

Primary school transport

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Introduction

You can request a place at any school for your child, but your child may not necessarily be entitled to free school transport. It is very important that you check whether your child will be entitled. If they are not, you will need to think carefully about how your child is going to get to the school you prefer for the whole time they will be there.

Your child will be entitled to free school transport to the nearest school to your home address, or the school designated to serve your home address, as long as it is more than two miles away from your home by the shortest walking route. You can find out which school serves your home address at [School designated areas](#).

Where children live within walking distance of the school (2 miles) and it is considered that the walking route to school is unsafe then transport will be provided.

School transport is only provided at the normal times at the beginning and end of the day. If your child begins primary school on a part-time basis then they may be entitled to free transport for the journey to school.

The below document was designed for printing purposes only, and with that in mind will not be fully accessible to someone using assistive technology such as a screen reader.

The information contained in this guide is also summarised in the [Transport for primary school pupils leaflet](#).

Whose responsibility is it to get a child to school? -

It is your responsibility to get your child to school for the whole time the child is there. You are encouraged to consider the practicalities of sending your child to a school which is not in walking distance, unless it is the designated or nearest school. It is unwise to rely on lifts from friends, concessionary places on buses or public transport routes which could change.

Will my child get free school transport? -

You can express a preference for a place at any school, but choosing the school you would like for your child may mean that they will not be entitled to free school transport. It is important to check whether your child will be entitled to transport and, if not, to consider how your child is going to get to the school you prefer for the whole time they will be there.

How do I check if my child is eligible to apply for free school transport? -

If you apply for a place at the school designated to serve your home address and you live more than two miles away by the shortest walking route, your child will be entitled to free transport. You can check which is the designated school to serve your home address by calling [0345 155 1019](tel:03451551019) or via the [website](#).

Your child will also be entitled to free transport to the school **nearest** to your home, provided it is still over two miles from your home by the shortest walking route. This is usually the designated school, but not always. Transport is provided only at normal school times at the beginning and end of the day. Transport is **not** provided for nursery schools, taster or induction days.

How are distances measured? -

Walking distances are measured using the shortest available walking route. This may include roads, recognised footpaths and bridleways. The measurement is made between the nearest entrance to your house (for example a front gate) and the nearest entrance to the school grounds. Private driveways to homes and within schools are not included in the measurement. Distances are measured using an electronic geographic information system (GIS).

What if my child lives at two addresses? -

We provide transport assistance from one permanent home address. If your child lives at two addresses, you must nominate one address as permanent for transport even if both addresses are eligible for transport assistance. You must let us know if your child's permanent address changes and you may be asked to provide evidence of this if it affects entitlement to transport assistance.

Code of conduct -

We want all passengers to enjoy a safe and pleasant journey and more detailed information about the code of conduct can be found in the following pages. All parents must tick the box on the online application form in order to agree that their child/children will behave appropriately on school transport and abide by the [code of conduct](#).

If you have any questions please call [0345 155 1019](tel:0345 155 1019) or visit the [school transport](#) homepage.

Applications -

If you have read the introduction along with the other sections above and you would like to apply for free school transport for your child, [complete the primary school transport application form](#).

A transport application form must be completed for each child who requires transport.

Moving house -

If you have changed address please [complete a new online application form](#) or email schooltransportservicequeries-mailbox@devon.gov.uk so that we can assess your free school transport entitlement to ensure your child's entitlement is valid. We would expect your child to move to the nearest or designated school for your new address.

You must allow at least two week's notice for transport to be changed.

Transport to faith schools -

Transport will not be provided on faith grounds unless the school is the nearest to your home address and you live more than two miles from the school.

Appeals -

Please see our [guide to school transport appeals and complaints](#) for comprehensive guidance on the appeal process.

Route safety -

Walking to school

If you live under the statutory walking distance but feel the route to school is too dangerous to walk please call 0345 155 1019 and ask to speak to the transport officer for your child's school. The route may already have been checked and deemed to be "unavailable" and there may be transport in place. If not, the transport officer will send you a form to outline your concerns and a route walk will be organised at the same time as your child would walk to school. You will be contacted with the results of the route walk. However, it is important to understand that in a rural county such as Devon there are many lanes where there are no pavements or street lights, but this does not necessarily mean the road is unsafe to walk. These factors will be taken into consideration as will the width of the road, the volume of traffic, the number of accidents recorded and poor visibility.

It is a parent's responsibility to accompany their child to and from school and therefore the assessment will be made as if the child is accompanied on the journey. This responsibility also applies if your child has to walk in the dark.

Please note that the following are not taken into account during a route safety walk:

- the parent's individual circumstances, for instance personal availability to walk with the child or that it may be necessary to walk with younger children or pram
- parental finances
- local weather conditions
- unusual events – such as, road closures, construction work, flooding
- lack of street lighting – the majority of roads in Devon do not have streetlights and lighting is not an issue all year round
- lack of pavements – the lack of a paved footpath is not necessarily a reason to assess a route as unsuitable
- the presence of uncut hedges
- difficult terrain and arduousness of the route
- practicality or the time taken to walk the route

On the vehicle

We want everyone to stay safe and travel in comfort. Our [code of conduct](#) outlines the standard of behaviour that is expected as well as what to do in bad weather and if the transport provision is late.

If you become aware that there is bad behaviour or bullying on your child's vehicle please report the matter to the Transport team by ringing 0345 155 1019. They will ask the contractor and school to investigate. The contractor will speak to the driver and the school should interview the pupils involved and also any witnesses. They will then report back to the Transport team who will take the appropriate action. This can be a warning letter home to parents, a one or two week ban, or with serious or repeated incidents an indefinite ban can be imposed. If a child is banned from school transport it is the parent's responsibility to make arrangements to get him/her to school.