

# Special Schools Transport Review Guide



# Contents

1. Reviewing school transport	3
2. Internal arrangements – CYPS and Transport Co-ordination Service	5
3. Stakeholders	6
4. Roles and responsibilities	7
5. Communication strategy	10
6. After implementation	12
7. Managing feedback	13
8. Glossary	14
9. Home to school transport policy	14
10. Appendices	15
Appendix A Special School Review project timeline	16
Appendix B Contact details	20
Appendix C Model initial letter to parents	21
Appendix D TRAMS information to accompany initial letter to parents	22
Appendix E Model letter to contractors and escorts advising of review	23
Appendix F Model letter to school governing body advising of review and requesting meeting	24
Appendix G Model email briefing to elected members, Parent Carer Voice, social care and My Devon advising of review	26
Appendix H Model letter to parents advising of new arrangements	
Appendix I Model letter to contractors regarding termination of contract	27
Appendix J Model letter to contractors advising of successful tender	28
Appendix K Model letter to DCC escorts advising of redundancy	29
Appendix L Model letter to DCC escorts advising of new contract conditions	30
Appendix M Transport Review Flowchart	31



# 1. Reviewing school transport

This guide is to provide a framework for future transport reviews for special schools. The information in this guide comes from experience gathered during recent reviews at some of Devon's special schools, and takes account of feedback from the schools themselves, from parents and from other stakeholders.

## Why review school transport?

Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) and the Transport Co-ordination Service (TCS) work closely together to make sure that transport is provided that firstly meets the needs of children and young people, but also delivers best value for public money.

Over time, pupils travelling on school transport routes will change for a variety of reasons; they may complete their education at a particular setting, or move within Devon or away from the area. There are also new arrivals to Devon or new pupils taking up places at special schools on an ongoing basis. This means that routes become inefficient, with some areas under capacity and others over capacity.

The needs of the pupils we transport also change, so it is appropriate for us to periodically review the way we are providing transport for pupils with special needs to make sure it is safe and appropriate to their needs; for example there are a higher number of pupils being transported who need to travel in a wheelchair and cannot transfer to a seat. The changes may include the need to provide more flexible transport, in discussion with schools and other education providers, in order to meet the personalisation agenda as it develops.

To make sure we get the best value for public money the transport teams in Devon County Council must make sure that transport is delivered in the most cost effective way possible. To achieve this we are undertaking an ongoing programme of transport reviews. To comply with UK and European legislation, and to meet Devon County Council's *Procurement Policy* ([www.devon.gov.uk/equalityprocurement](http://www.devon.gov.uk/equalityprocurement)) contracts with external providers have to be regularly reviewed and re-tendered.

## What is a school transport review?

Officers will audit all existing transport arrangements for a particular school or education setting. This audit will include a review of the current routes which exist in a network and information on each passenger including:

- their home address
- their pick up point
- whether an escort is required to travel with them
- the nature of their special needs and whether these have changed.

Officers will use all of this information to re-design the network in the most cost effective way possible.





### When to review school transport

Changes in pupils travelling or their needs happen on an ongoing basis which may require more minor changes to take place at any time of year.

Full transport reviews are scheduled throughout an academic year, but the scheduling will take account of a number of factors; for example we will not undertake a review when many pupils may be taking examinations.

Wherever possible, changes to arrangements which result from a transport review will be introduced at the beginning of a term or half-term.

### General principles of transport reviews

Any changes to transport arrangements that are proposed as a result of a transport review will be within the regulations of the *DCC School Transport Policy*; ([www.devon.gov.uk/school\\_transport](http://www.devon.gov.uk/school_transport)) for example maximum journey times or distances to pick up points.

It is expected that any school whose routes are subject to review will **work in partnership** with the School Transport Team to effect the changes. The school will be offered the opportunity to participate at all stages of the review including:

- advising on the child or young person's need and how these can best be met on transport
- communicating with parents and carers
- helping to plan the new network
- helping to manage any issues that arise from changes to transport.

The Special Heads Association Devon (SHAD) will also be invited to participate in the review process.

Communication with parents and carers and other stakeholders is particularly important and will take place at appropriate points throughout the process. This will include seeking the views of parents and carers and schools regarding the special needs of children and young people and how transport can best meet them. This will also to make sure that any concerns or issues are considered during the review process - see section 6.

## 2. Internal arrangements – CYPS and Transport Co-ordination Service (TCS)

School transport in Devon is the responsibility of CYPS. The Devon County Council Cabinet of Elected Members set the policy which determines who is eligible for school transport and then CYPS officers assess eligibility in line with that policy.

CYPS commission the Transport Co-ordination Service (TCS) in the Environment, Economy and Culture Directorate to organise the transport on our behalf. TCS establish and manage contracts with local transport providers and make sure that safety and compliance is paramount in all arrangements.

### The Review Team

TCS will nominate an officer to lead the review. This Lead Review Officer will establish a Review Team comprising:

- TCS Safety, Fleet and Compliance Manager
- CYPS eligibility officer
- TCS transport co-ordinator
- escort co-ordinators (co-ordinating DCC employed and contracted escorts)
- County Special Education Team (CSET) casework representative
- a school representative
- a SHAD representative.

The Review Team will meet regularly, as set out in the processes and timescales in section 5, and at any point at which the Lead Review Officer considers it necessary. There will be regular email progress updates by the Lead Review Officer with the Review Team as the

review progresses. The Review Team has a shared responsibility to make sure that proposed transport arrangements arising from the review will meet the needs of pupils travelling and deliver best value.

