



Home to School Travel Policy

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

North Yorkshire Council (NYC) recognises that free home to school travel assistance is an important service that is valued by families and communities. The service enables access to education for children who would be otherwise prevented from doing so, and so contributes to two of the objectives in the Council Plan:

- Maximise the potential of North Yorkshire's people and communities; and
- Develop more sustainable and connected places across North Yorkshire

However, like many local authorities across the country, the Council faces significant challenges due to reduced funding from central government, rising costs and increasing demand for both statutory and non-statutory services, including home to school travel. As a result, the Council needs to think differently and to design services that enable the best use of the limited resources that are available.

This policy explains how the Council will meet its statutory duties and how it may exercise discretionary powers in relation to home to school travel assistance for children of compulsory school age. It is intended to be clear, transparent and capable of consistent application while allowing individual circumstances to be considered on their merits.

1.1 Legislative Background

This policy reflects the statutory duties and discretionary powers governing travel to school for children of compulsory school age, as defined within:

- Section 508A of the Education Act, 1996: sustainable travel to school
- Section 508B of and Schedule 35B to the Education Act 1996: travel arrangements for eligible children
- Section 508C of the Education Act 1996: travel arrangements for other children
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008: publication of information about travel arrangements

The policy also has regard to the Department for Education's (DfE's) Statutory Guidance, Travel to school for children of compulsory school age, May 2026.

1.2 Links to other Council policies

When considering making an application for a school place parents should consider this policy alongside:

- The North Yorkshire Coordinated Admissions Scheme
- The Admissions Policy for North Yorkshire maintained schools; and/or
- The Admissions Policy/Policies for any Voluntary Aided School or Academy for which they may wish to apply for a place

2.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

2.1 Parental Responsibility

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school. This means they must take all the action necessary to enable their child to attend school.

For most parents, this includes making arrangements for their child to travel to and from school. Local authorities must make arrangements, free-of-charge, for eligible children to travel to school (see Section 3).

Where pupils are eligible for assistance with travel then parents should comply with the terms as set out in this policy.

2.2 Geographic Coverage

This policy applies to children of compulsory school age (see Section 3.1) who are resident in North Yorkshire and who attend a state-funded school, including a state-funded school that is located within another Local Authority's area.

The parents of children who do not reside in North Yorkshire, but who attend a state-funded school in North Yorkshire should refer to their own Local Authority's Home to School Transport policy.

2.3 Eligibility Assessments

The Council normally completes an assessment of a child's eligibility for assistance with home to school travel after they have been allocated a school place as part of a normal school admissions round at:

- Primary or infant school in the Reception Year
- Junior school in Year 3; or
- Secondary school in Year 7

Notification

For applications as part of the normal school admissions round parents will be notified in May for secondary school eligibility and in June for primary school eligibility.

An eligibility assessment will also be undertaken when a child is allocated a school place at a time other than as part of a normal school admissions round, for example if a child moves into North Yorkshire from another area or where a family moves house.

When a child is determined to be eligible for assistance with home to school travel then they will normally continue to be eligible for the remainder of that phase of their education, provided that:

- The circumstances upon which their eligibility was determined remain unchanged; including
- They remain at the same home address

Where a child's home to school distance is between two and three miles, they will receive notification before the end of Year three that they will no longer be eligible to receive travel from the following September.

If a child's home address changes, even if they remain registered at the same school, then the parents should inform the Council within 14 days of that change of address.

The Council will undertake a re-assessment of a child's eligibility for assistance with home to school travel when there has been any change in their circumstances.

2.4 Home Address

The home address used for determining a child's eligibility for home to school travel will normally be the home address:

- That is provided at the time that an application for a school place is made; or
- That which is provided if there is a change of address.

In line with the DfE's Statutory Guidance, eligibility for travel will only be assessed, and (if a child is eligible) travel will only be provided from one home address, which should be the child's main residence. In the case of a child having more than one residence, the one at which they are registered for the purpose of the application for a school place will be used.

