

# Transport to school or a resourced provision for children and young people with Education, Health and Care plans

## A guide for parents and carers

Children and young people with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans may have to travel several miles in order to get to the school that they have been offered a place at. This can be either a special school, a mainstream school or a mainstream school with a resourced provision. This leaflet explains how Hampshire County Council can help with your child's travel arrangements.

### When will we help with transport?

Hampshire County Council will provide travel assistance for children and young people with special educational needs where the following conditions apply:

- your child is attending the appropriate school nearest to your home which is able to meet his or her special educational needs as agreed by the County Council
- the distance between your home and the school, measured by the nearest available walking route, is more than two miles (for pupils up to the end of the school year in which they have their eighth birthday), or more than three miles (for pupils from the beginning of the school year in which they have their ninth birthday).
- the distance criteria can be lowered for children and young people who are on free school meals, or if their parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit. Please refer to section 2.5.1 of the Home to School Transport Policy (see details on page 5).

Assistance may be given within these distance limits where a child's needs make this essential. Assistance given because of individual personal circumstances will form part of the annual review. Please contact the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Service if you feel this applies to you.

### What to do if you move house

If you move house, your child's entitlement to transport will need to be reassessed. Please notify your child's school and/or the SEN Service well in advance of your moving date to ensure that your case is re-evaluated.

If you fail to advise your child's school and/or the SEN Service in good time, you will be responsible for your child's transport to school until new arrangements are made. (Please note that ten working days must be allowed for the Passenger Transport Group to make new arrangements once the entitlement has been agreed.)

### How travel assistance is provided

There are three types of assistance:

- season tickets for public transport services
- contract transport provided by Hampshire County Council, using coaches, minibuses or taxis

- expenses given to parents who use their own transport. Expenses are normally only paid when there are no places available on contract vehicles.

The decision on whether to offer assistance with transport is made by the SEN Service, and parents and carers of children and young people at special schools or in a resourced provision do not have to apply for assistance themselves, as the school is consulted about the most appropriate type of transport for your child. For children and young people attending mainstream schools, the SEN Service will still advise on transport entitlement, but the parents or carers will have to make the application. All travel arrangements are then made by the Passenger Transport Group (see contact details on page 5), who will provide you with full details of the arrangements. If the school has a place available for your child before transport can be arranged, you may be asked to make your own arrangements to transport your child on a temporary basis.

Once transport is agreed, it may not always be possible to provide the same vehicle contractor, driver or escort. Changes may be made at any time and you will be informed of these by the Passenger Transport Group.

## **Post-16 transport**

From September 2012 there is no longer an entitlement to free transport for post-16 young people with SEN, either continuing at their current SEN school or moving on to a college placement. Parents will be asked to make an annual contribution, but there will be exemptions for young people whose parents are on certain benefits. Full details of the current charges and exemptions can be obtained from Passenger Transport (see contact details on page 5).

## **Escorts**

If it is felt that there would be a risk to the health or safety of your child or other children and young people on the contract vehicle, an adult carer will be provided.

Escorts are not normally allowed to administer medication, but may, in certain circumstances, do so.

Escorts are required to stay in the vehicle at all times. They are not expected to leave the vehicle to accompany children and young people into or from their homes. If an escort is suddenly taken ill and it is not possible to find a replacement, the transport may have to be cancelled. If this happens, every effort will be made to let you know promptly.

If you have waited for more than 30 minutes after the pick-up time and no transport has arrived, please return home and contact the transport operator for information.

## **Pick-up points**

Home pick-ups are the exception rather than the rule, and pick-up and drop-off times cannot be tailored to suit individual needs.

Many children and young people are picked up and set down at a central point rather than at their home address. You are responsible for the safety of your child between home and the pick-up point.

## **Passenger restraints**

Car seats and booster cushions and, where required, wheelchair restraints as required by Government regulations are provided along with other specialist equipment needed to

make the journey safe. This equipment is the property of Hampshire County Council and must be returned when it is no longer required.

In some circumstances, you may be asked to provide a child seat or booster cushion. Children and young people must wear seat-belts where they are available.

### **Additional equipment**

Additional equipment/luggage, etc, cannot be carried on school transport, ie at the end of term. It is the responsibility of the parents or carers to make appropriate arrangements.

### **Journeys for which we are unable to provide assistance**

We provide assistance for journeys from home to school. We are unable to provide assistance for journeys:

- where you have expressed a preference for your child to attend an alternative school which is not the nearest appropriate school
- between one school and another
- to work experience placements
- to dental or hospital appointments
- if your child is sick and has to be collected from school (or returned mid-week if attending a residential school)
- to or from a location that is not your normal home address, for example, a childminder's house or a friend's house
- to or from different addresses where your child shares their time between parents who are living separately. Transport entitlement will be assessed and provided only from the primary address at which the child spends the most of their time
- to or from respite care or place of temporary residence.