### Internal progress reports

The Lead Review Officer will manage providing regular updates on progress to the Review Team and will share any relevant documents or information that arises as the review progresses.

Updates will be shared by email which will be sent out regularly by the Lead Review Officer.

### Transport Management System (TRAMS)

The Transport Management System (TRAMS) is the database that is used by all transport staff in Devon County Council. It holds all the information about passengers, contractors and routes.

As part of the review process the Review Team will work together to make sure that all information held in the database is secure and current, including the nature of the special needs of the pupils who will be affected by the review. Current route schedules will be checked to make sure accurate information is available about pick up and set down times, the need for a school escort and the use of any specially adapted vehicles or equipment.

## 3. Stakeholders

As well as CYPs and TCS there are several identified stakeholders who will be involved in any special school transport review and engaged with during the process.

- The governing body and the senior management team of the school being reviewed.
- Parents and carers.
- Parent Carer Voice.
- Social care staff.
- Transport contractors.
- School escorts.
- Devon County Council Elected Members - CYPs Portfolio Holders and Local Members.
- My Devon Customer Service Centre.



## 4. Roles and responsibilities

Stakeholder and role	Responsibilities
<p><b>Lead Review Officer</b> Lead the review project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set the timescale for the review</li> <li>• Establish the Review Team</li> <li>• Establish internal and external communications strategies</li> <li>• Prepare a briefing on the proposed review to be circulated to Local Members and the CYPs Portfolio Holders</li> <li>• Advise stakeholders (including parents and carers) of the review and timescales</li> <li>• Review and update passenger and route information for each pupil</li> <li>• Consider information provided by parents and carers about individual pupils and take account of this when re-designing the transport network</li> <li>• Calculate route timings, including suitability of pick up points and loading times for pupils with Special Educational Needs</li> <li>• Produce a contract review summary to identify actions for each route</li> <li>• Establish which routes are to be terminated, put out to tender or retained</li> <li>• Consult with school on new proposed network</li> <li>• Tender all routes through the Devon procurement e-tendering system</li> <li>• Award contracts - taking into account any legal requirements and DCC operating requirements</li> <li>• Allocate passengers to new routes</li> <li>• Take account of any changes to specialist equipment as a result of the review</li> <li>• Manage the updating of TRAMS at appropriate points</li> <li>• On implementation day make sure that appropriate staff are deployed in TCS and at the school to deal with any teething issues.</li> <li>• Maintain regular contact with the school for a month after implementation to be aware of any resulting issues</li> <li>• Manage any complaints on behalf of DCC that may arise after implementation</li> </ul>
<p><b>TCS</b> Nominate the Lead Review Officer and provide support to the review process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure proposed arrangements meet safety and compliance requirements through the Safety and Compliance Manager</li> <li>• Ensure proposed arrangements fit within the DCC Transport policy requirements</li> <li>• Manage any implications of the review on the DCC transport fleet</li> <li>• Ensure any contractor employed escorts are compliant, including providing any relevant training</li> <li>• Share any relevant information which may affect the review outcomes – for example a pupil moving</li> <li>• Advise and support schools on site management issues</li> </ul>

Stakeholder and role	Responsibilities
<p><b>CYPS Transport Team</b> Provide full support to the Lead Review Officer in undertaking the review process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage any effect of the review on DCC employed escorts, including possible re-deployment issues</li> <li>• Ensure any DCC employed escorts are compliant, including providing relevant training</li> <li>• Assist the Lead Review Officer in updating passenger information (including any changes to SEN) on TRAMS</li> <li>• Manage any eligibility issue that may arise during the review</li> <li>• Accompany the Lead Review Officer to school-based meetings about the review</li> <li>• Support the Lead Review Officer in managing any complaints – particularly where there are eligibility issues</li> </ul>
<p><b>The school</b> Support the review process in the interest of children’s needs and best value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all appropriate school staff are aware of the review</li> <li>• Nominate a liaison officer who has delegated responsibility to engage fully in the process</li> <li>• Engage with the Review Team about the special needs of pupils and highlight specific issues</li> <li>• Consider issues of site safety that may already exist or may arise as a result of the review and manage appropriately</li> <li>• Support the communication strategy by advising parents of the review where possible – for example through a school newsletter</li> <li>• Provide feedback to the Review Team on the proposed new transport network</li> <li>• Provide appropriate support to the Review Team during and after implementation</li> <li>• Direct any parental complaints to the lead review officer</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parents and carers</b> To contribute information regarding their child’s SEN that can be considered by the Review Team before new arrangements are proposed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide information in line with stated timescales</li> <li>• To prepare their child for the likelihood of changes to their transport arrangements</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parent Carer Voice</b> Be aware of the review and contribute information on behalf of parents and carers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on behalf of parents and carers who may need support during the review process</li> </ul>