2.5 Suitable School

A suitable school for school travel purposes is a qualifying school that is suitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. It should also be suitable for the child's sex. For example, a girls' school would not be suitable for a boy.

Qualifying schools are:

- Community schools, foundation schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools;
- Academies (including those which are free schools, university technical colleges, studio schools and special schools);
- Alternative provision academies;
- Non-maintained special schools;
- Pupil referral units;
- Maintained nursery schools (where attended by a child of compulsory school age);
- Children receiving early years provision otherwise than at school; and
- City technology colleges and city colleges for the technology of the arts.

For children with special educational needs, an independent school is also a qualifying school if it is the only school named in their Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP), or where more than one school is named in the EHCP, the school nearest to the home address named in the EHCP will be the qualifying school.

2.6 Travel Arrangements

If a child is determined to be eligible for assistance with travel, then the Council will also determine the travel arrangements that are to be established (See section 4).

The travel arrangements will be the most efficient, environmentally sustainable, and economical that meet the child's needs.

The Council will make travel arrangements to enable a child to travel to school for the **beginning** of the school day, and to return home at the **end** of the school day.

There are no requirements to make arrangements:

- For children to travel between institutions during the school day; or
- To enable children to attend extracurricular activities and other commitments outside school hours; or
- To enable children to get to and from before and after school childcare, whether formal (for example, a childminder) or informal (for example, a grandparent).

Where particular classes, year groups or pupils have a start or finish time that is different from most pupils at the school, it will not normally be possible for the Council to make separate travel arrangements. Schools may need to make alternative arrangements to accommodate these pupils.

There may be a small number of circumstances in which the Council considers it appropriate to arrange travel at an alternative time of day, for example if a child has a medical condition which means they are not well enough to attend school for the whole day – this will be through an application, supported with evidence to request travel through exceptional circumstances.

The Council is not required to arrange travel for an eligible child where:

- Suitable **free** travel is provided by someone else, for example, their school or Local Transport Authority.
- A parent chooses to make their own arrangements for the child's travel to and from school (this does not prevent the parent from requesting that home to school travel is provided by the Council at a later date).

Transport for social care purposes such as respite and after school activities are not covered by this policy.

When a child is unwell and needs collecting from school, it will be a parent's responsibility to collect them and to determine what action needs to be taken with regard to the child's illness.

Travel will not be provided to facilitate work experience/placements.

2.7 Home to School Distance Measurement

All home to school distance measurements are undertaken using the Council's Geographic Information System (GIS).

The data contained in the GIS is:

- *Ordnance Survey* OS MasterMap Highways Network - Paths
- *Ordnance Survey* OS MasterMap Highways Network - Roads

The data includes public highways and footpaths, private roads and footpaths, public rights of way and 'permissive routes'.

The data contained in the GIS is supplemented by additional data which includes: -

- All known entrance points used by pupils at schools within both North Yorkshire and schools located in other Local Authority areas
- Local paths and footways not identified by Ordnance Survey; and

The deletion of:

- Home to school walking routes which have been assessed as being unsafe.
- Any routes where it has been identified that it would not be reasonable for use as either a walking or vehicular route including, for example, land that is privately owned and where there is no right of access.

All routes identified within the GIS will be regarded as being available for the purpose of measuring home to school distances, unless discretion is applied through the appeals process as defined within this policy.

The data within the GIS is updated annually in September to form the 'Standard' network which is then used to measure home to school distances.

All home to school distances are calculated from the fixed point associated with the Unique Property Reference (UPRN) of the child's home address to: -

- The nearest entrance point of a school in North Yorkshire, as recorded in the GIS; or
- The nearest entrance point of a school that is located in another local authority's area.

Where other Local Authorities have not provided the Council with the gate data for schools in their area, the Council will use a school's UPRN to determine distance and eligibility.

The Council will request updated gate data from both North Yorkshire schools and bordering Local Authorities every 5 years and update the Council's GIS mapping system accordingly. Where any Local Authority proactively sends updated gate information to the Council, this will be updated in the system in the following September.

The Council will not use any other routes or method of measurement to determine home to school distances.

