

Home to School Travel Assistance – FAQ's

Q. What type of transport will the Council provide?

The Council determine the type of travel provision depending on whether there are existing arrangements to the school and the needs of an individual. This could be a coach, minibus or taxi. We also use public transport (bus and rail) wherever possible. In some circumstances we may offer mileage allowances, independent travel training or a personal travel budget.

Q. Do drivers have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check?

All taxi drivers have a DBS check in order to obtain their taxi licence; in addition the council require all of its contracted drivers to have an enhanced DBS check.

Q. What do I do if I have any concerns about my child's experience?

Please speak to either the ITU, the passenger assistant (if there is one on the vehicle), the school or your child's SEND officer (if you have one). We are committed to promoting the welfare and safeguarding of children, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Q. If I change my address will I still get transport?

If you change your address, we will have to reassess your entitlement to travel assistance. You must contact us as soon as you know about a change. Even if you are still entitled to assistance your child may have to travel on another vehicle and this takes time to arrange.

Q. When will I be informed about the travel arrangements?

All transport is reviewed between June and August. You will be contacted before the beginning of the school year with details of the operator, the route number and pick up/drop off times.

Q. If my child is on a different vehicle to that of his or her friend, could they change to the other vehicle?

As far as possible, students are given the nearest stop to the home address, so a change may not be possible. The ITU transport around 2,500 students each year and need to make sure there are spaces for all these students first. Once these arrangements have been made it may be possible to consider a change. You will need to put your request in writing along with payment for a replacement travel pass.

Q. What if I lose my ticket/travel pass?

If you/your child loses the ticket you will need to apply for a new one. The cost of a replacement is advertised in the Council's fees and charges document. Please contact the team for information on the accepted payment methods.

Q. What if I am not at home when my child gets back?

If parents are not at home to receive their children (who are dropped at the home address) the driver and/or passenger assistant are advised to complete the route and then try again. If at this stage the parents have not returned, they will contact the ITU and Social Services.

Q. Will the council provide Post-16 travel assistance?

The council must publish an annual policy statement which outlines the travel arrangements the council will provide to facilitate the attendance of students in education and training over the age of 16, this can be found on the website. Please note, there is no statutory entitlement to free travel assistance.

Q. Who do I contact if I have concerns or queries about home to school transport?

Please contact the Integrated Transport Unit on the contact details below.

SEN specific questions

Q. How is travel entitlement for SEN students assessed?

Your child must be attending the nearest school which can meet their needs. We then look at distance from home and whether the walking route between home and school is safe or dangerous. If you live under distance, your child's special needs would determine whether travel assistance is provided.

Q. Will a Passenger Assistant be provided?

Passenger Assistants are often provided on routes where there are larger numbers of children with additional needs. Occasionally it is identified that a child requires their own individual passenger assistant due to their needs, this is reviewed regularly as need can change.

Q. Does the council provide medically trained passenger assistants?

We do not provide medically trained passenger assistants. Those provided are there for the welfare of the children on the journey to and from school. The administration of medication would only be carried out in an emergency under the guidance of a qualified medical professional.

Q. Is it possible for my child to carry medication on board transport?

Medication may be carried on the vehicle if it is in a sealed container or bag clearly labelled with your child's name. The passenger assistant/driver will keep the medication safe during the journey and hand it to an adult on arrival.

Q. I would like to take my child to school myself, will I receive any help with my costs?

The council do offer personal travel budgets and mileage allowances to enable the student to access school where it is considered a viable option, please contact the ITU if you would like to be considered for one of these options

Contact details for the ITU:

Email: schooltransport@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634715

Postal Address: -

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