Stakeholder and role	Responsibilities
<p><b>Social care staff</b> Contribute relevant information about individual pupils which can be considered by the Review Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appreciate the reasons why a review is being done</li> <li>• Support CYPS transport officers in managing the process</li> <li>• Be aware of the School Transport Policy, including parental responsibility to ensure attendance</li> <li>• Provide information in line with stated timescales</li> <li>• Prepare any pupil or family they are working with of the likelihood of changes to the transport arrangements</li> <li>• Direct any parental complaints, or make any complaints on behalf of families, to the Lead Review Officer</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transport contractors</b> Provide safe and reliable transport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing contractors must fully co-operate with TCS by supplying any relevant information for the routes being reviewed</li> <li>• Respond professionally to any queries or concerns raised by parents and carers and schools during the review process and direct any queries to TCS as appropriate</li> <li>• Tender for contracts in line with the specification submitted through the e-tendering system</li> <li>• Contractors must not make any revisions or amendments to contracted routes without first consulting TCS</li> <li>• DCC terms and conditions of contract must be complied with at all times</li> </ul>
<p><b>Escorts</b> Accompany pupils with special needs to and from school to ensure they're safe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct any queries and concerns about any proposed changes to the Lead Review Officer</li> <li>• Respond professionally to any queries or concerns raised by parents and carers and schools during the review process</li> <li>• Comply with the requirements of the DCC contract they are employed under</li> <li>• Escorts must not make any revisions or amendments to contracted routes without first consulting DCC</li> <li>• Undertake any necessary training to accompany passengers allocated to the new network</li> </ul>
<p><b>Elected Members</b> Commission the transport review process and the rationale behind it to advise parents and carers appropriately</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support where appropriate (through information provided by the Review Group) special school transport reviews taking place in their electoral division</li> </ul>

# 5. Communication strategy

## Who will we tell?

Effective communication will be essential to ensure the success of any special school transport review. The Lead Review Officer will make sure that all stakeholders are told when a review is to take place and receive updates as the review progresses.

Each stakeholder group will receive targeted communications during the course of the review.

## The school

- Initial letter advising that the review is to take place.
- Meeting between Lead Review Officer, representatives of the Review Team and governing body to discuss the review process.
- Letter to confirm agreements at meeting with governing body.
- Ongoing meetings with nominated school contact to review pupil information and consider proposed network arrangements.
- Copy of outcomes summary when review is completed.

## Parents and carers

- Initial letter advising of the review and enclosing TRAMS information for their child. Parents and carers will need to check the information and provide any additional information they consider important to their child's travel arrangements.
- Wherever possible, an opportunity for parents to meet with members of the review team to discuss the process and any concerns they may have.

- Allocation letter parents and carers to advise of their child's new transport arrangements four weeks before new arrangements start.

## Parent Carer Voice

- Email briefing to advise that the review is to take place.

## Social care staff

- Email briefing to advise that the review is to take place.
- Initial parent and carer letter advising of the review and requesting additional information for Children in Care that DCC has parental responsibility for.
- Allocation letter to advise of child's new transport arrangements where the child is in care to DCC.
- Contact made regarding any specific issues that arise – for example respite transport arrangements.

## Transport contractors

- Face to face meeting with existing major contractors.
- Initial letter to advise that the review is to take place.
- If their route is to be re-tendered a termination of contract letter will be sent at least one month before their last day of operation.
- Successful tenders will receive award letters.
- On-site briefing with drivers and escorts by Lead Review Officer.

## School escorts

- DCC employed escorts will be telephoned to advise that the review is commencing and a letter is on its way.
- DCC employed escorts will receive an initial letter to advise that the review is to take place – these letters will be sent at the same time as contractor letters.
- If their route is to be terminated and no reasonable alternative is available DCC escorts may receive notice of redundancy.
- If re-allocated, DCC escorts will receive a letter of confirmation of their new route and hours.
- Contractor escorts will be informed of the process and any associated changes to their employment by their employer.

## Elected Members

- Email briefing to advise that the review is to take place will be sent to CYPS Lead Members and Members whose constituents will be affected by the review.
- Possible contact about queries or complaints from individual families during the process.
- Copy of the Outcomes Summary to be provided.

## My Devon Customer Service Centre

- Email briefing to advise that the review is to take place.
- Any updates as the review progresses to make sure they are able to advise parents and carers appropriately.
- When the new arrangements start details of the nominated contacts on the ground and in TCS will be provided in case of contact from parents and carers and other stakeholders.



## 6. After implementation

Immediately before the start of the new transport arrangements resulting from the review, the Lead Review Officer will nominate two contacts to support the implementation process.

The first will be available at the school to monitor the new arrangements in operation and to deal with any issues that may arise. The second will be a nominated contact in the TCS office to handle any telephone calls that the new arrangements may generate from parents and carers and transport contractors.

The names of both contacts will be made known to school staff who have supported the review, contractors, school escorts and CYPS transport staff in advance of the new arrangements beginning, so everyone is clear who can be contacted during the initial stages.

Within a month of the new arrangements beginning the Lead Review Officer will re-convene the Review Team for a brief **Outcomes Learning Review Meeting**. This meeting will focus on how implementation went, issues that have arisen and how they are being managed, and feedback from stakeholders.

This will also be an opportunity to review feedback on the process itself to update this review guide and refine practice for further special school transport reviews. This meeting will be held at the school wherever possible.



Following this meeting the Lead Review Officer will produce an outcomes summary which will set out the positives and negatives that have arisen from the process. This will be circulated for information to:

- the Review Team
- Special Heads Association Devon (SHAD)
- Parent Carer Voice
- CYPS Lead Members.

## 7. Managing feedback

We know that any change to transport arrangements will be difficult for some pupils and their families to manage and deal with – particularly where those pupils have Special Educational Needs. It is likely that during the process complaints will be received by the Review Team.

Any complaint received about the transport review should be immediately referred to the Review Lead in TCS.

As a minimum all complaints will be acknowledged within three working days, with a full response made within ten working days. Given the critical nature of resolving issues before implementing new transport arrangements in most cases complaints will be responded to more quickly than the minimum requirement.

