

Special education needs and disability (SEND) Transport Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is it now safe to use home to school/college transport?

Government guidance states that social distancing is not required on dedicated home-school/college transport. Additional precautions have been put in place to minimise the risk of children/young people travelling together including increased cleaning routines, availability of sanitiser, driver and PA encouraged to wear masks, and vehicle ventilation.

2. Will transport use the same “bubbles” as in schools/colleges.

In most cases, no. Additional precautions have been put in place to minimise the risk of children/young people travelling together including increased cleaning routines, availability of sanitiser, driver and PA to wear masks, and vehicle ventilation.

Children/young people attending special schools are in much smaller classes and travel with very few children/young people compared to those attending mainstream schools. The number of children/young people they mix with is low and the risk of infection minimal.

3. How many passengers will be allowed in the back of a taxi? Will minibuses be using all seats?

Government guidance is clear that social distancing is not required on dedicated home-school/college transport. Taxis and minibuses will be filled as normal.

Will drivers be asked to follow advice to keep windows open for ventilation during journeys?

Yes. This advice has been made clear to all operators

4. My child/young person is worried about being close to others, particularly if they are not wearing a mask.

We understand that children/young people and parents will be anxious about sharing vehicles. However, government guidance is clear that social distancing is not required on dedicated home-school/college transport. Additional precautions have been put in place to minimise risk to children/young people travelling together including increased cleaning routines, availability of sanitiser, driver and PA encouraged to wear masks, and vehicle ventilation.

Children/young person's attending special schools are in much smaller classes and travel with very few children compared to those attending mainstream schools. The number of children they meet is low and the risk of infection minimal.

5. My child is anxious about the new transport team for next term. Are new transport teams still able to come and meet my child, with their vehicle, before term begins?

Special education needs and disability (SEND) Transport Frequently Asked Questions

Yes, wherever possible operators will arrange a meeting between new drivers/passenger assistants and the child/family prior to the start of term to ensure familiarity and minimise concerns.

6. My child/young person is unable to understand that they should not be touching others, will they still be allowed on transport?

Yes but please re-emphasise the message. Your child/young person's school/college may also be able to help them understand this. You can minimise risk by ensuring your child/young person washes their hands before travelling and immediately upon returning home. Schools will be putting in place hand washing routines for all pupils upon arrival and prior to returning home.

7. My child/young person will not wear a mask, will they still be allowed on transport?

Yes. It is understood that many children/young persons with SEND cannot wear masks. See the information page on the SEND Local Offer about face masks <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/face-covering-exemption.aspx>

8. The college has not confirmed my young person's timetable. How do I ensure transport is available on the correct days?

We are in contact with colleges and transport operators about start/finish times and timetabling. You can help to ensure the correct transport is put in place by sending us a copy of your young person's timetable as soon as you receive it:

- Call the Contract Management Team on 0300 123 4044 or
- Email ptu.feedback@hertfordshire.gov.uk

9. My child/young person's school/college may stagger start and finish times to help with social distancing. Will my child still be able to get transport to school?

Yes. We are working closely with schools/colleges and operators to ensure that transport times are changed to accommodate any changes to the school day.

10. Will there be any change to the maximum amount of time my child/young person can be on transport?

Some journey times may have changed. Wherever possible journeys will not be longer than the maximum recommended.

11. Who do I need to inform if my child/young person develops a high temperature or other symptoms?

Your child must not travel or attend school/college if they develop any of these

Special education needs and disability (SEND) Transport Frequently Asked Questions

symptoms – high temperature, a persistent cough or loss of taste/smell. You must inform the school and the Contract Management Team at Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) immediately on 0300 123 4044.

12. How will you be notifying families if driver, escort or other passenger has reported symptoms?

If any person travelling reports symptoms, they will be required to self-isolate for 14 days. Passengers, operators and schools must inform the county council immediately on 0300 123 4044 if anyone travelling has developed symptoms. The Contract Management Team will inform anyone else involved (passenger, operator, school) and tell them what they need to do.

13. I have taken a Personal Transport Budget (PTB). What do I do if I need to change back to using transport?

Personal Transport Budgets are available to all children/young persons who are entitled to home-school transport. Many families welcome the additional flexibility offered by a PTB and the county council welcomes further applications. If arranging your transport is proving difficult, your child can revert to HCC transport, but we will need at least 14 days' notice to arrange the transport.

Please contact the SEN Transport Team on 0300 123 4043 or email schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk to request a PTB or to raise any concerns.

14. Who should I contact if I am concerned about anything?

It is important that the county council is aware of any issues or difficulties around transport. If you have specific concerns about your transport operator, please contact the Contract Management Team in the first instance, call on 0300 123 4044 or email ptu.feedback@hertfordshire.gov.uk. They will take forward any concerns /issues direct with the operator.