



Non-Statutory Transport Arrangements Policy **Academic year 2015/2016**

Home to School Transport for Secondary age Children

Darlington Borough Council has a duty to make the necessary travel arrangements for 'eligible children' under Section 508B of the Education Act 1996.

The Council will provide 'free' transport in the following circumstances:

- To the nearest appropriate school which is more than 3 miles from the parental address
- To children entitled to free school meals or those families in receipt of the maximum level of working tax credit to:-
 - 1 of their 3 nearest qualifying schools which is more than 2 miles but less than 6 and or
 - to the nearest suitable school on grounds of religion or belief which is more than 2 miles but less than 15

Different arrangements are available for transport to a Special School or the Pupil Referral Unit, please contact the Transport Unit direct to discuss these circumstances.

Additional Access to co-ordinated transport services

In conjunction with all secondary schools in Darlington, the Local Authority has agreed to offer a limited number of additional places on existing routes to parents/carers of secondary age children; however there will be a cost for this provision.

Parents/carers who are not entitled to 'free' transport can apply for a fare paying place on an existing school coach, where there are spaces available. The spaces are limited and there is no guarantee that every child who applies will be allocated a place. This offer only applies to children living two miles or more from the school.

It is a parents / carers responsibility to get their child to school and your choice of school should not be affected by the availability of transport.

Charging Policy

Families will be charged a maximum of £1.75 per day. If a family has more than one child that obtains a place on a coach, the eldest child will be charged £1.75 then there will be a reduction of 10% (£1.35) for the first sibling and a reduction of 20% (£1.20) for each sibling after that. The charge will be in place for the whole of the academic year. There will be no reductions for sickness absence, holiday absence, exclusion etc.

If a child no longer requires the seat on the coach the parent must inform the Local Authority of their decision and must return the bus pass to the Authority in order that a refund can be calculated from the date of receipt of the pass itself.

Allocation of places

The Local Authority will not consider providing additional routes, diversions to existing routes or increase the capacity of a coach to meet an increased demand, unless there are cost effective reasons for doing so. All decisions to provide an additional service will be taken in consultation with Head Teachers.

Places on the school coaches will be allocated as follows:

Non-Statutory places will first be allocated to the pupils who currently use home to school transport on a non-statutory basis, and then places will be issued to any new starters or mid-year transfers.

Once pupils are allocated to a route they will all be treated equally regardless of year group.

The calculated distance is measured from the front door of the home address (including flats) to the main school gate, by the shortest walking route. This will be based on the home address of the child where they reside for the majority of the time (where there is shared care the decision will be based on the parent that receives the child benefit). To remain consistent the Authority uses a Geographical Information System to measure all distances. The Authority's priority when measuring a route is to identify the shortest route judged to be safe (safe is lit at regular intervals, paved/tarmaced). The Local Authority accepts there may be exceptions and will treat each case on its merits.

The Authority will decide which route your child should be allocated; thereafter places will be determined on a furthest distance from the school basis. I.e. if there are two children applying for the same route we will allocate the route to the pupil who lives furthest from the school within the route area. No consideration will be given to childcare arrangements, or drop offs due to location of parents workplace.

If your child is successful in obtaining a place on the transport we will attempt to enable your child to access transport for the full five years of their secondary education. However, this cannot be guaranteed as circumstances may change at any time. This transport will be known as non-statutory transport.

Allocations will be made prior to the commencement of the academic year. The application form will stipulate a date by which forms must be returned to the local authority for processing. Any applications made after this date, will be treated as late and they will be accommodated after all of the applications that were received by the deadline, this includes any renewing pupils. Any

applications made mid-year i.e. during September to July of any academic year will be accommodated where possible.

Conditions

Places will only be made available on each route if there are seats available after all statutory children have been accommodated. If there is sufficient demand then a case will be considered for increasing the size of the coach, if possible and only in circumstances where this is cost effective.

A non-statutory child can be removed at any point in time to allow for a statutory child to take their place. The Authority will give 10 working days' notice to parents for their child to be taken off a route.

The Authority is responsible for issuing bus passes and will undertake periodical checks on coach routes to ensure that passengers are complying with the Travel Rules (copy enclosed for your information).

Payment

The secondary school that your child attends will make arrangements with you to collect payment for the transport if you are successful in obtaining a fare-paying place. Schools offer parents a variety of ways to make payments, including direct debit, cash, cheque and an online service. Passes will not be issued to pupils until their school has received payment for the pass.

Agreement

Name of Pupil: _____

Name of School: _____

I confirm that I understand the conditions under which non-statutory travel arrangements for my son / daughter have been arranged by Darlington Borough Council. I understand that entitlement will cease at the end of the school year and I agree to accept the payment terms as outlined in the Non-Statutory Transport Arrangements Policy.

Parent/Carers Name: _____ Relationship to pupil: _____

Parent/Carers Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please sign and return this slip along with the completed application form to Transport Team, Room 201, Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT.

Office Use Only:

Date Received:

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