Where the Lead Review Officer is unable to resolve a complaint the complainant will be offered the opportunity to lodge a formal complaint using the DCC corporate complaints process, details are available at [www.devon.gov.uk/compliments\\_and\\_complaints](http://www.devon.gov.uk/compliments_and_complaints)

Any parent or carer who believes that there are exceptional circumstances which prevent their child moving to the new transport arrangements will have the opportunity to make their case to the Transport Officer Panel following the usual appeals process. The Lead Review Officer, in discussion with other colleagues and the school, will need to make a judgement about whether the new arrangements for that child should be delayed subject to the Officer Panel's consideration of the appeal case.



All complaints and appeals will be recorded by the Lead Review Officer and used as the basis of the Outcomes Learning Review Meeting and the subsequent Outcomes Summary.

## 8. Glossary

### CYPS

Children and Young People's Services – the directorate in Devon County Council which is responsible for children's education and social care.

### DCC

Devon County Council – the local authority for schools in Devon.

### TCS

Transport Co-ordination Service – the team which is responsible for managing school transport networks and making appropriate provision on behalf of CYPS.

[www.devon.gov.uk/school\\_care\\_transport](http://www.devon.gov.uk/school_care_transport)

### SHAD

Special Heads Association Devon  
[www.devon.gov.uk/j4s-headteachers](http://www.devon.gov.uk/j4s-headteachers)

### Cabinet

The Cabinet is the part of the Council responsible for most day-to-day decisions. It is made up of a Leader and no more than nine other Cabinet Members, all appointed by the County Council from amongst its membership. When major decisions are to be discussed or made, these are published in the Cabinet's Forward Plan wherever possible.

[www.devon.gov.uk/cabinet\\_committee](http://www.devon.gov.uk/cabinet_committee)

### TRAMS

Transport Management System – the database which holds all information about pupils who travel on school and college transport routes, information about contractors who provide transport on behalf of the county council and route schedules.

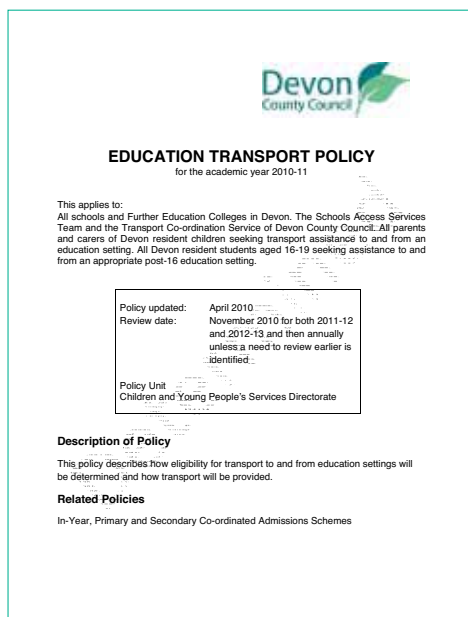
### My Devon Customer Service Centre

The County Council's customer service centre which is the first point of contact for members of the public.

### e-tendering

The electronic tendering process that is used by TCS to advertise and award contracts.

## 9. Home to school transport policy



The home to school transport policy can be found at [devon.gov.uk/admissions-determined2011-educationtransport.pdf](http://devon.gov.uk/admissions-determined2011-educationtransport.pdf)

## 10. Appendices

- Appendix A Special School Review project timeline
- Appendix B Contact details
- Appendix C Model initial letter to parents
- Appendix D TRAMS information to accompany initial letter to parents
- Appendix E Model letter to contractors and escorts advising of review
- Appendix F Model letter to school governing body advising of review and requesting meeting
- Appendix G Model email briefing to elected members, Parent Carer Voice, social care and My Devon advising of review
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- Appendix J Model letter to contractors advising of successful tender
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- Appendix L Model letter to DCC escorts advising of new contract conditions
- Appendix M Transport Review Flowchart





# Special School Review Project Timeline

## Appendix A

each block represents the quickest and longest timeline to complete the project

Action	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13	Week 14	Week 15	Week 16	Week 17	Week 18
Collate Tender returns and gain approval from Passenger Services Manager and Fleet Manger to award contracts											Within 2 days							
Further meeting of review group once tenders returned to review progress											Within 1 day							
Export from TRAMS the following for the existing network: 1. Passengers at an Establishment report 2. List of Routes 3. Route Schedule for each contract 4. Passenger List report for each contract.											Within 1 day							
Collate and e-mail or photocopy and distribute to review team																		
Input the new routes onto TRAMS and then reallocate passengers. Print an Unallocated Passengers report to ensure every passenger has been captured												Within 2 days						
Verbally Award Contracts. Input contracts into TRAMS and post letters and details to contractors												Within 2 days						
Send out new allocation letters to parents and carers to advise on new transport arrangements. Copy to designated contact at the school for information													Within 2 days					



