest suitable school is?**

If the pupil attends the nearest suitable school and the distance from home to school exceeds the statutory maximum walking distance, the pupil will be entitled to transport assistance in accordance with the general transport policy.

**6. What is the 'statutory maximum walking distance' between home and school?**

The statutory maximum walking distance between home and school is:

- 2 miles for a pupil under the age of eight
- 3 miles for a pupil aged eight or over.

**7. Will I have to pay for the transport?**

For those pupils who are considered eligible for transport, this transport will be free of charge.

Lancashire County Council may seek to make arrangements with parents or carers to transport their own child to and from school. In these cases, a payment may be made at a standard mileage rate.

**APPLYING FOR SPECIAL TRANSPORT**

**1. Who does the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport Policy apply to?**

The policy applies to children who are attending schools and early years settings and have special educational needs which might justify making special transport arrangements. All decisions regarding eligibility under this policy will be made on the basis of an individual assessment of need.

**2. Where can I get a copy of the SEN Transport Policy?**

It is available on request, from the **SEN Assessment Team in your Area Education Office** in Accrington, Lancaster and Preston.

**3. My child has special educational needs will he / she get transport to school?**

Most pupils who have special educational needs will be able to travel between home and school independently, with adult supervision, if appropriate. But there are some pupils with significant special educational needs, which the Authority considers **justify** special transport arrangements.

#### **4. So what are these special transport arrangements?**

- Where the pupil attends the nearest suitable school and lives less than the statutory maximum walking distance, but has **special educational needs which the Authority considers** mean that particular transport arrangements are required. This could apply in respect of pupils with significant health, learning, behaviour or communication needs.
- Where the pupil attends a school which is not the nearest suitable school with a place, but where there are convincing medical or family reasons for attending a school which is not the nearest.
- Where special transport arrangements are required, for example the provision of a taxi, because of the child's special needs.

#### **5. Who will decide if I get transport?**

The SEN **Assessment Team** will consider requests for transport provision on grounds of special educational needs.

#### **6. What things will they take into account when making their decision?**

Decisions will be taken on an individual basis and the following factors will be taken into account:

- The physical or health needs of the pupil.
- The learning or behaviour needs of the pupil.
- The age of the pupil – very young children will normally only be provided with travel assistance if they are placed at a specialist early years provision more than two miles from their home address, and where this is the nearest suitable provision.  
Pupils over the age of 16 who are attending a special school might also be given travel assistance, if they have previously been eligible for transport to the end of Year 11 and are attending the nearest suitable school.  
Young people attending local colleges or specialist colleges will be considered under Lancashire County Council's Post 16 Transport Policy.
- Family circumstances – these are not of primary consideration, but will be borne in mind when the decision is being made. This particularly relates to families where the pupil under consideration needs to attend a different school to that of their siblings because of their special educational needs. The siblings of pupils with SEN will not normally be able to travel on the vehicle.
- The nature of the route to school, and the suitability of existing transport options.

### ***7. How do I apply for special transport?***

Lancashire County Council will provide application forms for transport provision on request from **the SEN Assessment Team** at your local Area Education Office.

### ***8. How will I know the decision?***

You will be notified in writing of the decision regarding the provision of transport between home and school within 20 working days of receipt of application. This letter will contain details of the appeal process in the event that the application is refused.

## **APPEALS**

### ***1. Where do I get the Appeal Form from and could someone help me fill it in?***

Appeal forms are available from the **SEN Assessment Team** at the Area Education Offices in Accrington, Lancaster and Preston. Assistance in completing the form will be available on request **from a Parent Partnership Officer**.

### ***2. What information do I need to include in the appeal?***

You should provide any information you feel will assist your application. You may wish to include information about any family, financial or other circumstances which you feel will justify an exception to the general policy.

### ***3. How often does the Appeals Panel meet?***

**The Panel usually meets** on a monthly basis. **The Parent Partnership Service will be able to tell** you the date of the next Panel meeting, and the cut off date for submitting your appeal in time for that meeting.