2.8 Unsuitable Routes

On review of North Yorkshire routes, the following routes have been identified as being unsuitable for some vehicles, or an inefficient use of resources, in the provision of home to school travel. This is based on their height above sea level, gradients, the impact upon them arising from winter weather conditions, the distance and travelling time associated with alternative routes and the value for the money case to the council:

1. Fleet Moss Road
2. Keld to Kirkby Stephen

3. Buttertubs Pass
4. The Stang
5. Kidstone Pass

3.0 ELIGIBILITY

A child is eligible for assistance with home to school travel if they:

1. Are of compulsory school age; and
2. Attend their nearest suitable school to their home address with a place available; and
3. Live more than the statutory walking distance from that school; or
4. Could not reasonably be expected to walk to that school because of their special educational needs, disability or mobility problem, even if they were accompanied by an appropriate adult; or
5. Would not be able to walk to that school in reasonable safety, even if they were accompanied by an appropriate adult.

In addition to the above, pupils from low-income households may have access to extended rights to home to school travel.

3.1 Compulsory School Age

A child is defined as being compulsory school age between: -

- The start of the school term after their 5th birthday; and
- The 30th June in the academic year in which they are in Year 11

On a **discretionary** basis, the Council also provides home to school travel to children aged 4 and 5 who are attending the reception class before reaching compulsory school age, subject to them satisfying other eligibility criteria.

Home to school travel is not normally provided to children who are attending Nursery schools or classes.

3.2 Nearest suitable school with an available place

A suitable school for travel purposes is a qualifying school as defined at Section 2.5.

‘Suitable school’ does not mean the most suitable school for a child. Schools are able to meet a wide range of needs. The nearest secondary school to the home address for example, will almost always be their nearest suitable school providing they were able to admit the child.

The nearest suitable school **may not** be the catchment school that is used for admissions purposes

For the purpose of identifying the nearest suitable school, home to school distances are measured using the shortest available route. When determining the shortest available route, no consideration is made about whether a child, accompanied as necessary, is able to walk the route in reasonable safety.

The Council will use discretion when:

- The measured home to school distance is further than the statutory walking distance
- It would not be reasonable for a vehicle to use the route used to identify the nearest suitable school; and
- The shortest available road route to the school identified as being the nearest suitable school is greater than 2 miles further than the shortest available road route to the next nearest school

Where these criteria apply, then:

- **The Council will deem the next nearest suitable school to be the nearest suitable school.**

Where a child's nearest school is oversubscribed and an application has been made for the school during the normal admissions round, and the admission authority is unable to offer them a place, then the next nearest school with places available is their nearest suitable school for school travel purposes.

When a child applies for a school place outside the normal admissions round, the suitable school for travel purposes is the nearest provision which can offer a school place. The Council expects parents to list the nearest suitable school on their application if they want assistance with home to school travel to be provided. The eligibility criteria will then be applied.

Where a child changes preference of school during the school year, eligibility will be assessed based on the ability to secure a place at their nearest qualifying school.

3.3 Statutory walking distance

Statutory walking distances are used to determine a child's eligibility for assistance with home to school travel. If a child lives within the statutory walking distance and is not eligible for assistance with travel under any other grounds then their parent is responsible for arranging their child's travel to and from school, and it is for their parent to determine what arrangements would be suitable for their child.

A child under the age of eight is eligible for assistance with travel to their nearest suitable school with an available place if it is more than two miles from their home.

A child aged eight years or over is eligible for assistance with travel to their nearest suitable school with an available place if it is more than three miles from their home.

On a **discretionary basis**, the Council continues to regard children who reach the age of eight and who attend their nearest suitable school with an available place and that is between two and three miles from their home as being eligible for assistance with travel until they reach the end of Year three.

For the purpose of determining eligibility for assistance with travel, when the Council determines whether the distance between a child's home address and their school is less than or equal to the statutory walking distance. It will measure the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk in reasonable

safety. This is not necessarily the shortest distance by road. The route may also include footpaths, bridleways and other pathways.