## Appendix B Contact details

Name	Title	Role	Contact details
<b>Mike Tucker</b>	Lead Review Officer	Lead the transport review and act as first point of contact for all stakeholders. Design the new transport network and manage the re-tendering of transport contracts.	<b>01392 382124</b> <a href="mailto:mike.tucker@devon.gov.uk">mike.tucker@devon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Steve Roberts</b>	Access Manager	Manage the CYPS transport teams which deal with eligibility assessment for mainstream and special needs pupils.	<b>01392 383587</b> <a href="mailto:steve.roberts@devon.gov.uk">steve.roberts@devon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Lisa Boon</b>	Schools Access Services Manager	Lead and manage Schools Access Services, which includes CYPS transport function and education transport budgets.	<b>01392 383841</b> <a href="mailto:lisa.boon@devon.gov.uk">lisa.boon@devon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Damien Jones</b>	Passenger Services Manager	Responsible for all provision matters on behalf of CYPS. Lead and manage the TCS transport team.	<b>01392 383243</b> <a href="mailto:damien.jones@devon.gov.uk">damien.jones@devon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Paul Edmonds</b>	Manager – Safety, Fleet & Compliance	Responsible for the safety and compliance of all transport contracts including DCC vehicles and CRB checking.	<b>01392 382886</b> <a href="mailto:paul.edmonds@devon.gov.uk">paul.edmonds@devon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Jenny Bridewell</b>	Transport Manager (Special Assistance)	Manages the team which assesses transport eligibility for pupils with special needs. Manage DCC employed escorts and their deployment and responsible for all escort training - DCC employed and contractor escorts.	<b>01392 383579</b> <a href="mailto:jenny.bridewell@devon.gov.uk">jenny.bridewell@devon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Tony Mordaunt</b>	Transport Manager (Appeals and Policy)	Manage all complaints and appeals relating to education transport. Chair the Transport Officer Panel and manage all correspondence and administration. Advise CYPS Transport staff on complex eligibility issues.	<b>01392 383882</b> <a href="mailto:anthony.mordaunt@devon.gov.uk">anthony.mordaunt@devon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Andrew Brent</b>	Policy and Strategy Officer (Education)	Responsible for drafting the education transport policy for determination by Members, taking account of statutory requirements. Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and resulting issues. Advising Members, parents and CYPS and TCS transport teams on policy and legislative matters.	<b>01392 381214</b> <a href="mailto:andrew.brent@devon.gov.uk">andrew.brent@devon.gov.uk</a>

## Appendix C Model initial letter to parents

An example letter to parents and carers to advise them that a review is happening and to ask for specific information about their child.

**Environment, Economy and Culture Directorate  
Transport Co-ordination Service**

Matford Lane Offices  
County Hall, Exeter  
EX2 4QW

Tel **01392 38XXXX**

Email **mike.tucker@devon.gov.uk**

Fax **01392 38XXXX**

Your ref **XXXX**

Our ref **XXXX**

**<Date>**

Dear **<parent or carer's details>**

The Transport Co-ordination Service is shortly going to start a review of the school transport for **<name of school>**. As part of the review there are likely to be changes to your child's transport arrangements. This could include a change of escort, driver, pick up time, drop off time, vehicle or fellow passengers.

We spend approximately £21 million each year to meet our statutory responsibility to transport eligible children and young people from home to school. To achieve Best Value for council tax payers in Devon, we constantly review all transport networks and each passenger's transport service.

Personal Passenger Details for your child are enclosed and we would be grateful if you could carefully check the details are correct. This information is important to make sure that we provide safe and appropriate transport.

Please make any relevant changes to the form and add any specific transport needs you believe your child has, and then return the form in the pre-paid envelope by **<date>**. The Review Team will consider the information you have provided before any new transport arrangements are proposed. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to meet any additional requests and we may need to ask you for more information or evidence.

If we have not had a reply from you by **<date>** we will assume the information we hold for your child is complete and correct. We will then start re-designing the school transport routes.

Once we have finalised the route we will write to you to confirm your child's new travel arrangements. We are planning to start the new routes on **<date>** and will tell you about any changes four weeks in advance. Any changes made will be in line with our School Transport Policy which can be viewed at **www.devon.gov.uk/school\_transport** If you would prefer a paper copy of the policy call the My Devon Customer Service Team on **0845 155 1019**.

If you have any concerns please contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Mike Tucker**  
Lead Review Officer  
Transport Co-ordination Service

## Appendix D TRAMS information to accompany initial letter to parents

### Passenger personal details

Passenger			
<b>Ref</b>	99/999999		
<b>Status</b>	Live		
<b>Name</b>	J Smith (John)		
<b>Date of birth</b>	19/09/1999		
<b>Authority</b>	Devon		
Parent or guardian			
<b>Name</b>	Mrs H Smith		
<b>Address</b>	6 Acacia Road Exeterville EX99 9HL		
<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 123456		
<b>Work or mobile number</b>			
<b>Email</b>			
Establishment			
<b>Establishment</b>	7002 - Ellen Tinkham School		
<b>Transport from</b>	2010	Summer	1st Half
<b>Leave establishment</b>	2022	Summer	2nd Half
<b>Transport entitlement</b>	Over 3	Entitled	No social grounds
<b>Special needs</b>	Special seat required Escort on vehicle		
<b>Special needs description</b>	Severe learning difficulties Communication difficulties General delay		
<b>Manual handling</b>	Amber - Pupils who can walk and access the vehicle independently but need assistance.		
<b>Special needs notes</b>	Height 3ft Weight 21kg Will require a full child seat.		

## Appendix E Model letter to contractors and escorts advising of review

**Children and Young People's Services Directorate**

**Access Services Escort Team**

One Capital Court, Bittern Road

Sowton, Exeter EX2 7FW

Tel **01392 383576**

Email **nicola.tregale@devon.gov.uk**

Fax **01392 383614**

Your ref **XXXX**

Our ref **XXXX**

**<Date>**

Dear

### **School Escort duties and review of school transport at <school name>**

The Transport Co-ordination Service (TCS) is currently carrying out a review of the school transport network for <school name>. As part of the review there may be a change to current transport arrangements.

