

School Transport FAQs

Find out answers to the most frequently asked questions we get asked about school transport...

Can I get free school transport for my child?

Free transport to the nearest appropriate school will be provided for children aged between 5 and 16 years old where they live:

- over two miles away from a primary school, or
- over three miles away from a secondary school

Free transport will also be provided for 5 to 16 year olds where:

- the route to school has been inspected and is considered to be hazardous
- a child has a Statement of Special Education Need which names a school
- transport is needed on medical grounds, but no suitable public transport is available
- a child lives 2.5 miles away and parents receive Income Support or Working Tax Credit

If you meet the above criteria and think you will qualify for free transport, you will need to apply online:

<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/School-Transport-Application.aspx>

Once you have applied, we will need to assess your application in accordance with the eligibility criteria. If your child is eligible for free school transport, the necessary travel arrangements will then be made.

You can check the eligibility criteria online:

<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Lifelong-Learning/Schools/School-Transport/Transport-Eligibility-Criteria-.pdf>

How do I apply for school transport?

If you wish to apply for school transport for a child who will be starting primary school (reception), or high school (year 7) in September 2018, you should apply as early as possible. This can be done by completing an online school transport application form on the Flintshire website:

<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/School-Transport-Application.aspx>

Applications for pupils in years 1-6 and 8-11 can be made at any time, but note the information below if you are simply looking to renew your child's transport.

When can I apply for transport for my child?

Most applications for transport are submitted by parents/carers in time for the start of the school year in September, once a school place has been confirmed for their child.

To be sure you have transport arrangements in place for September please submit your application between the dates below:

- Online application forms will be available on **1 February 2019**
Receipt of your application will be acknowledged within 10 working days
- Forms need to be completed and returned by no later than **31st May 2019**

There may be times when you need to apply for transport outside of these dates, perhaps during the school year your child's needs have changed, you have moved house or your financial situation has changed. You can submit an application at any time. Just remember that to guarantee transport for the start of the year in September you will need to apply between the dates above.

What if I'm late getting my application in?

It's best to get your application as early as possible. Applications received before the closing date above will be considered first.

If your application is received after the closing date we cannot guarantee that it will be considered in time to have arrangements in place for the start of the school year in September and you may need to wait as long as October half term.

Late applications will be considered in order of priority, for example where there are medical grounds or a special educational need they will be considered first.

How do I renew transport for my child?

If your child is eligible for assisted transport, received a travel pass in the previous school year and will continue to be eligible when moving up to the next school year, their details will automatically be renewed and you will not need to re-apply for their transport.

If there have been any changes to the School Transport Policy that affect the continuation of your child's entitlement to travel assistance, you will be notified in writing at the earliest opportunity.

It is important that you inform us of any change in circumstances (such as a change of school or address as this may affect your child's entitlement.

My child is going to a Welsh language school, can they get free transport?

Free transport to the nearest appropriate Welsh language school will be provided for children aged between 5 and 16 years old where they live:

- over two miles away from a primary school, or
- over three miles away from a secondary school

Free transport will also be provided for 5 to 16 year olds going to a Welsh language school where:

- the route to school has been inspected and is considered to be hazardous
- a child has a Statement of Special Education Need which names a school
- transport is needed on medical grounds but no suitable public transport is available
- they live 2.5 miles away and parents receive Income Support or Working Tax Credit

My child is going to a faith school, can they get free transport?

Free transport to the nearest appropriate voluntary aided school will be provided for children aged between 5 and 16 years old where the admission to the school is on denominational grounds, subject to the distance criteria listed below:

- over two miles away from a primary faith school, or
- over three miles away from a secondary faith school

Suitable evidence of adherence to the faith of the school such as a baptismal certificate or a letter from a priest may be requested.

Free transport will also be provided for 5 to 16 year olds where:

- the route to school has been inspected and is considered to be hazardous
- a child has a Statement of Special Education Need which names a school
- transport is needed on medical grounds but no suitable public transport is available
- a child lives 2.5 miles away and parents receive Income Support, Universal Credit or Working Tax Credit

In addition to the conditions above, children attending a faith school will also need to comply with the Council's '[oversubscription criteria](#)' where proof of faith may be required.

