



School Transport

A Guide for Parents and Pupils



SCHOOL TRANSPORT

On every school day over 10,000 pupils attend school in Argyll and Bute, approximately 3,000 of them travel to and from school on transport organised by Argyll and Bute Council. Our highest priority is getting pupils safely to and from school.

This guide provides pupils and parents with useful background information about transport arrangements for school pupils in Argyll and Bute.

This guide sets out:

- What free school transport means
- Suggestions for healthy travel options to get to school
- Who is entitled to free school transport
- What transport is provided
- The responsibilities of the Council, schools, parents, pupils, bus and taxi operators and drivers
- Safety information
- Parents' frequently asked questions
- Complaint and contact details





Argyll and Bute Council School Transport

Who is entitled to School Transport?

Transport to and from school is available for pupils who live more than:-

- 2 miles away from their catchment Primary School
- 3 miles away from their catchment Secondary School

Pupils may still be required to walk to a school transport pick up or drop off point. Primary school pupils will not be required to walk more than two miles and secondary pupils will not be required to walk more than three miles from their home to the pick up or drop off point.

Pupils will not be picked up or dropped off at any point other than the designated location without written authorisation from a parent or guardian.

Exceptional Request

Consideration will be given in exceptional circumstances for school transportation where your child attends their catchment school but would not normally be entitled to transport.

Where parents believe that there may be grounds for an exceptional transport request, an application form should be completed and submitted to the Integrated Transport Section. Applications will then be referred for further assessment as appropriate.

Exceptional transport requests can be made when:-

- Your child has been recommended on health grounds by a designated medical officer.



- Your child has requirements based on educational grounds / additional educational needs.
- Your child has to walk a route which, after an assessment, is considered to be unsafe for children even when accompanied by a responsible adult.

Privilege Rides

If spare seats exist on dedicated school transport vehicles, a child who does not meet the walking distance criteria, or a placing request (who would not normally qualify for transport), may be granted a privileged seat to and from their home address which will be charged at a cost determined by the Council. (A dedicated vehicle is one exclusively used for pupil transport to school.) **It should be noted that these privilege places may be withdrawn at very short notice in the event of change of circumstance.**

Privilege Rides will be charged at £100.00 per term, reducing to £84.00 per child per term where there are two children or more (this may be subject to increase). Payment should only be made on receipt of an invoice and this number should be quoted when making payment. Payments received with applications will be returned.

Privilege rides are not available on journeys which operate as registered local bus services. In such cases non-entitled pupils can access free bus travel by applying online or preferably through their school for the Under 22s free bus travel product to be added to their Young Scot National Entitlement Card.

The Privilege Ride Application Form can either be downloaded or an application made online at the following address:-



Argyll and Bute Council

What Transport is provided?

The Integrated Transport Section is responsible for the design and management of the school transport service. Most pupils are transported by external contractors and the remainder are transported by our in-house service. There are various services used for taking pupils to and from school:-

- School contract buses hired from private companies on which travel passes are issued for pupils only
- Taxis, private hire cars and minibuses
- Public bus services on which travel passes (tickets) are issued for children to use for travel to and from the school
- Other forms of transport such as ferries, trains and private cars

School transport services are normally timed to arrive at school five minutes prior to the start of school and leave five minutes after the close of school. However, primary schools in towns often share transport with their associated high schools and there may be a requirement to bring children in earlier or take them home later.

If a family lives remotely from other children and off any established route, a mileage allowance to allow parents to drive their own children to school in their own car may be offered.





What are Your Responsibilities as a Parent?

- It is your responsibility to get your children safely to and from transport pick up and set down points



What are the Driver's Responsibilities?

Operation of the vehicle, including:-

- Deciding whether road conditions are safe.
- Duty of care for the safety and comfort of all passengers on the vehicle during the journey to and from school.
- Reporting any incidents of bad behaviour to the Integrated Transport Section or the Education Service, who will undertake disciplinary measures as may be necessary.

What are the Responsibilities of the Bus and Taxi Operators?

- Providing services as specified by the Council.
- Safe operation of their vehicle.
- Taking reasonable care of the children in their vehicles and ensuring seatbelts, where provided, are worn.
- Reporting misbehaviour to the Integrated Transport Section or the Education Service.

Safety Is Our Top Priority

Bus travel is one of the safest forms of transport and all buses are licensed with the Department for Transport and are routinely inspected by the Vehicle Inspectorate.





Parents Frequently Asked Questions

What Do I Do If My Child Loses Their School Travel Pass?

Your child should immediately notify their school who will arrange a replacement card.

What Do I Do If A School Bus Fails To Arrive On Time?

Your child should be at the bus pick up point at least five minutes before the scheduled pick up time. We advise your child to wait at a pick up point for up to fifteen minutes after the bus was due to arrive. After fifteen minutes it can be assumed that the bus will not run that day. You should ensure that there are suitable care arrangements in the event of school transport not running without notice.



What Happens If Schools Close Early Due To Bad Weather Or Any Other Emergency?

Every attempt will be made by the school to inform parents.

If you feel that your child should not walk home alone in bad weather from the drop off point or from school it will be your responsibility to meet him/her.

Drivers will not normally set children down at any point significantly different from the usual one. If it is not possible to set children down at the normal drop off point due to bad weather, then children will be taken to a nearby place of safety.



Argyll and Bute Council

If you have any enquiries or concerns about school transport, or wish to make a complaint about an operator you should contact your child's school who will liaise with the Integrated Transport Section to investigate the complaint.

For matters relating to school transport delivered by the Council's in-house service please contact:-

Andrea Moir:	Administrative Officer (Tel: 01369 708662)
Shelagh Croucher	Administrative Officer (Tel: 01436 658987)

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