We have to maintain an efficient transport network to make sure that public money is used effectively. We spend approximately £21 million each year to meet our statutory responsibility to transport eligible children and young people from home to school. To achieve best value for Council Tax payers in Devon, TCS constantly reviews all transport networks and each passenger's transport provision.

TCS will be re-tendering batches of route contracts, so all existing and new contracts must be subjected to a best value review. The result of each contract review will produce three possible outcomes to escorts.

1. Change of contractor with no change to escort.
2. Amalgamation of routes, possibly resulting in redundancy for Devon County Council escorts, which is always a possibility as stated in your contract.
3. New routes being sourced, with either a contractor or Devon County Council escort being employed.

We cannot say which routes will be affected until we know which contractors have been appointed. We are also not able to say until then which escorts will be affected.

As soon as we know the outcome we will write to you again. TCS plan to start the review on <date> or shortly after.

If your route is to be terminated we will give you appropriate notice and hope that you would wish to stay on the relief register.

This exercise is not designed to replace Devon County Council escorts with contractor escorts. As with all route reviews, some escorts may be made redundant because of the reduction in routes. This is not a change in practice and is reflected in your current contract.

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Nicola Tregale**

Escort Co-ordinator, Access Services

## Appendix F Model letter to school governing body advising of review and requesting meeting

**Transport Co-ordination Service**  
Matford Offices, Topsham Road Exeter EX2 4QW

Tel **01392 382124**  
Email **mike.tucker@devon.gov.uk**  
Fax **01392 382904**  
<Date>

Dear Chair of Governors

Review of school transport at <school name>

The Transport Co-ordination Service (TCS) will soon be carrying out a review of the school transport network for your school. As part of the review there will be a change to current transport arrangements.

Over time the needs of pupils who require transport to a school can change significantly so it is important to regularly review transport arrangements for children and young people to make sure they are appropriate.

You will appreciate that Devon County Council is also obliged to maintain an efficient transport network to ensure best value for public money. We spend approximately £21 million each year to meet our statutory responsibility to transport eligible children and young people from home to school and college. To achieve Best Value, TCS is constantly reviewing all transport networks to make sure they are as effective as possible.

At this early stage it is difficult to state how the school transport contracts will be affected however there are several possible outcomes. The review objectives at this stage will be to improve vehicles use and to reduce route mileage wherever possible, while responding to each child's transport requirements and any changes that may have taken place.

We will also be writing to parents, our contractors and escorts about this review. In the letter to parents we will include all the transport-related information we hold for their child. We will ask them to review this information to make sure that it is up to date, and to provide us with any other information about their child's transport needs that they feel it is important for us to be aware of.

Before we begin the review we would like the opportunity to meet with the governing body or a representative group so we can explain the review process in detail and work closely with you to make sure parents are supported through the process. This would also be a good time to discuss any other transport-related issues you may have so that potential solutions can be built into the new transport arrangements, which will be introduced as a result of the review.

Some parents may come to you directly for more information about the review, so it is important that you understand the process and we work together to deliver the objectives. As the Lead Officer for the review, I am happy to deal with parent queries as they arise, so feel free to put parents in touch with me.

we anticipate that the provisional start date for the new transport arrangements will be <insert date> or shortly after.

I look forward to meeting you in person to discuss the process in more detail and to answer any questions you may have. If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me on the telephone number above.

Yours sincerely

Mike Tucker  
Lead Network Review Officer

## Appendix G Model email briefing to elected members, Parent Carer Voice, social care and My Devon advising of review

To:  
From:  
Subject: <insert name> Special School

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I am writing to advise you that the Transport Co-ordination Service (TCS) will be carrying out a review of the school transport network for the above school. As part of the review there will be a change to current transport arrangements.

You will appreciate that Devon County council has an obligation to maintain an efficient transport network to make sure that public monies are used effectively. We spend approximately £21 million each year to meet our statutory responsibility to transport eligible children and young people from home to school. To achieve best value for tax payers, TCS is constantly reviewing all transport networks and each passenger's transport provision.

At this stage it is difficult to state how the school transport contracts will be affected, however there are several possible outcomes. The review objectives at this stage will be to improve vehicle use and reduce route mileage, while responding to each child's transport requirements.

We are also writing to parents, our contractors and escorts about the review. In the letter to parents we have included all the transport related information we hold for their child. We will ask them to review this information to make sure that it is up to date.

It is inevitable that a few parents in your area may wish to come to you direct for more information about the review. If you are asked any questions about the review please refer them back to me as the Lead Review Officer.

TCS and CYPS will be carrying out a lot of the work on the review project to achieve a smooth transition. It is anticipated that the provisional start date for the new transport arrangements will be <insert date> or shortly after.

I hope this email explains the reasoning behind this review but if you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Attached is a link to the Special School Review Guide which will give you more information about the process of reviewing school transport <insert link>

Damien Jones  
Passenger Services Manager  
Transport Co-ordination Service  
Tel: 01392 383243  
Mob: 07980918248  
damien.jones@devon.gov.uk

## Appendix H Model letter to parents advising of new arrangements

**Environment, Economy and Culture**  
Transport Co-ordination Service  
Matford Lane Offices  
County Hall  
Topsham Road  
Exeter  
EX2 4QW  
  
Tel **01392 382124**  
<Date>

Dear parent or carer,

Transport to <insert name> School

I wrote to you on <insert date> to tell you that we would be reviewing all school transport to your child's school. My thanks if you contributed information about your child's transport needs as part of the review process. We have tried to take account of individual circumstances wherever possible, but you will understand that we are not able to do this in all cases.

