

HURWORTH — SCHOOL —



Transport Policy

Accepted by:

Governing Body

Lead Reviewer:

Chief Finance Officer

Review cycle:

2 year

Last reviewed:

October 2023

Date of next review:

October 2025

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Aims and Introduction

This document describes the policy for home to school travel assistance and the criteria applied to determine eligibility.

The Policy has been developed in accordance with the legislative framework set out under the Education Act 1996 and current Government guidance. It will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that arrangements adopted within Buckinghamshire reflect any new legislation and guidance.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that their child attends school; however, in certain circumstances, travel assistance, is provided if the criteria are met. Home to School travel assistance aims to:

- support those most in need
- promote principles of independence
- provide the most cost effective travel assistance
- promote and encourage the use of sustainable travel

Home to School Transport for Secondary age Children

School Transport is currently available for children living in the areas outlined in the school's admissions policy – Middleton St George, Middleton One Row, Neasham, Bishopton, Sadberge, Great Stainton, Little Stainton and the rural areas of Sockburn, Low Dinsdale and Hurworth Moor.

Children living in the Firthmoor area (as defined on the map which lies South of Harris Street) will qualify for "school transport" if their application for a place at Hurworth School is successful, under the sibling or distance criterion.

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 and/or suitable school determined by the Local Authority which is more than 3 miles from the parental address using the shortest walking route judged to be safe
- 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 appropriate and/or suitable 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

All applications for statutory school transport must be made through the School Transport Team at Darlington Borough Council. We are unable to issue any bus passes until DBC have received and validated an application for statutory transport.

Access to co-ordinated transport services

Hurworth School are able to offer 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, however 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

Please note that this may be subject to change at anytime.

Parents/Guardians are currently charged a maximum of £4.25 per day per student. If a family has more than one child that obtains a place on a coach, the eldest child will be charged £4.25 then there will be a reduction of 10% (reduced cost of £3.83) for the first sibling and a further reduction of 10% 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 School of their decision and must return the bus pass to the Finance Office at Hurworth School in order that a refund can be calculated from the date of receipt of the pass.

Allocation of places

The School 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 School Transport at Darlington Borough Council.

Places on the school bus will be allocated as follows:

- Places will first be allocated to the pupils who currently use home to school transport on a non-statutory basis.
- New starters or mid-year transfers.
- Statutory applications

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 School uses a Geographical Information System to measure all distances. The priority when measuring a route is to identify the shortest route judged to be safe (safe is lit at regular intervals, paved/tarmacked). The School accepts there may be exceptions and will treat each case on its merits.

The School 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 process will stipulate a date by which forms must be returned to the School for processing. Any applications made after this date will be treated as late and will not be processed until all other places are allocated. 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 non-statutory children that currently use home to school transport 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; the School will give appropriate notice to parents for their child to be taken off a route.

The School is responsible for issuing bus passes and will undertake daily checks on bus routes to ensure that passengers are complying with the Travel Rules as per the Travel Safely in Darlington guidance (please see below).

Pupils will be issued one pass for one route; there is not an option for pupils to have multiple passes for different routes. If a pupil wants to change routes a request can be made by parents /carers to the Finance Office, and this will be assessed and accommodated where possible.

Payment

Hurworth School will contact you with payment details if you are successful in obtaining a fare-paying place. Parents can pay by monthly standing order or through their ParentMail account; passes will not be issued to pupils until payment has been received.

Travel rules

- Smoking or vaping is illegal on School contracted vehicles. Lighters and matches are not to be brought onto vehicles.
- Where seatbelts or lap-belts are fitted they must be worn.
- Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Children who are discovered to be bullying others during journeys will have their pass removed. Repeated incidences will result in the loss of transport privileges on a permanent basis.
- Instances of poor behaviour may result in the loss of transport privileges on a permanent basis.
- A number of contracted vehicles are now fitted with CCTV which will be in operation on school runs. CCTV footage may be used to investigate instances of poor behaviour.
- Luggage should be stored in appropriate spaces or under seats. Bags should not be left in aisles or on seats.
- Eating and drinking are not permitted on contracted vehicles.
- Contracted vehicles may proceed to other private contracts following school runs. Pupils should leave the vehicle clean and tidy condition, taking all litter with them.

Information for Parents/Carers

You are entitled to:

- Be made aware of the Local Authority and School Policy and Guidelines on School Transport.
- Be involved in consultation where there are problems on school transport and to share in the solution.
- Be listened to where you have concerns and where appropriate, be able to register complaints.
- Be assured that transport in a safe, secure, non-threatening and civilised environment will be provided.
- Be made aware of the details of home to school transport arrangements.
- Support, assistance and co-operation from other partners in School Transport
- Be made aware of the consequences of your child's poor behaviour.

The consequences of poor behaviour on School Transport can be:

- A charge for replacement passes.
- A charge for making good of damage caused through acts of vandalism.
- Short or long term withdrawal of transport with no reimbursement or alternative provision being made, during which time it will be the parents responsibility to ensure the child attends school.
- The potential for the refusal of travel if no pass is carried.

Your responsibilities are to:

Support the Local Authority, school and operator in applying the Schools Policies and Guidelines.

- Support a positive resolution where there are problems on School Transport which involve your child.
- Pay for the making good of damage caused by vandalism / criminal activity which involves your child.
- Ensure that your child conducts themselves in accordance with the expectations of the school and the Authority Policy and Guidelines. This may include meeting with the school to discuss problems and in some cases, entering into a voluntary agreement between yourself, the school and the pupil, to manage the situation positively.
- Act as a good role model to your child thereby encouraging good positive behaviour.

- Ensure that your child always has their bus pass available for use on school transport and apply for a new pass if it is lost or damaged.
- Assume responsibility of your child up to the point of collection and following drop off by the appropriate transport.
- Ensure your child is at the correct pick up point at the appropriate time. If your child misses the transport, it is your responsibility to transport your child to school.

Information for Pupils

You are entitled to:

- A safe, secure, non-threatening and civilised environment on school transport.
- Have your views and concerns listened to and addressed, as appropriate.
- Be treated consistently and fairly.
- Be made aware of your school and the Authority's expectations of the behaviour and conduct expected on transport and the sanctions that may be applied where these expectations are not met.
- Be made aware of the seriousness of your behaviour where there are problems, and the possible consequences arising from bad behaviour.

Your responsibilities are to:

- Conduct yourself at all times in a safe, orderly, courteous and responsible manner.
- Respect the rights and feelings of others, including other passengers, drivers and passenger assistants, bystanders and other road users.
- Comply with the guidelines issued to pupils by the school.
- Carry and show your bus pass at all times when using school transport.
- Inform the school finance office if you lose your bus pass in order to obtain a temporary bus pass.

The consequences of poor behaviour on School Transport can be:

- A letter of detailing the school's concerns to parents/carers; this may include a warning re future conduct
- The range of normal school sanctions, which may include exclusion, detention, withdrawal of privileges, etc.
- Voluntary agreements / contracts between parents, school and pupils.
- Short and long term withdrawal of transport with no reimbursement or alternative provision made.
- The potential loss of travel if no pass is carried.
- Possible Police action in appropriate cases.
- The loss of transport privileges on a permanent basis in the most serious cases