### **Your child's safety**

We take every precaution to ensure your child's safety while travelling on the vehicle. In particular we ensure that:

- escorts are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks
- escorts carry identity cards
- drivers, escorts and operators are aware of their duties and responsibilities, particularly in the event of an emergency
- escorts receive appropriate training and are familiar with safety and emergency equipment
- whenever possible, you are informed in advance of any changes in transport arrangements
- children and young people are not normally left alone at drop-off points unless, having regard to the health, age and maturity of the child, it is considered to be appropriate and we have received written permission from parents/carers.

## **Your child's behaviour**

For reasons of health and safety your child must not:

- smoke on school transport
- eat or drink on the vehicle
- stand up in the vehicle while it is moving.

You may be held responsible for any damage caused by your child and be asked to reimburse the operator accordingly. Persistent disruptive or violent behaviour may mean that transport has to be withdrawn.

## **How can you help us?**

You can play an important part in ensuring the smooth running of your child's transport arrangements by:

- making sure that your child is ready five minutes before the home pick-up (drivers are only required to wait three minutes after the pickup time at home pick-up points)
- making sure you are at the pick-up point in good time – drivers only stop long enough to pick up children and young people who are waiting
- always being at the drop-off point to meet your child, or making arrangements for a responsible, previously identified adult to meet your child on your behalf.

To ensure your child's safety, if there is no-one at the drop-off point or at home to meet your child, we will contact Children's Services Social Care or the police for assistance. We may charge you for any extra cost we have to meet in ensuring your child is returned to you safely

- informing the transport operator as soon as possible if your child is ill or unable to attend school for any reason
- advising your escort if you are aware of any problems affecting your child on a particular day
- ensuring that your child is aware of appropriate behaviour whilst travelling to and from school
- giving your child's school plenty of notice of any changes of address
- providing us with the name, address and telephone number of a person who can take responsibility for your child in an emergency if you are not available
- if your child needs lifting in or out of the vehicle you will be required to do this
- if your child travels in a wheelchair, please inform us of details of the manufacture and model so that correct restraints can be ordered. If the wheelchair is due to change, please advise us in plenty of time the details of the new one.

## **Privilege travel**

If your child does not qualify for travel assistance, it may be possible to pay for a privilege seat on a contracted school vehicle. Privilege places can only be offered where spare seats are available. This is not normally known until after the start of the autumn term. You will need to take your child to an existing pick-up point. If you wish to enquire about

the possibility of a privilege place, please contact the Passenger Transport Group (please see contact details below).

A charge is made for privilege travel. There are exemptions to this charge for parents who are on certain benefits, and you will be asked to provide written confirmation that you are in receipt of the benefit concerned. Full details of the current charges and exemptions can be obtained from the Passenger Transport Group.

Privilege places are not guaranteed and can be withdrawn at short notice to provide a place for an entitled child. You will then be responsible for your child's transport arrangements.

### **For further information**

#### **SEN Service**

Children's Services Department  
Hampshire County Council  
Elizabeth II Court North  
The Castle  
Winchester  
SO23 8UG

Tel: 0300 555 1384

Email: [childrens.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@hants.gov.uk)

Website: [www.hants.gov.uk/sen-home](http://www.hants.gov.uk/sen-home).

#### **Passenger Transport Group**

Economy, Transport & Environment Department  
Hampshire County Council  
Capital House  
48-52 Andover Road  
Winchester  
SO23 7BH

Tel: 01962 845327 (SEN transport)

01962 846924 or 845332 (Mainstream transport)

Website: [www.hants.gov.uk/traveltoschool](http://www.hants.gov.uk/traveltoschool)

**Home to School Transport Policy** is available to view at: [www.hants.gov.uk/traveltoschool](http://www.hants.gov.uk/traveltoschool).

You can download this leaflet at [www.hants.gov.uk/sen-parentpublications](http://www.hants.gov.uk/sen-parentpublications) or request a hard copy by contacting [childrens.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@hants.gov.uk) or 0300 555 1384.

For a copy of this leaflet in another language or format (eg large print or in an audio format) please contact **0300 555 1384, [childrens.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@hants.gov.uk) or Textphone 0300 555 1390.**

Calls to 0300 numbers are included in call packages, or charged at the same rate as 01 and 02 numbers. Costs may vary depending on your telecoms provider and whether you are calling from a landline or mobile. Further information about call charges can be found at [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk).