

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Date</b>
Rider data input/Passed to Co-ordination		
Allocated to transport/Data input		

**Code description**

Any other White background  
 Roma/Roma Gypsy  
 White/Black Caribbean  
 White/Black African  
 White/Asian  
 Any other Mixed background  
 Indian  
 Pakistani  
 Bangladeshi  
 Any other Asian background  
 Black Caribbean  
 African  
 Any other Black background  
 Chinese  
 Any other Ethnic Group  
 Refused  
 Info not obtained  
 British  
 Irish  
 Traveller - Irish Heritage  
 Sri Lankan Other

**Ethnicity Codes**

WOTH  
 WROM  
 MWBC  
 MWBA  
 MWAS  
 MOTH  
 AIND  
 APKN  
 ABAN  
 AOTH  
 BCRB  
 BAFR  
 BOTH  
 CHNE  
 OOTH  
 REFU  
 NOBT  
 WBRI  
 WIRI  
 WIRT  
 ASRO



This publication can be made available in other languages and alternative formats (including large print, audio tape, computer disc and Braille) on request from the Education Travel Team on telephone number 01905 765765 or by emailing [s&stransport-educationtravel@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:s&stransport-educationtravel@worcestershire.gov.uk)



# Transport Assistance for pupils under 16 years of age

Information and application form  
Academic Year 2009-10

49883 02/09

# Transport Assistance for pupils under 16 years of age

Information and Application Form

For any school travel assistance enquiries please ring  
**01905 765765**

Additional information on line at  
**[www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooltransport)**

This booklet contains information on home to school transport assistance available to the residents of Worcestershire.

Please read through this brief guide and keep for future guidance. Complete the application form, which is inside the back cover and then send it to Worcestershire County Council at the address opposite. Please send the completed form to reach us before the end of summer term. Transport requests cannot be considered unless an application has been received.

Applications can be made online.

## Home to school transport appeals policy

1. All applications are individually assessed by officers in the Environmental Services Directorate against the County Council approved Home to School Transport Policy.
2. Applicants are advised, in writing, of the outcome of their application.
3. Unsuccessful applicants may ask for a review of the case by a senior officer in the Children's Services Directorate.
4. When asking for a review, applicants must state the reason giving full details of the case. The request must be put in writing to the Education Travel Team.
5. The outcome of the review will be provided in writing within fifteen working days of receipt of the request for a review.

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which your request has been handled you may wish to take the matter through the County Council complaints procedure.

**EDUCATION TRAVEL TEAM  
COUNTY HALL, SPETCHLEY ROAD,  
WORCESTER, WR5 2NP**

**FOR ENQUIRIES ABOUT YOUR APPLICATION  
TEL: 01905 765765**



- **What should I do if I move address?**

You will need to complete a new application form and send it to us. We will then assess your application as soon as we can. It is helpful if applications are submitted prior to your move. You may not continue to use your existing pass unless we advise you to do so.

- **What about transport in bad weather?**

We have to be guided by the Operator's opinion as to whether or not it is safe for the transport to operate. It is advisable for parents to listen for information regarding school closures on BBC Hereford & Worcester or local radio and seek advice from schools as necessary.

## 13. Appeals policy

You may ask for your case to be reviewed by a senior officer in the Children's Services Directorate by completing a review form, giving full details of your request and enclosing any independent evidence to:

Education Travel  
County Hall  
Spetchley Road  
Worcester  
WR5 2NP

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For any school travel assistance enquiry please ring: **01905 765765**

Completed application forms should be sent to:

Education Travel Team  
County Hall  
Spetchley Road  
Worcester  
WR5 2NP

This booklet and application form are also available to download on the County Council website at: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooltransport)



# 1. Who is entitled to free transport?

Statutory school age children and pre-statutory school age children who are admitted to mainstream schools in accordance with current County Council Admission Policy, provided they:

- live in Worcestershire
- are 4 years old at 1st September
- are attending either the designated or nearest school for their home address
- live beyond the statutory walking distance from the school.

Statutory walking distance is 2 miles (3.218 kilometres) for pupils up to 8 years and 3 miles (4.828 kilometres) for pupils between 8-16 years. The distance is measured by the shortest available walking route, as measured from the nearest pedestrian access at the school to the nearest entrance on the external boundary of the pupil's home address.

