

Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND) Home to School Transport



Driver and Travel Assistant handbook

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Important information

Sickness procedure for students – If you usually only have one student on your route and you are informed by parent that the child does not require transport due to them being ill, please adopt the following process:

- Day 1 of illness – Inform SEND Transport that student is ill, and they will not require transport today.
- Please inform parent that they must contact SEND Transport to inform them when their child is well enough to return.
- Do not carry out any further journeys until you have been informed the student is well enough to travel.

Travel Assistants duties

What is my job and what are my responsibilities?	Open the vehicle door, greet the child and parent/carer and help the child fasten seatbelt (if necessary). If the child wears a harness, make sure it is fastened and on securely before departing. If the child uses a car booster seat it is the parent's responsibility to provide and fit the seat. Sit in the back of the vehicle with the children. Travel assistants are not permitted to sit in the front of the bus or taxi once children are on board unless instructed to do so by the SEND Transport Service team. Stand on and support the student whilst travelling on the tail lift with wheelchair users when there is room and if required. Ensure the students are well behaved and that order is maintained. For health and safety reasons, students are expected to behave well on transport. If there are any incidents on transport, please alert the parent/carer (if you feel comfortable doing so) however the school and SEND Transport Service Team must be informed as a matter of urgency. You are also required to complete an incident report form (if you do not have a copy on the vehicle contact your provider). Small disturbances will escalate if they are not sorted out quickly. Reporting a student's behaviour is not "getting them into trouble" Do not leave the vehicle or knock on the students door, if the parent/carer is not visible when you arrive, wait three minutes, then contact the SEND Transport Service Team for instructions. You must not leave until instructed to do so by the team. However, if you arrive early, please wait until your normal pick-up time, then three minutes beyond that before ringing SEND Transport/departing. If you have a mobile phone, you can call or text the parent/carer to let them know you are there. If a parent/carer gives you medicine for their child, it must be in the pharmacy packaging it was dispensed in,
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	with the child's name, the name of the medication and the date on it. Please do not accept loose pills or over-the-counter medication as these will not be able to be dispensed by the school staff. Any medication transported to/from school must be signed for at school/home end. Emergency Medication is prescribed for some of the young people who access SEND Transport. In most cases this would not be administered by the escort on route. All students' who are prescribed emergency medication will have an emergency rescue medication in place, and this must travel with them on all journeys. The usual procedure is that if the child displays any of the symptoms identified in the plan • Vehicle should be pulled over to a suitable place • Driver or Travel escort call 999. Hand over plan to paramedics when they arrive so they can treat the young person appropriately • Once paramedics arrive and take over the care of the child, call parent and make them aware • Call SEND Transport and complete an incident form which needs to be forwarded to SEND Transport In a small number of cases there will need to be trained staff on a route who do administer medication. Training will be given prior to the commencement of that route and be signed off by the appropriate medical staff. Store child's belongings safely i.e. under the seat or belted together in an empty seat. Please ensure these are handed over when they arrive at the destination.
	<u>Please do not leave the vehicle for any reason</u> Keep a record of each students contact numbers, emergency contacts, seat assignment, medical needs etc. This will be given to you at the start of each school year or when a new route is needed by the company you work for. If you are covering a route in an emergency contact your office who will be able to provide a copy of this information. (If a student is no longer on route, please ensure their personal information is destroyed confidentially following GDPR guidelines) Always ensure that parents/carers take and collect their child to and from the vehicle unless the SEND Transport Service team have informed you otherwise. Never drop off a student either at a school or home without an adult being present or a nominated person which should be checked with SEND Transport Service before dropping off.

Driver's duties

What is my job and what are my responsibilities?	Greet the student and parent when they are brought to the vehicle a simple hello costs nothing and can make the child and their parent feel at ease. If a student is travelling in a wheelchair, please do visual checks to ensure: • Wheelchair lap belt secured • Footrests in a lowered position • Wheelchair is in suitable condition before accepting onto vehicle Operate the tail lift and clamp wheelchairs securely where needed. It is the driver's responsibility to do this as they are responsible for the safety of all passengers on their vehicle. Ensure students are secured into the vehicle using a 3-point inertia seatbelt. Please ensure child locks are activated on doors where they have them fitted. Doors should not be opened until the parent/carer is at the vehicle ready to receive their child. Please ensure when picking up or dropping off, the door where the student accesses the vehicle is kerb side where possible for safety measures. Even if this means turning the vehicle around to do so. Please don't pull away until all passengers (including travel assistant) are seated and secured. Wait until escort informs you that all passengers are secured before pulling away. Ensure the vehicle is in good working order and has an adequate amount of petrol/diesel or electrical charge before setting off. Visual checks should be made before any journey. Only the travel assistant and the pupils on the transport list are permitted on the bus/taxi. Children's parents, siblings or friends are not permitted to travel on the vehicle. Relatives or friends of the driver or travel assistant are also not permitted. Ensure that you are well rested and alert, drivers who have worked a night shift should not then perform a school route the following morning. If an accident occurs the investigation would take this into account, and it could influence to the outcome.
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	If a vehicle breaks down on route, please keep the students in the vehicle until a relief vehicle arrives, unless it is unsafe to remain inside the vehicle. You will need to inform your provider and the SEND Transport Service team immediately so that they can assist you in managing the situation. Alert your provider and the SEND Transport Service Team of any delays i.e. heavy traffic, weather conditions etc. This will enable them to keep parents and schools informed that the students may be late in arriving at their destination and reduce any anxieties this might incur. Alert the SEND Transport Service Team of any delays i.e. heavy traffic, weather conditions etc If there is no travel assistant required on your school run, you are then responsible for all the duties usually performed by the travel assistant. However, if there is an assistant allocated to your route then the route cannot go-ahead without one on board. Only SEND Transport approved personnel should be used as a replacement on any route. If you need to leave the vehicle turn the engine off and remove keys. This is for the safety of the passengers and ensures that the vehicle remains stationary.
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Behaviour on Transport

