

Home to School Transport

This factsheet explains:

- ⇒ **who decides whether your child is entitled to transport from home to school**
- ⇒ **when your child might qualify for free transport**
- ⇒ **who is responsible for your child's safety on school transport**

Who decides if my child is entitled to transport to school?

Under the law¹, local authorities are responsible for making the arrangements they consider necessary to provide free transport to school for pupils in their area.

The law also allows local authorities to provide free transport even when they do not have a legal duty to do so. This means that different local authorities have different policies about providing free transport.

Distance from school

Local authorities must provide free transport to pupils who live further away from their school than the 'statutory walking distances'. These are:

- ◆ two miles for pupils under eight
- ◆ three miles for pupils eight and above

When does this apply?

This applies if your child attends their catchment school or if they go to a school that the local authority has placed them in (for example, if the local school cannot meet their needs). If your child is 16 or older, your local authority may continue to help with transport costs. Regardless of the distance, local authorities must consider the safety of the route to school for pupils and can provide free transport if necessary.

¹The Education (Scotland) Act 1980

When does this NOT apply?

If you make a successful placing request to a school outwith your catchment area.
If you move home, taking your child outwith your school catchment area.
This includes when the distance is further than the “statutory walking distance”.

Additional Support Needs (ASN)

If your child is disabled, the local authority must make “reasonable adjustments” for them to make sure they are not disadvantaged. In some circumstances, providing transport might be considered a “reasonable adjustment”.

If your child's needs make it difficult for them to get to and from school, your local authority may decide to provide transport for them, even if they live within the “statutory walking distance”.

The local authority **does not have to provide transport** for children in pre-school education.

Each application is looked at independently. The law on transport and placing requests is complicated and it is important to discuss this with the local ASN Transport Team.

Who is responsible for my child's safety on school transport?

The local authority is responsible for your child's safety and supervision while on transport to and from home to school. This includes looking at your child's age, and any additional support needs they may have.

You should agree in advance what will happen if there is a medical emergency on a journey.

Travel Assistants might be employed to be with your child in a taxi or minibus and need to know about your child's needs. Training will be given if necessary. Drivers may also need training. By law, anyone who provides childcare or supervises children must be fully checked through Disclosure Scotland.

All vehicles must have a seatbelt fitted for each passenger. If adaptations are needed for children with additional support needs, the local authority should assess what changes are needed and make the necessary arrangements.

Where can I find out more?

The local authority's home to school transport policy should have information about how they make decisions on eligibility for transport. You can ask them for a copy.

Dundee City Council's ASN Transport Team will be able to answer all of your queries. Their contact details are at the foot of this factsheet.