Pupils who live between 2-3 miles from the nearest suitable school, and from low-income families, are entitled to free transport up to age of 11. (Low income is defined as in receipt of Free School Meals or Maximum Working Tax Credits; entitlement will be reassessed each year.)

Pupils of High School age, and from low-income families, are also entitled to free transport assistance for a choice of the 3 nearest schools between 2 and 6 miles.

Eligibility for transport assistance does not guarantee entitlement to a place at the chosen school as preference for catchment area schools is a consideration of the Pupil Admission Service.

To confirm your catchment area or nearest available school, please contact the Pupil Admission Service on **01905 766524**.

If you feel there are special circumstances which the County Council should consider when assessing your application, please send an accompanying letter, with any independent evidence and attach it to the completed application form.

awarded free transport to the nearest suitable establishment between 2 and 6 miles.

This entitlement is extended to the age of 11 for low-income families. (Low income is defined as in receipt of Free School Meals or Maximum Working Tax Credit.)

- **What happens if my child wishes to stay on at school after the age of 16?**

You **must** obtain a Post 16 information/application pack from the school and submit a fresh application as detailed in the information pack. (A new application is necessary because Post 16 Transport Policy differs from the policy for Under 16s.) Passes are no longer valid after 16 years of age so you must ensure that you re-apply at the end of year 11.

- **What happens if a pass is lost or stolen?**

If a pass is stolen, a free pass can usually be obtained if you report the incident to the police and provide the Authority with a valid crime reference number.

If a pass for a contract vehicle is lost we can normally replace this for a charge of £10.00. Cheques should be made payable to Worcestershire County Council and sent to the Education Travel Team, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP.

If a pass becomes unreadable a replacement will be required. Replacement tickets are available on commercial bus services and rail, however these prices may vary. Please contact us for details on how to obtain a replacement ticket. Please note there is normally a limit of one replacement ticket per term.

- **What about refunds?**

There are no refunds for partly used tickets/passes where the decision not to use transport has been made by the parent/pupil. Where a refund is awarded for any other reason an administration charge of £5.00 will be taken. If the County Council removes a Vacant Seat arrangement a pro-rata refund will be made.

No refunds will be made if the transport fails to operate for any reason.



## 12. Frequently asked questions

- **What if my child attends a school other than the designated or nearest one?**

Transport is not normally provided if parents choose a school that is not the nearest or designated one for their home address.
- **Will transport assistance be given to nursery schools?**

Transport is not normally provided for Nursery Education.
- **Will transport assistance be given to independent schools?**

Transport is not normally given to independent schools, however a vacant seat may be offered if a contract vehicle route is available or application to the Severn Card Service.
- **When should application forms be submitted?**

If your child is commencing a new school in September, you should try and submit your application before the end of summer term to ensure that your application can be processed in time for the new school year. The sooner an application is received, the more quickly it can be dealt with. Late applications may result in the application not being processed in time for the start of the academic year. Sometimes schools will send application forms on to us, but you should ensure that this is the case.
- **When will I hear about my travel application?**

We will reply as soon as possible if your application has been unsuccessful or if any payment is required. Successful applicants will receive their pass 2-3 weeks before the start of term.
- **How will I know if my child is only entitled to free transport assistance until the age of 8?**

When we have assessed your application and checked the distance between your home and the school, we will write and inform you that your child is only entitled to free transport until the end of the academic year in which they become 8 years old. You will be

## 2. What about transport to a denominational school?

Pupils qualify for assistance if:

- they or one of their parents adhere to the religion and denomination of the school (which must be an AIDED CHURCH SCHOOL)
- they live beyond the statutory walking distance for their age
- they attend the nearest or nominated denominational school (as identified by the relevant Diocesan Authority).

Pupils who live between 2-15 miles from the nearest or nominated school, and are from low-income families are entitled to free transport.