For reasons of health and safety, pupils are expected to behave well on transport. Students on transport are not permitted to:

- Smoke or vape
- Spit
- Litter
- Vandalise the vehicle
- Make obscene gestures
- Eat in the vehicle, unless there is a medical reason (if you have a child who needs to eat for medical/sensory reasons please contact SEND Transport before you allow this as a risk assessment must be completed)
- Stand up in the vehicle when it is moving
- Use bad language
- Strike another person or otherwise misbehave
- Kiss or touch others inappropriately

Any incident on transport should be reported to SEND Transport via the relevant incident form.

Frequently Asked Questions

There is a child on my school run who has never attended school or isn't at the address listed. Should I tell someone?	Yes. Please contact the SEND Transport Service Team if there are any non-attending pupils or if pupils' details are different than those listed on your run sheet. This information needs to be recorded Reminder – you need to contact SEND Transport for any students who does not come to the vehicle within the 3-minute timescale, or you have not been informed that transport is not required.
What should I do if the vehicle is involved in an accident?	In the event of an accident contact the SEND Transport team immediately for advice / instructions. An Accident Form will be emailed to the relevant transport provider which must be completed and returned to SENDTravelSupport@newcastle.gov.uk within 24 hours of the accident taking place.
The school staff/parent are trying to put a child on transport who is being violent and potentially unsafe to other passengers and staff. How do I handle this situation?	You should not accept them on to the vehicle as a seriously distressed child will put themselves, the other children and staff at risk. The behaviour would be a distraction to the driver, and this could result in an accident. Please contact the SEND Transport team before the child is put onto the vehicle if you feel a child is displaying violent behaviour or is ill and could disrupt the journey.
If a parent/carer is not home when I call to drop off can I leave a child with a neighbour?	No, a child is never to be left with anyone who has not been agreed by the SEND Transport team. You will need to call the SEND Transport team on 0191 2774646 first. You cannot leave a child with a neighbour or friend unless we have written permission. All emergency contacts will be indicated on the meet and greet sheet sent to your provider.
I'm being sworn at, hit or spit on by child on transport; what should I do?	Please report this type of behaviour to the school and to the SEND Transport team immediately. It is our responsibility to ensure the safety of staff as well as other children on transport. You must also complete an incident form. The reason for the behaviour will determine how it is managed going forward.
I'm concerned that a child on transport is being abused or neglected, who should I report it to?	Contact the SEND Transport Service team. We will notify the relevant service to aid the child. It would also be helpful to notify the school however if you do not feel comfortable doing this the SEND Transport team will have this conversation once we have received an incident report.

If the school calls me to pick a child up early or take to a different address; should I?	No. Schools and colleges cannot change pick up times or addresses. If you have been asked this by the school/college, you will need to tell them to contact the SEND Transport team, and we will deal with it. You must not take instruction to change the arrangements from anyone other than from SEND Transport Service.
The parent/carer wants me to transport extra baggage or equipment for their child. Do I transport it?	Extra baggage or equipment should not be transported unless it can be stored safely, call the SEND Transport Service Team for instructions.
What if a child is sick/damages my vehicle?	• Call SEND Transport immediately to inform of nature of the incident • Take clear photographs (when no children on route); • Complete incident form and forward to your provider along with the photographic evidence. Failure to follow this procedure may result in not being reimbursed for any valeting costs etc. Please note we will only pay to valet the area of concern and will not pay for anything above this.
A parent/carer on the run never has their child ready on time, how can you help?	Call SEND Transport once you have waited the allocated 3 minutes. However, if you arrive early you must wait until the usual time and the 3 minutes beyond this before calling. If the lines are busy when you call, please leave a voicemail indicating your route number along with the name of the child who is not ready also giving their usual pick-up time.
A child on my transport is moving house, what advice should I give the parent/carer?	Parent/Carer must contact the SEND Transport team. Do not pick the student up from any other address other than the one on your route sheet.

General Information

- Remember that all information regarding the pupils on your school route is confidential and should not be discussed with anyone other than relevant parties.
- Don't let small problems turn into larger ones. Call the SEND Transport Service team, even if you feel it is a minor issue.
- Be professional. Don't allow yourself to be drawn into a confrontation with parent/carers, students, school staff or other transport staff. Ask SEND Transport Service for help.
- Drivers/travel escorts are not permitted to smoke or vape on the vehicle at any time.

Please remember you are representing SEND Transport Service for Newcastle City Council. You should always remain polite and courteous whilst working on SEND routes.

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Contact Details

SEND Transport Service

Newcastle City Council
3rd Floor
Civic Centre
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8QH

Phone 0191 2774646 between 7.30am and 4.30pm
Email sendtransportservice@newcastle.gov.uk