

Home to School Transport

Dear Parent or Carer

I hope that you your family's transport experience has been a positive one this half term. To acknowledge your feedback on the services, we are continuing to make changes to improve the home to school travel offer.

Thank you to all who have shared their feedback with us, please do continue to let us know how your children are experiencing their journey to school. This is the beginning of their daily learning journey and it is so important that our youngsters get off to the best possible start. Staff are learning all the time, thank you to those parents who have recognised improvements, this positive feedback means a lot to us.

In terms of specialist transport routes and call handling, overall the service is operating very well at the moment as shown in the following statistics.

- 99.98% of routes operated successfully
- 98.78% of routes were on time
- 92.57% of calls were answered with an average waiting time of less than two minutes

Our data is compiled using weekly feedback from schools, operators and parents. If you would like to contribute to feedback please email Travel Assist - travelassist@birmingham.gov.uk

During November a number of NEAT routes were unable to operate due to staff shortages. We are working closely with NEAT to resolve this. Unfortunately, staff shortages (particularly driver shortages) are an issue nationally at present. We are monitoring this issue carefully. We do appreciate your patience if you are impacted by this situation.

Severe Weather

Please be reassured that in the event of snow or severe weather, we will attempt to run all of our routes. If conditions mean that we cannot operate a route, you will be informed via updates provided to your child's school.

Routes can operate slightly later in severe weather, particularly where there is a knock on impact on local roads. Please keep an eye on the Local Offer website for updates – <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/home-to-school-transport/home-to-school-transport-news/>

Applying for Free School Travel Bus Passes

In some instances, the City Council is able to offer children free school travel passes to get to school. However please note that these are usually exceptional circumstances and only approximately 20% of applications meet the specified criteria and are successful. You can find more information about whether you are likely to qualify here: www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50052/school_travel/888/apply_for_a_free_school_travel_pass

New Safeguarding Measures

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We are continually working to review and improve our safeguarding procedures. Following reviews of incidents and near misses, we have revised our procedures (and those of our contractors) to tighten up our pupil handover process.

In order to ensure that every child/passenger is carefully accounted for as they arrive at and leave school at the end of the day, we have reviewed and relaunched the pupil handover process. You may notice that our Guides (or drivers where there is no guide) complete a register which they agree with the school before leaving the premises.

New Transport Application Form from 1st December

As of 1st December 2021, parents and carers will only be able to apply for Home to School Transport using the link: <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/xfp/form/902>.

You should read the council's **Travel assistance policy for 0-25 year olds in education** before submitting the application.

The changes to this process are in place to make sure the service has as much of the information it needs to commence transport, at the earliest point – meaning transport arrangements can be made in a more timely manner for eligible pupils.

Various documentation will be requested as part of the application form process and you will need to be able to upload it with the application. In most cases, completion of the application is not possible without this:

1. EHCP (Education Health Care Plan)
2. Supporting evidence, in absence of EHCP – any relevant supporting documents such as behaviour support plans, incident reports or previous risk assessments in addition to any health & social care information and plans
3. If a wheelchair user, the wheelchair specifications including make, model and measurements
4. If applicable, Epilepsy Care Plan, Behaviour Care Plan, Asthma Plan, Allergy Care Plan and any related health care plan

The documents should be recent (under 2 years old).



Travel Assist – Tel: 0121 303 4955
Email: travelassist@birmingham.gov.uk
Website: www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk

Have Your Say

Home to School Travel Assistance Eligibility

Where children are eligible for travel assistance, our policy states that 'Children become of compulsory school age at one of three points during the school year in which they turn 5, depending on when exactly their birthday is'. Awarded transport will then be free from the term following a child's fifth birthday. For more details on home to transport eligibility, the Home to School Transport Policy can be found here -

www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/home-to-school-transport/travel-assist-policy-documents/

Ring and Ride Survey

The West Midlands Combined Authority has created a short, survey on how people use, and feel about Ring and Ride. It doesn't matter if people don't use the service anymore, or have never used it, they still want to hear your views. Therefore, they would be really grateful if Home to School Transport service users would complete the survey.

The link to the survey is below and everyone who completes it can be entered into a free prize drawer to win £30 of vouchers.

<https://snapsurveys.wmca.org.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=163187018287>

Get involved in SEND Co-production and 'Have your Say' workshop opportunities

You are invited to Parent/Carer engagement events across Birmingham to 'have your say' on co-production and the Local Offer website.

The first meeting is 15th December in central Birmingham. For more information go to:

<https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/ofsted2021/co-production/>

Tell us about a great guide or a dedicated driver

Is there someone who makes your child's journey a joy? We'd love to hear from you if you would like to tell us about a driver or guide who makes your day that little bit easier.

We'd love to hear your stories and shine a light on the best of our Home to School Transport staff in the next newsletter. Please email:

HTSTransport@birmingham.gov.uk

Information updates on the Local Offer

Renewed Bus Pass Applications required

Bus Pass holders who have moved from temporary accommodation to permanent accommodation since September will need to reapply for their pass. We will be writing to those concerned in December and deactivating their bus pass codes. If you think your child will still be eligible for travel assistance from your new permanent address, please apply here:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50052/school_travel/888/apply_for_free_school_travel_assistance

Information updates on the Local Offer website

The current COVID situation is changing rapidly with the identification of the new Omicron variant. Please visit the Local Offer website to keep up to date with any changes regarding Home to School Transport

Travel Assist Christmas opening times will also be published on the Local Offer website as soon as they are available.

<https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/home-to-school-transport/home-to-school-transport-news/>

Find answers to your questions on Home to School Transport on the Local Offer website

Birmingham families can now find resources, information and help for SEND all in one place

 Birmingham City Council



www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk

 BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S TRUST 

The Local Offer website includes Frequently Asked Questions for Home to School Transport. If there are any further updates, the site will be updated during the holidays with the most current information.

<https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/faq/home-to-school-transport-faqs/>

[Home to School Parent Carer Charter](#)

Season's Greetings

Wishing all our passengers, their families, our guides and drivers a peaceful and happy time together over the holidays. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year.