The transport application has to be supported by proof of baptism in the faith or by the Parish Priest or Local Vicar confirming that the Parent or Pupil adheres to the religion and denomination of the school. **Please ensure that the Denomination Grounds box is completed on the application form and be aware that a contribution towards the cost of transport will be required.**

## 3. What if my child does not qualify for transport assistance?

We may still be able to help under the County Council's Vacant Seat Payment Scheme, which offers parents the chance to buy a **spare seat at a subsidised rate** on a school contract vehicle. Vacant Seats can only be awarded once all riders eligible for free transport have been allocated. We will try to let you know as soon as we can if a spare seat is available, **although it is not always possible to do this until after the start of term and sometimes an offer cannot be made for travel in the Autumn Term until the end of September.**



We will only offer spare seats on vehicles under contract to Worcestershire County Council, using existing routes and boarding/alighting points. (Transport is linked to specific schools, however it may be possible to offer a seat to a child who attends another school near the route. In these cases, the County Council cannot accept responsibility for transporting the child when the transport does not operate because the specific schools it serves are closed, nor will we accept responsibility for the child's safety while not on the vehicle.)

**We cannot guarantee that the spare seat will always be available** as requirements for pupils who are entitled to free transport vary from time to time and on occasion, we may have to withdraw the facility. It is important, therefore, that you do not totally rely on the offer of a spare seat and that you have other transport arrangements available. If we do have to withdraw a spare seat, we will give at least one week's notice and will make a proportional refund. The County Council accepts no responsibility for any transport difficulties or costs resulting from withdrawal of a spare seat.

A pass will only be issued if payment has been received and it is important that payments are made promptly. Details of how to pay and the different rates available will be sent to you once concessionary travel has been agreed. If travelling on a local bus service you should pay the daily fare or buy a season ticket from the operator.

Pupils will be awarded vacant seats on a points scoring system; points are awarded for the following criteria:

- Residence in Worcestershire
- Having used the bus before
- Siblings on the bus
- Alternative public transport service not available
- Attending designated or nearest school
- Living beyond the statutory walking distance from the school
- Date of application received.

If no seats are available you will be entered onto the waiting list and advised if a seat becomes available. Late payment of contribution may result in the withdrawal of this offer.

## 10. Seatbelts on school buses

Although Worcestershire County Council now specifies the fitting of belts on its school vehicles, parents and pupils must be aware that it is not currently a legal requirement that these are worn. It is only required that seat belts are fitted to vehicles which are capable of travelling in excess of 60mph, therefore most "buses" are not provided with seatbelts. In some instances pupils may be required to stand on local bus services.

Pupils must regard the **CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

## 11. Charging schedule

For those not entitled to free transport.

Payment Scheme	Price 09-10
Termly	£112.00
Annual	£310.00
Half-Termly / One Way Travel	£67.00
Family Rate Ticket Termly	£168.00
Family Rate Ticket Annual	£504.00

Free transport may be available if the pupil is entitled to Free School Meals or the household is in receipt of **Maximum** Working Tax Credits. See section 1 - who is entitled to free transport.

A family ticket service is available, one payment for all entitled children from the same family.



- Familiarise yourself with the County Council's procedures for dealing with accidents and breakdowns. If the vehicle breaks down, or in the event of an accident, give clear instructions to the pupils. Their safety is paramount.
- If there is any serious delay you must inform the school so that information can be passed to parents.
- Children should not be allowed to push vehicles for any reason.

## 9. No Pass No Travel

Worcestershire County Council will be operating a "No Pass, No Travel" policy on all contracted education transport services from September 2009 onwards. It will be the driver's responsibility to check student's bus passes each time they board the vehicle, and the students must ensure they carry their pass at all times. Any students that are found not to be carrying a valid bus pass will be refused access to the vehicle.

The "No Pass, No Travel" policy is intended to ensure :

- no vehicle becomes overloaded by unauthorised riders, resulting in illegal operation
- Worcestershire County Council, schools and operators have accurate lists of all students using transport services for communication and emergency purposes
- effective operation of the Denominational, Post 16 and Vacant Seat payments schemes
- students use the correctly allocated vehicle where 2 vehicles may serve the same bus stop, again preventing overloading

If your child's pass is lost or stolen, follow the guidance in Section 12 (Frequently Asked Questions) to obtain a replacement. A Temporary Authorisation to Travel (TATT) can be obtained if a student's bus pass is lost or stolen. This can either be obtained through the School Office, or by contacting the Worcestershire Hub on 01905 765 765. TATTs are valid for a maximum of 2 weeks, and only one will be issued per student per term.