3.4 Special Educational Needs, and/or Disability

A child is eligible for free travel to school if:

- they attend their nearest suitable school, and
- it is within the statutory walking distance of their home, and
- they could not reasonably be expected to **walk** there because of their **special educational needs, disability, or mobility problem**, even if they were accompanied by an **appropriate adult**.

To be eligible on these grounds, a child does not need to:

- have an Education Health and Care plan (EHC plan); or
- have travel to school specified in their EHC plan if they have one; or
- attend a special school; or
- live beyond the statutory **walking** distance.

Not every child with an EHC plan or who attends a special school will be eligible for free travel to school.

To qualify for eligibility on the grounds of special educational needs, disability or mobility problems, the Council is required to complete an individual assessment of the child, and this will take into account the child's physical ability to walk to school, and any health and safety issues related to their special educational needs, disability, or mobility problems.

The Council may take into account whether the child would be able to walk to school if they were accompanied by an appropriate adult. The Council will consider each case on its facts.

Information the Council may consider when assessing a child's eligibility may include (but is not restricted to) the following:

- information provided by the parent;
- information provided by any professionals involved in the child's care;
- information provided by the child's school;
- any relevant information in the child's EHC plan if they have one;
- any relevant information in their individual healthcare plan if they have one.

Parents that wish to request an application to be considered on the ground of Special Education Needs/Disability will need to apply online (a link will be inserted when the policy is published). Paper copies will be available on request.

3.5 Unsafe Walked Route

A child is eligible for free travel to school if they attend their nearest suitable school, it is within the statutory walking distance of their home, and

- the nature of the route means they could not be expected to walk there in reasonable safety even if accompanied by an appropriate adult, and

- there is no alternative route within the statutory walking distance that they would be able to walk in reasonable safety, even if accompanied by an appropriate adult.

Where the Council does not hold a record about the safety of a walked route, then assessments are undertaken upon receipt of a request.

When assessing whether a route can be walked in reasonable safety, the Council will consider the whole of the route. This will include, for example, any sections that use footpaths or bridleways, as well as sections that use roads.

The Council uses the 'Assessment of Walked Routes to Schools Guidelines', published by Road Safety GB, which provides advice to local authorities on assessing the risk posed to pedestrians by traffic.

These guidelines can form the basis of the assessment and are used in conjunction with local context and knowledge.

3.6 Extended Rights

Extended rights are designed to support low-income families to exercise school choice. A child is eligible for free travel to school if they meet one of the criteria below and are from a qualifying low-income household. Low-income is defined by reference to eligibility for benefits-based free school meals (FSM). From the beginning of 2026/27 academic year, there will be two categories of benefits-based free school meals:

- Targeted FSM – for pupils who are in households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual household earnings of not more than £7,400.
- Expanded FSM – for pupils who do not qualify for Targeted FSM, but who are in households receiving Universal Credit.

Extended rights to free travel continue to apply to children eligible for Targeted FSM. However, pupils eligible for expanded FSM are not eligible for extended rights for home to school travel. This reflects existing policy and national guidance, with updated terminology.

In the event that the DfE amends the financial criteria upon which pupils are eligible for extended rights, then the Council will amend this policy accordingly, and the details will be published on the Council's website.

The statutory criteria that a child must meet are:

- aged eight or over but under 11, attend their nearest suitable school and it is more than two miles from their home; or
- aged 11 to 16 years, and attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than two miles but not more than six miles from their home; or
- aged 11 to 16 years, attend a school that is more than two but not more than 15 miles from their home that their parents have chosen on the grounds of their religion or belief if, having regard to that religion or belief, there is no suitable school nearer to their home.

On a **discretionary basis**, the Council also provides eligibility for extended rights to a child who is:

- aged 11 to 16 years, and attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than 2 miles but not more than 12 miles from their home

Where a child qualified for, and was receiving, extended rights travel on 31 March 2025 and continues to meet the eligibility criteria set out above, the Council will continue providing free travel until the end of their current phase of education or until they leave their current school, whichever is sooner. Where a child ceases to be eligible during the course of an academic year, the local authority should continue to provide free travel to school for the remainder of that academic year.