### ***4. Who decides about the appeal?***

Transport appeals will be considered by an Appeals Panel comprising Senior Officers who were not involved in the initial decision. The meeting is also attended by a member of the County Council who acts as an observer and a solicitor who acts as clerk and legal advisor to the Panel.

### ***5. Will I be able to attend?***

**No, but the Appeals Panel will consider anything you submit in written form.**

**6. *When will I know their decision?***

You will receive a letter within 20 working days of the Appeal Panel meeting, telling you of the outcome.

**7. *Is there anything I can do if the Appeal is not agreed?***

The decision of the Appeals Panel is final and binding. If there is some significant change in circumstances which you feel merits the case being reconsidered, you should inform **the SEN Assessment Team** in your local Area Education Office.

**TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS**

**1. *What about times when there is a spare place on the transport going to my child's school?***

In certain circumstances the Authority may be willing to make a spare place on existing transport available to a pupil with SEN who does not meet the criteria for free transport under the terms of this policy.

In such circumstances a daily charge will be levied and transport will be provided on the understanding that the place may be withdrawn if it is required for a pupil who is eligible for transport under the terms of this policy.

**2. *If transport is agreed who makes the arrangements?***

Lancashire County Council will make appropriate arrangements, to transport the pupil between home (the address where the pupil lives) and school.

Transport may be provided from the door or from a specified pick up point nearby. It is expected that the pupil will be picked up from and delivered back to the same address/pick up point for each journey.

**3. *When will transport be provided?***

Transport will normally only be provided at the beginning and end of the standard school day.

**4. *What happens if my child attends a residential school?***

For pupils attending a residential placement, the frequency of journeys between home and school will be set out at the start of the placement with agreement by parents / carers, and Lancashire County Council.

The frequency of these journeys may be weekly, at the start and end of half terms, or at school closure times as required by the details of the individual placement.

**5. *My child goes to respite care after school, will transport be provided for this?***

Transport to respite care provision organised by Health or Social Care Services may be authorised where there is a regular arrangement and does not incur significant additional cost.

**6. *What about after school clubs, trips etc?***

The Authority's duties relate to transport between home and school, therefore Lancashire County Council will **not** normally provide transport for:

- Educational visits as it is expected that schools will consider transport needs when planning trips to facilitate the inclusion of all pupils
- Pupils to attend swimming sessions
- Pupils to attend after school clubs
- Pupils to attend work experience
- Pupils to attend differing establishments during the school day
- Pupils to attend interviews and open days in preparation for Post-16 college provision
- Pupils to attend medical or dental appointments
- Parents to attend open days, school plays or other social events
- Parents to attend annual review meetings, except for the parents of pupils who are placed by the Authority in schools **outside the administrative area of Lancashire County Council.** In such cases, parents' requests for transport will be considered by SEN Officers.

**7. *What is the maximum journey time?***

**For a day placement,** journey times will last no more than 75 minutes wherever possible.

**8. *What type of transport will be provided?***

Transport will be arranged in the most cost effective manner and is usually shared with other pupils. This may be a minibus, taxi, adapted bus, school bus or public transport. Lancashire County Council will provide equipment to ensure that the journey between home and school is safe and appropriate to the pupil's needs.

## **PASSENGER ASSISTANTS & DRIVERS**

### **1. *Will there be a Passenger Assistant ('Escort') on the transport?***

Lancashire County Council will determine the necessity of providing a Passenger Assistant on the vehicle in which the pupil is travelling. Alternatively a walking escort may be provided to accompany the pupil on foot, or a passenger assistant on public transport. Occasionally, the Council may ask parents to escort their children on the vehicle.

### **2. *Is there an age limit regarding children having Passenger Assistants?***

Passenger Assistants will normally be provided for pupils under the age of eight. For pupils over this age, the necessity for providing a Passenger Assistant will be considered in relation to the needs of the pupil, the vehicle in which they will travel, the distance between home and school, and the number and needs of pupils travelling together.