It is parental responsibility to ensure your child carries their bus pass and gets to and from the bus stop in safety, until they have boarded the vehicle. If your child is refused access to the vehicle as they have not got a valid bus pass or TATT, **it is parental responsibility to make alternative arrangements to transport your child to and from school.**

## 4. What type of transport will be provided?

Transport is normally provided on a Contract Vehicle, Service Bus or Train Service. Sometimes in special circumstances, for example if there is no bus or train service available, a taxi or mileage allowance may be offered to parents. A mileage allowance is not offered where there is available transport. Taxi services are not offered for Denominational Travel. Transport options will be decided by Worcestershire County Council.

Boarding and alighting points are provided at frequent distances along contract routes and parents are required to ensure that children get safely to and from these points. Children are expected to make their own way, up to a mile, to and from the nearest boarding point.

**Transport is provided at the beginning and end of the normal school day. It is not provided at lunchtimes or for out of school activities.**

## 5. How long will the ticket be valid?

Each ticket will be printed with an expiry date dependent on the contribution paid. If the pass is provided free of charge, tickets for our contract bus services will normally be valid until the end of the academic year. Passes for rail or commercial bus services are normally re-issued each term, when they are nearing expiry a new valid pass will be sent to the pupil's home address. Rail photocards must be kept to use with the new termly pass.

**New applications for passes are only required when the pupil has either moved address and/or changed school.**



## 6. Making an application

Applications will be assessed and, if free transport is approved, a pass will be sent to your home address before the start of term. You must allow four weeks from the date of receipt for your application to be processed. To guarantee assessment for the new academic year, send completed forms to reach us before the last day of summer term. Applications must be made on the enclosed form and submitted to:

Education Travel Team  
County Hall  
Spetchley Road  
Worcester  
WR5 2NP

If assistance is given through the Vacant Seats Payment Scheme or the Denominational Contribution Scheme a letter will be sent asking for payment and providing details of how payment can be made. As soon as we have received payment, a pass will be sent direct to your home. (Rail and commercial bus tickets will take over a week for delivery.)

Some tickets are provided directly by local/national operators and it may be necessary to share your address details. If allocated to a rail or Severn Card contract a photo will be required for your ticket.

Applications can be made online.

- Keep the doors closed until the vehicle is at a complete standstill and always tell pupils not to stand before you stop at the boarding/alighting point.
- Check that no bags or clothing are caught in the doors as it closes and check nearside mirror every time before moving away. Remember that latecomers may be tempted to approach the vehicle.
- Where seat belts are fitted always request that the pupils use them.
- Where using the school bus sign ensure that they are in the proper position(s) while transporting pupils.
- You are required to co-operate with the County Council's Transport Officers when they are carrying out surveys or checks which may involve boarding your vehicle.
- Wherever possible, park on the same side of the road as the school entrance, and always park so that pupils alight on the nearside. Never allow them to alight onto the carriageway.
- Beware of pupils running back for items they may have left on the vehicle.
- If pupils have to exit by the rear of a minibus or via the emergency door you must supervise this operation personally.
- If pupils need to cross the road, tell them to wait until the bus has moved away before they do so.
- Reversing should only be undertaken when absolutely necessary and preferably with help from another adult. Do not reverse after pupils have alighted from the vehicle or before they have boarded.
- Remember that some pupils may have a disability, always allow for this.
- Always deal with pupils sympathetically when carrying out daily bus pass checks.
- You must report any misbehaviour by pupils to your employer and to the head teacher as soon as possible. No child should be evicted from the vehicle.
- Never say you are going to report misbehaviour and then fail to do so.
- You should know the location of both the first aid kit and the fire extinguisher and be trained in their use.
- Do not smoke or consume food or drink while you are on duty.
- Avoid physical contact with pupils and remember your language and behaviour are important too.