Where a child attends a North Yorkshire school and is in receipt of free school meals, the travel eligibility will, wherever possible, automatically be assessed under the criteria of extended rights. There are some limited circumstances where the parent may need to notify the Council of their free school meals status to enable that assessment to take place.

Where a child does not claim free school meals or is attending a school outside of North Yorkshire, please apply using the online form [\(a link will be inserted when the policy is published\)](#).

When the Council assesses travel, for the purposes of extended rights, the first two miles will be the walking route. When assessing whether a child lives within the 12 or 15-mile upper limits, the Council will measure road routes only.

3.7 Accompaniment

A child will not normally be eligible for free travel to school on the grounds of their special educational needs, disability, or mobility problem, or on the grounds that the route is unsafe if they would be able to walk to school if they were accompanied.

Where the Council determines, following an individual assessment, that a child would be able to walk if they were accompanied, the general expectation is that the parent will accompany them or make other suitable arrangements for their journey to and from school.

A child will not normally be eligible solely because of their parent's work commitments or caring responsibilities mean they are unable to accompany their child themselves although each case will be decided on the individual circumstances.

Consideration will be given where parents have a disability or mobility problem that would make it difficult for them to accompany their child. The Council will consider the parents' reasons for not being able to accompany their child or make other suitable arrangements and would require evidence of parental disability as part of the application.

Reasons such as the parent's working pattern or the fact they have children attending more than one school, on their own, will not normally be considered good reasons for a parent being unable to accompany their child. These apply to many parents, and, in most circumstances, it is reasonable to expect the parent to make suitable arrangements to fulfil their various responsibilities (for example, their responsibilities as an employee and as a parent).

Where the Council have determined, following an assessment, that a child could not reasonably be expected to walk even if they were accompanied, they will be eligible for free home to school travel regardless of whether their parent would be able to accompany them or make other arrangements for their journey.

3.8 Discretionary arrangements in exceptional circumstances

The eligibility criteria as outlined in this policy will apply to most situations; however, the Council also recognises that at times assistance may be required where the Council considers it necessary, including on a short-term basis. This will be considered at the Council's discretion on a case-by-case basis.

Where a child is not eligible for travel assistance under the policy and requires consideration of travel assistance under exceptional circumstances, the parents should make an application to the Council through the appeal process as set out at 6.2.

The Council does not usually consider matters such as parents' working patterns, the cost to the parents of transport, or where parents have children attending more than one school, to be exceptional circumstances, although will consider each case on a case by case basis.

3.9 Discretionary provision agreed after school organisation processes

The Council has previously agreed discretionary additional eligibility for home to school travel following school organisation processes, including at the request of school governing boards.

A schedule of the agreed discretionary arrangements is attached at Appendix one.
[To be added at publication.]

3.10 Spare Seats

On a discretionary basis, the Council will provide access to home to school travel services to children who have been assessed as not being eligible to receive free travel.

This will only be provided where there are spare seats available within the home to school travel services that are commissioned to meet the needs of eligible children and require the purchase of a Paid Travel Permit (PTP).

The full cost of a PTP is detailed on the Council website here: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-and-college-transport/paid-travel-permit>. In addition, a 50% reduction in the cost applies to children from low income households. The costs associated with PTP are reviewed annually by the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Service, in accordance with the Council's Fees and Charges Policy. The cost can be paid monthly or in full.

Spare seats are normally allocated each year, after the travel arrangements have been established for eligible children.