### **3. *Will the Passenger Assistant have been Police checked?***

The Council will ensure that all Passenger Assistants have clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau before being allowed to accompany any pupil. Passenger Assistants will also wear photo identification whilst on duty.

### **4. *What about the drivers?***

Drivers transporting children without the aid of a Passenger Assistant will have clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau.

### **5. *Will Passenger Assistants have any training?***

Passenger Assistants will be given training in order that they might provide adequate support for the pupil during the journey between home and school.

### **6. *Will the Passenger Assistant have information about my child?***

Yes, however Passenger Assistants will be required to keep any pupil related information confidential. Passenger Assistants may be required to take messages between home and school, or transport medication.

### **7. *Will I get the information about transport in writing?***

The Authority will provide parents with written information about transport arrangements.

## **MY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. *What things must I do with regard to the transport?***

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. Parents and carers are also responsible for ensuring that their child is ready on time each morning, that the child joins the vehicle safely, that they encourage the child to behave responsibly and that they make arrangements for the child to be received by a responsible adult on their return home or the pick up point.

Parents and carers should notify the SEN Office of any changes to the pupil's name, address, contact details or any other circumstances which would impact on the provision of transport.

### **2. *What happens if my child is ill and cannot attend school that day?***

You must try to contact the driver or passenger assistant in addition to informing school.

### **3. *What will happen to my child if I am not in when the transport arrives to drop him/her off after school?***

If the Passenger Assistant has a mobile phone number they will attempt to make contact with you. If the Passenger Assistant is able to make contact you will be expected to return home immediately to collect your child.

### **4. *What will happen if the Passenger Assistant cannot contact me?***

The Passenger Assistant will then contact the Education Welfare Officer and a decision will be made as to where your child will be taken to.

### **5. *Can I travel on the transport if I need to pass on information to school?***

For many parents and carers, particularly those of pupils attending school a long way from home, the contact with the driver and Passenger Assistant will represent the most regular contact with school.

Parents and carers will not normally be permitted to travel on the vehicle with their child, but may ask the Passenger Assistant to pass messages between home and school.

## **REVIEWING TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS**

### **1. *Will transport be reviewed?***

The provision of transport will be reviewed **annually**.

### **2. *When will these reviews take place?***

The reviews will take place:

- By the school and parents during the annual review of the pupil's statement.
- By the SEN **Assessment Team** when considering the information provided in Annual Review Summary reports, when considering any change in school placement, or when notified of any material change to the pupil's circumstances.
- By the Passenger Transport **Unit** when determining the most cost effective arrangements.
- In response to any reports of inappropriate conduct by pupils, or upon the conclusion of a Risk Assessment.

### **3. *Can the Authority withdraw the transport?***

Yes, Lancashire County Council has the right to withdraw transport provision if there is an unacceptable risk to the pupil, Passenger Assistant, driver, other passengers or the vehicle. Withdrawal may be on a temporary or permanent basis.

### **4. *How will I know if the transport has been withdrawn?***

You will be informed in writing. If there are immediate health and safety issues it may be necessary to give written notification after withdrawal has taken place, although parents / carers will have been contacted by telephone.

### **5. *Can transport be altered?***

The County Council retains the right to alter transport arrangements as necessary. However, all possible efforts will be made to inform parents in advance of any such changes so as to minimise any inconvenience.

**6. How can I make a complaint?**

Complaints will be dealt with under the County Council's Complaints procedure. You should write to:

Parent Partnership and Representations Manager  
Lancashire County Council  
Joint Divisional Offices  
East Cliff  
Preston  
PR1 3JT

**7. What can I do if I am still not happy?**

If following investigation, you are unsatisfied and feel that some maladministration has occurred, you may complain to the Local Government Ombudsman at the following address:

Local Government Ombudsman  
Beverley House  
17 Shipton Road  
York  
YO30 5FZ

**8. How often will the SEN Transport Policy be reviewed?**

The policy will be reviewed by the County Council on an annual basis.