[Click here](#) to find out more about the '[oversubscription criteria](#)'.

Does my child qualify for parents' income-assessed transport?

Generally your child will be entitled to free school transport if they're of secondary school age (11-16, school year 7 to 11) and you are either:

- Entitled to free school meals or
- Receiving the maximum level of working tax credit and can provide a copy of the latest tax credit award notice (form TC602), or a recent letter from the Benefits Agency, confirming receipt of maximum working tax credit

I am over 16 and go to school/college, can I get free transport?

Students who are aged over 16 and attending school or college are eligible for free transport to specified sites only where:

- they live over three miles away from the nearest specified school/college offering the courses they wish to study
- it is their first course of full time study after leaving school
- the course being studied is at least one level higher than was studied in school, for example GCSE retakes would not normally qualify
- the course is being offered at one of the following specified locations:
 - a Flintshire secondary school offering post-16 courses
 - Chester Catholic High School

- Prestatyn High School
 - Rhyl 6
 - St Brigid's School, Denbigh
 - Ysgol Glan Clwyd, St Asaph
- (For the locations listed above please **apply to Flintshire County Council**)*

- Coleg Cambria – Connah's Quay
 - Coleg Cambria – Northop
 - Coleg Cambria – Wrexham
 - Coleg Cambria – Llysfasi (for land based courses only)
- (For the locations above please **apply direct to Coleg Cambria - click here**)*

If an application is made for transport to one of the specified **schools** listed above, which is not the nearest to the students home, the Council will compare the courses at both locations. The application will only be approved where it is judged that there is a considerable difference in the course on offer.

I am over 19, can I get free transport to college?

Free transport is provided to eligible students who have reached 16 years of age and have not yet reached the age of 19 on 1st September of the academic year.

Free transport will be maintained for students for the length of their initial course even if they reach their 19th birthday before the end of that course.

My child goes to school in Flintshire but we don't live in Flintshire, where do I apply?

You will need to apply to the Council where you **live**, for example:

- if your child is going to school in Flintshire and you **live** in Denbighshire, you must apply to Denbighshire County Council

We live in Flintshire but my child goes to school in another County, where do I apply?

You will need to apply to the Council where you **live**, for example:

- if you **live** in Flintshire but your child goes to school in Denbighshire, you must apply to Flintshire County Council.

When will I find out if my child's application has been successful?

Applications received by the deadline of 31 May 2019 will be considered between 1 and 30 June 2019 and we will tell you if your application has been successful, or not, on 19 July 2019.

What if my application is unsuccessful?

If your application is unsuccessful, it may be possible for you to apply for a Concessionary Spare Seat.

There are times, on some routes, when the number of eligible children is less than the number of seats provided on the bus. Where this happens children who don't meet the conditions for free school

transport may be offered the opportunity to buy one of these empty seats. [Click here](#) to find out more about concessionary spare seats.

When will I find out the details of the transport arrangements?

On or around 19 July 2019 you will receive an email giving you the details of the transport arrangements for your child.

What type of transport will be provided?

We will write to you in advance, advising you of the arrangements we have put in place. Your child may be allocated a taxi, minibus, coach or public bus service bus, depending on various factors such as available capacity on existing services.

Am I able to choose the transport operator?

Transport can only be provided by operators on the Council's approved Framework list. Each transport contract is awarded following a competitive tendering exercise.

When will I receive my school bus pass?

If you applied for your child's school transport before 6th July 2018, a travel pass for September 2018 will have been sent to your home address before the end of July 2018. If you haven't received the bus pass before this time and you had applied by the deadline, please contact the Integrated Transport Unit by emailing school.transport@flintshire.gov.uk

If your application was made after the start of term or part way through the academic year and your child is eligible, we will aim to issue a pass within 14 days.

