

# SEN Assisted Travel

<b>Person responsible:</b>	Cheshire East Council
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## School transport information for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities

We provide school travel assistance for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) who meet eligibility criteria for free or subsidised school travel.

We do not provide assistance with school transport for children with special needs or disabilities who do not meet eligibility criteria, or where parents choose a school that is not the nearest school that can meet the child's needs.

### Eligibility for free or subsidised school travel

For full details of eligibility and how to apply, see [free and subsidised school transport](#). You can also talk to your key worker about your child's transport needs - contact them at [SENTeamEast@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:SENTeamEast@cheshireeast.gov.uk).

You may be able to [buy a spare seat](#) if your child is not eligible for support.

If your child is eligible, we will assess their needs and decide on the most cost-effective way to meet them. We may provide a travel pass for commercial bus or rail services or for a seat in a taxi or minibus (usually shared). If you are able to make arrangements yourself, we may offer you a direct payment (based on a mileage allowance) to help with costs. See [types of travel assistance](#) for more detail.

We provide a Passenger Assistant (PA) to support the child where the child has any of the following:

- a severe physical condition
- a medical condition that may need immediate treatment
- severe behavioural difficulties meaning the health and safety of the child, driver or anyone else travelling in the vehicle would be at risk

If you think a Passenger Assistant may be needed for the vehicle in which your child travels, talk to your key worker.

**For pupils of compulsory school age**, we ask parents/carers to provide all relevant information, including.

- medication details
- if the child needs a Passenger Assistant
- if the child needs a child seat
- if they are independently mobile
- if they are a wheelchair-user
- any other specific needs information relevant to transport.

We share information with the relevant transport operator as appropriate.

**For young people going to sixth form or post-16 college**, we ask parents/carers to fill in a form giving any relevant information. We then share this with the operator of the contracted service.

#### Practical assessment and action

On getting the information about the young person, we will carry out any assessments necessary. For example, we will carry out a wheelchair assessment before a wheelchair-user travels in a particular vehicle for the first time.

Where needed, we (or the school) also arrange for specific training to help staff meet an individual child's needs. Some specialist schools provide additional training for drivers, and we encourage drivers to attend.

We have strict processes to make sure children and young people are safe on the transport we organise.

#### [Safety on school transport](#)

We work out routes based on what will be the most cost-effective way to meet the needs of all the children who are eligible for support. We must make best use of tax payers' money, which means most children will share with others. We arrange transport for around 3,500 children and young people, so route planning is a complicated process.

We look for operators who can meet the needs of the children on the route at the lowest cost. Where an existing operator is close to the lowest price, we may ask them to reduce their price to maintain continuity.

We always do what we can to provide continuity and keep parents/carers informed of any changes.

#### Short notice changes

If the regular driver or Personal Assistant is unavailable or the usual vehicle can't be used, then the operator will give as much warning as possible of the changes. But it may not be possible to give advance notice if a change happens on the day because, for example, a driver is ill or a vehicle needs repair.

If you are concerned about a change, [contact us](#) to check.

#### Long term changes

Your child's arrangements could be changed if other children move home or change school and the existing arrangements are no longer the most cost-effective. We will give you as much notice as possible of any changes. If your child is getting a new driver we will offer a Meet and Greet session.

We try to keep the same operators wherever possible. But as the new school year begins, new children start and others leave. This means the demand for your child's route to school may change and we may need to change your child's driver and vehicle or bring different groups of children together to share. We will tell you as soon as we can if this is going to happen, and offer you a Meet and Greet session.

We try to confirm next year's arrangements before the end of the summer term. You can [contact us](#) if you have not heard and you are concerned.

Meet and Greets are available to families where transport arrangements are changing either during the school year or between school years. They are an opportunity for a child or young person to meet the driver, see the vehicle and ask any questions about the route, for example which seat they will be in, and whether there will be other people travelling.

For changes for the next school year, the Meet and Greet will be at the end of the summer term if possible. This way we can make sure your child knows what will be happening and does not worry through the holidays.

## Post 16 education travel assistance

Once a child finishes year 11 and moves to sixth form or college, they are not automatically eligible for continuing support with travel. See [subsidised travel for post 16 education](#) for more information.

## SEND service improvements and news

We work with the [Cheshire East Parent/Carer Forum](#) to improve services and processes for children and young people with SEND , including transport arrangements. We also publish news and information regularly at [SENDing You The News](#).

## Contact the SEND transport team

If anything changes or you have any concerns, email [SENTeamEast@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:SENTeamEast@cheshireeast.gov.uk) or phone 0300 123 5012 (option 1).