When a PTP is offered, then it is subject to the child's parent's agreement to the associated terms and conditions, the provisions for which include:

- Existing travel will not be diverted or extended to accommodate this application, nor will any additional vehicle capacity be added to a route or extra costs incurred to accommodate a paid travel permit application; and
- The Council reserves the right to withdraw the paid travel permit at its discretion, any time, by giving **thirty days' notice** without giving a reason. The following are examples of situations where a pass can be withdrawn (NB: This is not an exhaustive list):
 - if the journey becomes solely used by paid travel permit holders or where eligible pupils can be accommodated by other means
 - it is no longer lawful for the council to provide and charge for a permit
 - if the allocated seat is required for a pupil eligible for home to school travel
 - if a reduction in vehicle capacity is required during the course of the academic year
 - if the council consider the pass holder's behaviour is such that it causes inconvenience to other passengers

The terms and conditions associated with a PTP are reviewed annually by the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Service.

4. HOW TRAVEL ASSISTANCE WILL BE PROVIDED

- 4.1 It is for the Council to decide how to arrange free travel for an eligible child. The travel will be the most efficient, environmental, and economical method and route suitable for the child's needs.

This could be via:

- A pass on a public service (bus or train), or
- A seat on a school bus service, or
- A direct commissioned service, e.g. a taxi.

4.2 Parental Travel Allowances

The Council may also provide a parental mileage allowance in some circumstances and with the agreement of the parent. For example, in the event that no existing service is available to accommodate an eligible child.

As of April 2026, parental travel allowances are paid at the rate of 55p per mile for an agreed number of journeys. The Council will review the allowance rate in accordance with all appropriate guidance and will notify all parents who receive the allowance of any change in the rate that is paid.

In some circumstances the Council will also pay an enhanced allowance where the child requires additional support with travel to meet a medical, mobility or special educational need. These are calculated on individual circumstances based on distance and travel time.

Regular payments including mileage allowance made by the Council to reimburse the cost incurred by a parent in providing a child's travel to school:

- will not be taken into account in a Universal Credit assessment (should the Council need to pay a parent any additional amount, for example to cover unexpected expenses relating to a child's travel to school, these would be treated

as capital in the Universal Credit assessment and the parent would need to declare them)

- should not give rise to income tax liability, but individuals should continue to satisfy themselves that they meet HMRC's requirements

Where a parent has agreed to receive a travel allowance, it will be based on attendance at school. The Council will require that the school confirm the pupils' attendance.

The Council has the right to revoke an allowance if a child's attendance is deemed unsatisfactory and to provide assistance through an alternative travel arrangement.

A parent can surrender the allowance at any time; however, consideration will need to be given for the period involved in arranging alternative travel provision.

5. SUITABILITY OF TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Considering the Child's Needs

The Council will ensure that any travel arrangements they make will take account of the needs of the child concerned. For example, it would not be appropriate to provide a pass for free travel on a service bus to a child whose special educational needs meant they would be unable to travel on a service bus.

Any travel arrangements should enable the child to travel in reasonable safety and comfort, and without undue stress, strain, or difficulty, so that wherever possible they arrive at school ready to learn.

It is not a requirement to provide all children with 'door to door' travel. Many will be able to walk to a suitable pick-up point, up to a mile, from the home or school address, provided they would be able to do so in reasonable safety, accompanied by an appropriate adult if necessary.

If, following an assessment of needs, a child is not able to walk to a pickup point accompanied as necessary, the Council will provide an alternative which can meet their needs.

The waiting point for travel to school or college will be a public stop or station or, in the case of commissioned travel, a named point which is suitably safe, both for children to wait and vehicles to stop. The Council will carry out risk assessments on pick up and drop off points.

If the travel provided needs to meet a connecting service, the driver of the first vehicle will wait with children until the connecting vehicle arrives. The waiting time between connections will normally be no longer than 10 minutes. The meeting point will be suitable for the safe transfer of children.

When children are transported using a taxi or private-hire vehicle, that is not a public service vehicle, it must have one seat belt, and where appropriate child car seat or booster seat, for each person carried.

Some children may need additional arrangements to be made to meet their needs. In these cases, the Council would request that parents complete a travel assessment, so the Council can review and make suitable arrangements if required.

If children travel in a wheelchair this must be to ISO 7176-19;2022 standards and properly fixed in the vehicle in accordance with current Department for Transport guidelines. The Council will carry out a risk assessment to ensure that children are transported safely in these circumstances.