It has been necessary to make some changes to your child's transport arrangements as a result of the review. The details of the new arrangements are on the back of this letter, including the relevant pick up and drop off points.

Please continue to make sure that <insert name> is ready at least five minutes before the pick up time in the morning. You are responsible for your child's safety when travelling to and from pick up and drop off points.

If you have any queries about these new arrangements, or want to discuss any particular concerns, please contact me using the details above.

Like anything new, the transport arrangements may take a few days to settle down so please bear with us. However, if your child's transport is more than fifteen minutes late please contact the My Devon Customer Service Centre on 0845 155 1019 to let us know.

Please also contact me if there are any changes in your circumstances which may affect these transport arrangements, or if you choose not to use this transport for your child.

Yours sincerely

**Mike Tucker**  
Lead Review Officer, TCS

## Appendix I Model letter to contractors regarding termination of contract

**Environment, Economy and Culture**  
Transport Co-ordination Services  
Matford Offices  
County Hall  
Topsham Road  
Exeter  
EX2 4QW

Tel **01392 38xxxx**  
Email **xxxxxxxxxxx@devon.gov.uk**  
Fax **01392 38xxxx**  
<Date>

Dear sir or madam,

Termination of transport contract for route <insert route reference>

I write to confirm that the contract for this route will be terminated. The last day of operation will be <insert date> and the last payment date will be <insert date> inclusive.

This contract is being terminated due to a review of the routes in the area.

If you have any queries about this please contact this office quoting reference <insert reference number>.

Yours faithfully

**Mike Tucker**  
Transport Co-ordination Service

## Appendix J Model letter to contractors advising of successful tender

**Environment, Economy and Culture  
Transport Co-ordination Services**

Matford Offices  
County Hall  
Topsham Road  
Exeter  
EX2 4QW

Tel **01392 38xxxx**  
Email **xxxxxx@devon.gov.uk**  
Fax **01392 38xxxx**

<Date>

Dear sir or madam,

New transport contract for route <insert route reference>

I write to confirm that you are contracted to provide a driver for the route above subject to a satisfactory inspection of the vehicle(s) and documentation. Terms and conditions of the contract must be applied at all times with the signed confirmation receipt having been returned to this office.

Start date <insert date>

A vehicle with <insert number> of seats is required.

Automatic payments will be made based on:

	Daily	Monthly	Yearly
190 days	£<amount>	£<amount>	£<amount>

The following are attached:

- a copy of the route schedule
- further details of the contract
- a sample invoice - please ensure all submitted invoices follow this format.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact this office quoting reference <insert reference number>.

Yours faithfully

**Mike Tucker**  
Transport Co-ordination Service

## Appendix K Model letter to DCC escorts advising of redundancy

**Children and Young People's Services Directorate**  
**Access Services Escort Team**  
One Capital Court, Bittern Road  
Sowton, Exeter EX2 7FW

Tel **01392 383576**  
Email **nicola.tregale@devon.gov.uk**  
Fax **01392 383614**

Your ref **XXXX**  
Our ref **XXXX**

<Date>

Dear

I am writing to confirm that your post of school escort will cease on the grounds of redundancy. The reason for this is that <details>

We will make every effort to re-deploy you, but we will have to serve notice if we are not able to find you suitable alternative employment.

You are entitled to <amount> weeks notice, so will continue to be paid until <date>. Once your run finishes you must make yourself available until your last day of service.

I would be grateful if you could complete the enclosed form to allow me to get an estimate of your redundancy payment, and your pension if you are a member of local Government Pension Scheme.

Please be aware that once you receive a redundancy payment you may not be re-deployed in certain types of public employment for a period of four weeks from your last day of service, or your redundancy payment will be negated. Therefore please complete the enclosed RPA form.

Please return both forms to me in the pre-paid envelope.

If we are able to offer you a suitable alternative run which is within 20% of your current hours, there will no longer be an entitlement to a redundancy payment and your notice will be withdrawn.

On accepting redeployment which has more than a 20% variation in hours you are given a one month trial period. If, during this trial, you decide that it is not suitable alternative employment you must contact the office as soon as possible. If your notice period has expired your last day of service will be at the end of the one month trial period.

Please note that if you accept a redeployment which is more than a 20% variation in hours you will not be reissued with notice for a reduction in hours.

I have arranged for the Devon County Council Vacancies Bulletin to be sent to you each week so that you can consider other posts. You will also be contacted by the Central Placement Unit (CPU) as part of the redeployment process. You will be automatically considered for any permanent escort vacancies that arise.

If we are not able to redeploy you we will give you priority for any relief work that arises in your area.

Please contact me if you want to discuss any of these issues. I will be in touch shortly.

Yours sincerely

**Nicola Tregale**  
Escort Co-ordinator, Access Services

## Appendix L Model letter to DCC escorts advising of new contract

**Children and Young People's Services Directorate**

**Access Services Escort Team**

One Capital Court  
Bittern Road  
Sowton  
Exeter  
EX2 7FW

Tel **01392 383576**  
Email **nicola.tregale@devon.gov.uk**  
Fax **01392 383614**

Your ref **XXXX**  
Our ref **XXXX**

**<Date>**

Dear

### **School Escort duties**

The Transport Co-ordination Service (TCS) has been reviewing the current transport arrangements at **<school name>**.