Please note that applications made during peak times may be delayed and parents/carers are ultimately responsible for making any interim travel arrangements.

When you receive the travel pass, please ensure that you keep it in a safe place. If you pay towards the cost of your child's transport, passes will not be dispatched until the payment due has been received.

What do I do if the details are wrong on the bus pass?

Please contact the Integrated Transport Unit by emailing school.transport@flintshire.gov.uk, and we will endeavour to arrange a replacement without delay.

Do pupils need to carry their pass every day?

It is important that all pupils carry their pass and be ready to show it to the driver each time the vehicle is boarded. Passes should be kept safe and in good condition. To ensure that only those pupils who are eligible to travel do so, bus operators are instructed to enforce a 'no pass, no travel' policy.

Lost/damaged passes should be replaced immediately. There is currently no charge for a replacement bus pass if the pass has been issued by the Council.

When and for what journeys can the travel pass be used?

Unless otherwise stated, passes are valid for a return journey to/from school/college, Monday to Friday only. The misuse and/or fraudulent use of a travel pass is treated seriously and can result in transport being withdrawn. Any of the following may lead to confiscation:

- Use by anyone other than the named pass holder
- Attempted use for unauthorised journeys
- Using a damaged or defaced travel pass
- Using a pass that has expired and is no longer valid

What happens if the travel pass is lost or damaged?

Lost or damaged travel passes must be replaced as soon as possible. There is currently no charge for a replacement bus pass if the pass has been issued by the Council.

Pupils travelling on commercial bus services will be expected to pay the appropriate fare until a replacement pass is received and no refunds will be paid for any expenses incurred.

Can my child travel without a bus pass?

No. All secondary pupils who are eligible for free school transport are provided with bus passes, which must be used to access school transport at all times.

How can I find out information about school bus times and pick up points?

Details of all school bus routes, transport providers, pick-up points and timings are available on the Council's website: <http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Streetscene/School-Bus-Timetables.aspx>

What happens if we change our address or move to a different school?

A change of address or school must be reported so that we can reassess your details and update our records. Please contact us by emailing school.transport@flintshire.gov.uk

You will be required to provide proof of address if you have moved address e.g. Copy of Council Tax bill or utility bill.

What if I need to cancel my child's transport?

If your child is unable to attend school or transport is no longer required you will need to contact the Integrated Transport Unit as soon as possible by email: school.transport@flintshire.gov.uk

Can my child eat and drink on school transport?

No. Eating and drinking is not permitted on vehicles. If your child has a medical condition which means they must eat regularly you must notify the Integrated Transport Unit of this in advance of the journey.

Can my child take equipment on the school transport?

Additional equipment and bags will only be permitted if:

- There is enough room on the vehicle
- They can be stored safely and securely
- It does not incur any additional cost
- It does not inconvenience other passengers

Other options should be considered, for example is the equipment available at school?

What if my child needs to take medication to school?

Medication should be stored in a sealed container and placed inside your child's school bag.

Whose responsibility is it to get my child to school?

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that their children get to and from school at the appropriate time each day. Travel arrangements are an important consideration when parent/carers are making preferences. You should think about how practical it is to choose a school which is not within walking distance, unless it is designated as your nearest appropriate school. It is your responsibility as a parent/carer, to ensure that school travel arrangements are in place.

How does parental preference of a school affect entitlement to free home to school transport?

If you choose to place your child in a school other than the nearest suitable school then you are totally liable to organise, and pay for the cost of transport to the chosen school.

Who can I contact if there are problems or I have a complaint?

We are committed to providing a high standard of service, however, there may be times when your child is experiencing problems with the bus or taxi service on which they travel.

In the event of a problem arising or if you have any concerns, you can report them to us by emailing: school.transport@flintshire.gov.uk.

We will then investigate the problem and take the appropriate course of action.

What standards are expected of home to school transport contractors and drivers?

Only companies who have qualified on our framework of approved suppliers are allowed to bid for home to school transport contracts. To qualify they must be able to show that they meet standards regarding health and safety, financial security, vehicle safety, insurance and driver regulations.