5.2 Children with Medical Needs

When the Council makes travel arrangements for a child with medical needs, the Council will consider if and how those needs might affect the child during their journey to and from school and, where necessary, put in place proportionate arrangements to manage those needs.

Not every child with the same condition will need the same arrangements, assessments will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis.

The assessment will consider:

- the medical condition, its triggers, and symptoms; and the likelihood and consequences of the condition affecting the child on the journey to and from school; and
- the action that may need to be taken to manage the condition, for example whether the child may require medication and, if so, what dosage is required, how it should be administered, and by whom.

If a child has a medical need, parents must alert the Council to discuss their child's conditions, this may result in a risk assessment requirement before any transport can be arranged. This request should be made via the online form (a link will be inserted when the policy is published).

If a child has an EHC plan or individual healthcare plan, these may contain information that is relevant to the Council's assessment of medical need. There is a requirement for the school to share information from the individual healthcare plan with the Council, where it is relevant to the journey to and from school.

The Council may sometimes need to seek specialist advice about a child and their condition. A range of different health professionals may be involved in a child's care, for example a community nurse, specialist nurse or doctor. A parent should be able to help the Council identify the appropriate health professional in relation to their child.

The Council will ensure the driver of a vehicle providing dedicated school transport, and any passenger assistant involved in providing the child's travel, are aware of the child's needs and how to respond to them and have received any necessary training.

There is no expectation that a child's routine/daily medication will be administered on the journey to and from school, or that routine medical procedures will be carried out. Where a risk assessment recognises that it may sometimes be necessary to administer a child's emergency medication, the Council would deploy a passenger assistant who would be responsible for administering the medication.

The passenger assistant will receive all relevant training, and the medication would be administered in accordance with instructions from a health care professional in the Health Care Plan.

5.3 Journey Times

The statutory guidance states that as a **general guide**, the maximum journey time for a child of primary school age should be 45 minutes each way, and 75 minutes each way for a child of secondary school age. However, there may be circumstances in which this is not possible, for example in rural areas where children live in remote locations, where a child needs to travel a long way to the school named in their EHC plan, or when journey times are extended by traffic delays. Wherever possible, a child should not be expected to make several changes on public transport.

North Yorkshire, by the nature of its geography, makes transporting within the general guidelines difficult to achieve. Whilst the Council would expect any direct journeys not to exceed the guidance, to ensure transport is provided as efficiently and environmentally as possible, and to reduce the number of vehicles required in order to meet its sustainability duty, the Council anticipates some journeys may exceed this recommendation. Where this is the case, the Council will not expect the child to make several changes on public transport.

Travel arrangements for children with special educational needs, disability or mobility problems can be particularly complex to make. Shorter journeys may be particularly desirable, perhaps because a child's special educational needs or disability mean they become distressed while travelling, but a child may need to travel a long way to the school that is able to meet their needs, and one vehicle may need to collect several children.

Travel arrangements should be considered when deciding which is the school that should be named in the EHCP.

Where long journeys are unavoidable, the Council will consider whether there are measures that can be taken to minimise the negative impacts for the child, working with parents and schools, to develop a plan or risk assessment.

5.4 Safeguarding

The safeguarding of children is of paramount importance. The Council will ensure that:

- an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, with a check of the children's barred list, has been carried out for drivers and passenger assistants involved in providing dedicated school transport;
- drivers and passenger assistants have received any training they need to perform their role in relation to safeguarding;
- drivers and passenger assistants know how to report any concerns they have about the children in their care;
- they share any concerns they have about the driver of a taxi or private hire vehicle with the authority that licenses it;
- they consider whether concerns they have about a driver should be referred to the DBS.

Where concerns are present regarding the safeguarding of a child, a referral must be made via the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Partnership as soon as possible:

<https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/>

Where there are concerns around safety, these can be raised by phoning 0300 131 2 131 or by using the website.

5.5 Behaviour on School Transport

The Council will collaborate with schools to promote good behaviour on school transport. Schools have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable, including for misbehaviour which takes place on school transport.