I am writing to confirm the changes to your school run which will take effect from the **<date>**. You will now be undertaking route **<route number>** to **<school name>**.

I would like to re-iterate the importance of seeking advice from the parent or carer, or the head teacher at the school to establish whether the child needs specific help or attention.

The children's details are attached, including manual handling plans and any Emergency Medication Protocols you may need. It would be beneficial to contact parents before the start date.

If you need a yellow folder contact me and I will send one out to you.

Please carefully destroy, preferably by shredding, any information you have on children you will no longer be escorting after **<date>**. This is confidential information.

Any incidents must be reported to the office and followed up with the appropriate paperwork.

Once you have established your hours please complete the enclosed weekly programme and return it to me as soon as possible to avoid any under or over payments being made to you.

All other terms and conditions as a school escort will remain the same.

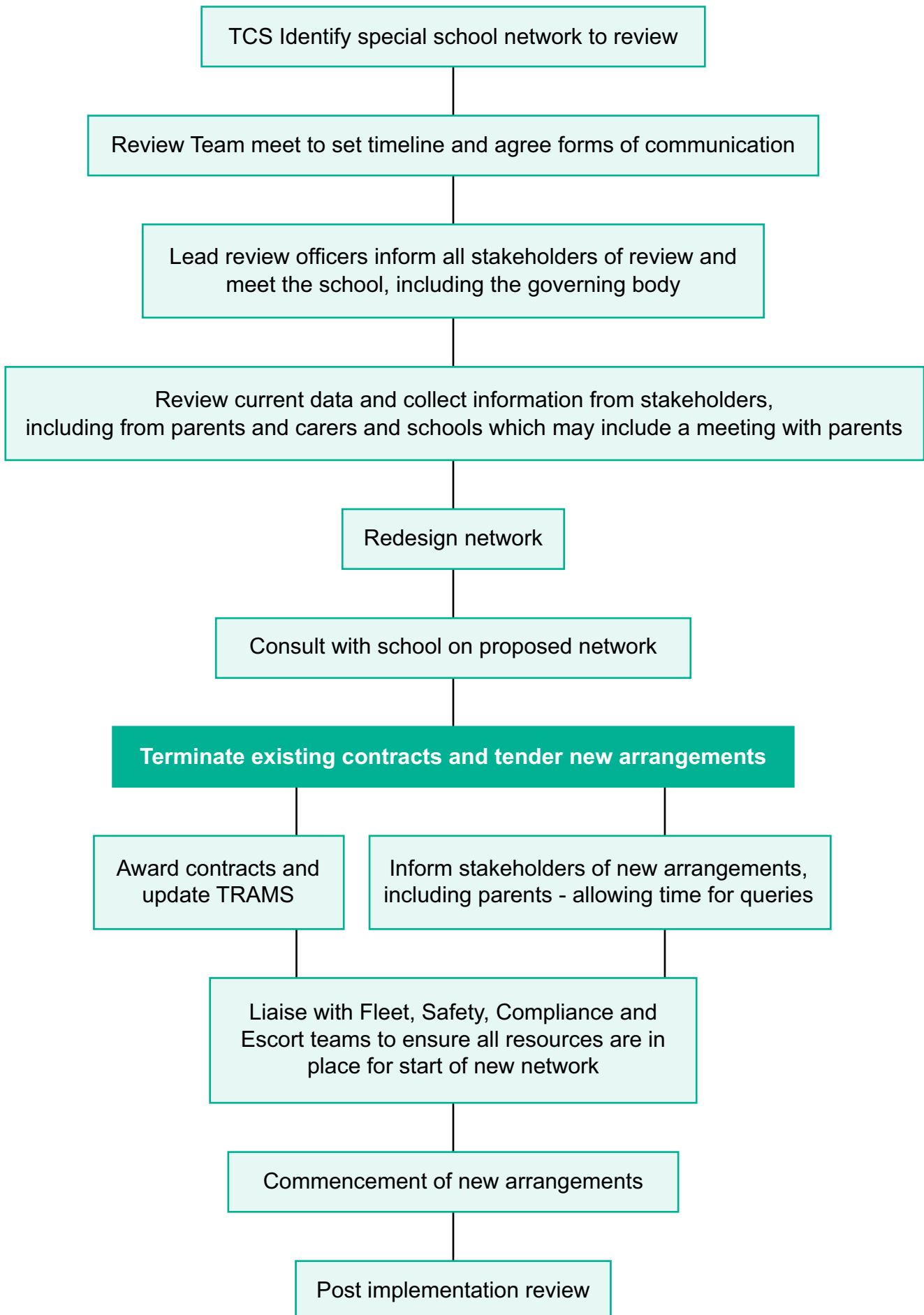
If you have any queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Nicky Tregale**

Escort Co-ordinator, Access services

## Appendix M Special School Transport Review flowchart



**For further information or help  
understanding this document contact:**

Devon Parent Partnership

Tel **01392 383080**

parentpartnershipservice-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

**www.parentpartnershipdevon.org.uk**

Visit **www.devon.gov.uk/school\_transport** for the full Special Schools  
Transport Review Guide

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**If you would like this in an alternative format such as large  
print, Braille or tape, or in a different language, please  
contact the council's Information Centre on:  
01392 380101 or email: info@devon.gov.uk**