## Operators Responsibility

- Ensure vehicles are in good condition, clean and roadworthy.
- Ensure that the insurance cover indemnifies the County Council and any third party.
- Ensure a licensed and qualified PCV driver, wherever a PCV vehicles is used for a contract and only use the number of vehicles specified on your operators licence.
- Equip all vehicles with adequate fire extinguishers, a first aid kit and any other emergency equipment and ensure that your drivers are trained in their use.
- Where seatbelts are fitted to vehicles ensure that current regulations regarding their use are strictly observed.
- Do not overload vehicles. The County Council requires that vehicles are capable of carrying the total number of passengers on a contract without exceeding the overall capacity of the vehicles.
- Drivers to carry a suitable form of identification.
- All drivers engaged on School Transport Contracts must have an Enhanced Criminal Records Certificate, as issued by the Criminal Records Bureau.
- Operators may be provided with a pupil's address details for the purpose of pass distribution and are required to comply with the Data Protection Act regarding use of this data.

## Drivers Responsibility

- Be punctual.
- Approach each stop slowly and with care.
- **Always stop at the designated pick up or set down point.** Always park on the nearside and do not allow pupils to board or alight on the offside.
- Do not allow children to operate the doors.

## 7. School travel plans

School Travel Plans are action plans to reduce car use to and from schools.

The actions are aimed at:

1. Increasing walking and cycling levels, thereby improving pupils' health, social interaction, pedestrian skills, cycling skills, alertness and stamina.
2. Increasing bus use, (which also reduces pollution if pupils would otherwise travel by car) and increases social interaction.
3. Another desired outcome is reducing carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions, and training children to choose alternatives to the car in later life.
4. Reducing congestion in the peak times.

Those involved – pupils, parents, staff, governors, residents – are consulted. Surveys are used to highlight what would increase walking, cycling, bus use and car-sharing.

Where possible, actions are taken to improve safety along the school journey.

A grant is available for the school on submission of a Travel Plan to the Department for Education Services, via Worcestershire County Council. It can be spent on capital items within school grounds.

To set up a Travel Plan, please call **01905 768354**.



## 8. Code of practice

### Pupil Responsibility

- Be punctual.
- Ensure you have your bus pass available for inspection.
- Queue in a sensible manner.
- Do not kneel on your seat as this is dangerous and accidents have occurred as a result.
- Only speak to the driver when he or she is not driving, or in an emergency, and remember excessive noise can disturb the driver.
- Wait until the bus has stopped before getting up to leave.
- Make sure you have your belongings with you when you leave the vehicle.
- If you have to cross the road after getting off the bus always allow the bus to move off before attempting to cross and always use the green cross code.
- Smoking and consumption of food and drink on the vehicle are not allowed.
- If the vehicle breaks down or is involved in an accident follow any instruction given to you by the driver.
- Behave sensibly and safely at all times.

### Parental Responsibility

- Be punctual. **Remember it is your responsibility to ensure your child gets to and from the bus in safety.** Make sure your child knows what to do if the bus is late or does not arrive in the morning and if you are unable to meet them in the afternoon.
- Ensure your child always carries their pass. A replacement pass is available on request for a fee.
- Wait with your child on the side of the road where the bus collects them. Always avoid having to call your child to cross the road to you.

- Teach your child to act sensibly on and around buses.
- Teach your child how to cross the road from the bus stop. Make sure your child understands the green cross code. Remember small children cannot judge speed and should not be allowed to cross the road unaccompanied.
- Report any worries you may have to your child's head teacher.
- You may be held responsible for any vandalism caused by your child whilst on school transport. Remember that the bus operator may after consultation refuse to transport persistent offenders.
- Advise your child to wear a seat belt if fitted in the vehicle.

### Schools Responsibility

- Make sure pedestrian entrances are open.
- Make sure pupils board and align transport.
- Keep staff vehicle entrances and bus set down points some distance apart wherever possible.
- Where primary school children have to cross the road after alighting from or before boarding the bus, ensure the children are supervised.
- Take immediate and appropriate action where any bad behaviour is reported via the driver or operator. After consultation with the County Council the bus operator may refuse to transport persistent offenders.
- Should a bus fail to arrive contact the operator, as well as the County Council and keep all the children together.
- The use of school transport and School Travel Plans should be part of the general curriculum. Road Safety offer advice and assistance to teachers wishing to use Road Safety within the National Curriculum and can provide resources on request.
- Contact the Education Travel Team if you are in any doubt about the procedures.
- Parents must not park outside the school in the area marked for the school bus.