Unacceptable behaviour may include, but is not limited to, being rude, pushing and kicking, bullying, verbal abuse, distracting the driver, refusing to wear a seatbelt, or refusing to remain seated. It may endanger the safety and wellbeing of other people.

The Council and schools will work together to:

- set high expectations for children's behaviour on school transport and ensure they are communicated clearly to parents and children;
- ensure arrangements are in place to report and manage incidents of unacceptable behaviour;
- work with operators to put in place measures to manage unacceptable behaviour where it occurs.

The Council will ensure drivers and passenger assistants have received any training they need to manage children's behaviour while travelling.

Where a child's behaviour is indicative of their special educational needs or disability, for example a way of communicating they are in distress, personalised guidance or risk assessments will be provided to the transport provider, following information gathered by school and parents, on how to best manage these situations.

An eligible child's travel arrangements may be withdrawn as a last resort and, in these circumstances, the Council will meet their duty in respect of the eligible child in an alternative way.

5.6 Severe weather

In circumstances where severe and adverse weather conditions are forecast, which may result in a school closure, schools will follow their emergency procedures and:

- inform parents and staff
- inform home to school transport contractors
- inform the Council

The Council will make suitable arrangements to provide transport to enable eligible children to return home. The arrangements may be different to the normal commissioned provision in the event of an emergency.

School closures are published on the Council website and through local radio stations [School closures | North Yorkshire Council](#).

5.7 Proposals for changing the school day

If a school or academy wants to change its start and finish times it should follow best practice and, before carrying out a consultation with affected parties, advise the Council of their proposed changes so that the Council can review and advise of the implications for school transport.

Any consultation should be at least three months before the planned change, and the school must include the Council in their consultation. Good practice suggests that schools can only change the times of the school day at the start of the academic year, i.e. in September.

Where a school or academy, following consultation, alters its hours, without agreement of the Council, the school will be expected to meet any additional transport costs for the remainder of the council's contract for applicable services.

6.0 APPEALS

6.1 Grounds for an appeal

A transport appeal can only be made on the following grounds:

- Eligibility
- Distance measurement of the walked route
- Safety of the walked route that is used to determine eligibility, and which is less than the statutory walking distance
- Travel arrangements that have been made for an eligible child
- Exceptional circumstances

6.2 The appeals process

Where a parent wishes to challenge the initial decision in relation to statutory travel assistance there is a two-stage appeal process.

Stage One:

A request for a stage one review must be made in writing within 20 working days of the initial decision letter. The request:

- Should clearly state the reasons for the challenge and include any new documentary evidence
- Will be reviewed by senior officers, the original decision may be upheld, overturned or alternative solutions suggested
- Where travel assistance is agreed the Council will make the necessary transport arrangements
- Where transport is not agreed, parent/carer will be told in writing and parents who are not satisfied with that decision will be informed of the next and final stage of the appeal process

Stage Two:

A stage two appeal must be made in writing by completion of an appeal form within 20 working days of receipt of the stage 1 response:

- The appeal form must clearly state the reasons why parent/carers challenge the stage one response and provide any new documentary evidence
- Stage two appeals are heard within 40 days of receipt of the appeal form by the Appeals Committee which consists of a small group of elected members of the Council
- Parent/carers can attend the appeal hearing
- Each case is considered on its merits
- The Committee considers the policy guidelines but may recommend departure from those guidelines in exceptional cases
- When a decision is made, this will be communicated in writing within five working days, including the reasons for the decision – this decision is final

Where the person is unhappy with the outcome, they will be advised how to escalate it to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman at, www.lgo.org.uk, who may investigate to decide whether there has been any maladministration.

6.3 The Complaints Process

The Council wants to maintain high standards of reliability of the transport it provides for pupils. The Council makes sure that complaints by parents and schools are investigated and satisfactorily resolved.

Where there are concerns about transport these can be raised by phoning 0300 131 2 131 or the through the Council's website using the following link:

[Complaints, comments or compliments | North Yorkshire Council](#)

Appendix One to be added at publication.