A driver's guide is also issued regarding standards of driver behaviour and customer awareness.

If the transport is late or does not arrive, what should I do?

Though we make every effort to minimise it, you may occasionally experience unexpected delays or problems. Please wait for 15 minutes after the scheduled pick up time. If the transport has still not arrived, please contact the Integrated Transport Unit on telephone number 01352 701234.

Please also call the Integrated Transport Unit if there is persistent lateness of transport by emailing school.transport@flintshire.gov.uk.

Lost property - what if my child leaves something behind on school transport?

You can either contact the transport company directly or you can contact Integrated Transport Unit and we will give you the name and telephone number of the vehicle operator so that you can contact them directly and make arrangements to collect the property.

Who should I contact if I have any concerns regarding my child's transport?

Please contact the Integrated Transport Unit if you are worried or concerned about any aspect of your child's journey, including the behaviour of the other passengers or the safety or reliability of the vehicle. The sooner we are made aware of a problem, the quicker we can act to rectify it.

What happens in the event of a road closure?

We generally receive advance warning of scheduled road closures. Where school transport is affected, we may need to organise alternative pick-up/drop-off points with the operator. We would then arrange for parents/carers to be notified of the temporary travel arrangements.

In the event of an emergency, roads may be closed without notice possibly causing delays to school transport, where possible we will publish emergency closures on the Flintshire website.

Please contact the Integrated Transport Unit if you are concerned at any time about the late arrival of your child/children.

What about adverse weather conditions?

Please listen to your local radio station to see if your child's school is closed. Details are also usually available on the schools web site. If you are still unsure if the service is running, please contact the Integrated Transport Unit.

In bad weather, it may be necessary for the transport operator to cancel the morning school journey at short notice if they do not believe that they can reach the school safely. Further information about school transport during bad weather can be found [here](#)

[<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Lifelong-Learning/Schools/School-Transport/School-Transport---Bad-Weather.pdf>]

Updates regarding delays and cancellations for contracted home to school transport services will be reported on the Flintshire website or you can contact the Integrated Transport Unit.

If you have a query regarding public transport routes, please contact the operator.

If my child is being bullied on transport, what should I do?

Schools have responsibility for the behaviour of their children on the way to and from school, including while travelling on home to school transport. Please report the incident(s) to the school in the first instance and then contact Integrated Transport Unit.

Can friends or parents travel on school transport?

No. Only eligible pupils are permitted to travel on the school transport vehicle

All seats have been allocated to eligible pupils. If additional children travel then this may lead to the vehicle becoming overcrowded.

Parents are not allowed to travel on school transport unless there were special circumstances and prior agreement has been given by the Integrated Transport Unit.

Are changes ever made to school transport?

To ensure transport routes remain efficient and cost effective, it is necessary to carry out periodic reviews. As a result, changes may occasionally be made to your child's transport, but we will always try to give you advance notice.

How do I apply for a concessionary spare seat?

The Council provides transport for pupils who are entitled to free travel between home and school under the current policy. To do this, coaches, minibuses and taxis are procured especially for school transport and the transport network is designed to run in the most cost-effective way to serve pupils entitled to free transport. Any spare seats on the transport can be sold to pupils who are not entitled to free travel. These places are called Concessionary Spare Seats.

A concessionary seat will be charged at £100 per term, per pupil, payable in advance (charge correct as of 2018/19 school year).

What other conditions do I need to know?

Parents, students and children need to be aware of the Welsh Government Travel Code of Behaviour which sets the standards to be followed by everyone to make sure that journeys to and from school are safe and protects the wellbeing of all passengers. To see the full guidance [click here](#).

Useful documents/other page links in the right menus of the web page:

[School Admissions](#)
[Schools List 2018/2019](#)
[School Holidays & Training Dates 2018/2019](#)
[Learner Travel Measure 2008](#)
[Young Person's Travel Discount Card](#)
[Road Safety](#)
[Public Transport](#)

