

Managing Special Needs Transport

Guidance for local authorities

August 2010



WLGA • CLILC

www.wlga.gov.uk



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



CYNGOR
Sir Ddinbych
Denbighshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

Contact

Welsh Local Government Association

The WLGA's primary purposes are to promote a better local government, its reputation and to support authorities in the development of policies and priorities which will improve public service and democracy. It represents the 22 local authorities in Wales, with the 4 police authorities, 3 fire and rescue authorities and 3 national park authorities as associate members.

Tomi Jones
Transport

Welsh Local Government Association
Local Government House
Drake Walk
Cardiff
CF10 4LG

Tel: 029 2046 8600
Fax: 029 2046 8601

www.wlga.gov.uk

Published: August 2010

Copyright: Welsh Local Government Association

ISBN: 978-1-906423-48-3



Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Why the guidance?	5
Who is the guidance for?	6
What it includes	7
Key principles for the guidance	7
1. Getting the basics right	11
2. Ability not disability	14
3. Safety and reasonable comfort	19
4. Cost effective	24
Glossary of useful terms and acronyms	28
Useful websites, organisations and references	30
Special educational needs code of Practice	32
Home to school transport: Learner Travel Measure	33
Example of needs assessment form	35



Acknowledgements

This guidance is the first in a number of documents to be published in the next few months as the result of a collaboration project involving Local Authorities in Wales, supported by the Welsh Assembly Government. The project has been co-ordinated by the Welsh Local Government Association.

Welsh Assembly Government Grant funding has been targeted at a range of school transport projects and initiatives across Wales with the objective of improving safety, efficiency and the transport experience for learners.

This document was produced by a partnership which involved Denbighshire County Council and Sian Thornthwaite of STC (Sian Thornthwaite Consultants Ltd.), following a twelve month project which examined working practices in special needs transport.

We wish to acknowledge the assistance of staff at Denbighshire County Council, without whose help and willingness to share data, this project would not have been possible.

In particular the following were invaluable to the work of this project:

Ceri Lloyd and Nigel Billings, for their project support.

Peter Daniels as Section Manager Passenger Transport in Denbighshire for his leadership and enthusiasm.

Eirwen Volger and her team in special education.

The staff and students of Tir Morfa school, Rhyl and Plas Brondyffryn school Denbigh who provided many of the ideas and suggestions that form part of this guidance.



Bryan Jeffreys

Chairman

School Transport Projects Board



Why the guidance?

The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 was passed by the National Assembly for Wales on 30 September 2008 and approved by Her Majesty in Council on 10 December 2008.

The Measure covers, amongst other things, duties on local authorities to assess learner travel needs and to make transport arrangements for defined groups of learners.

Section 2 of the Measure places a duty on a local authority to assess the travel needs of those under the age of 19 (or who have reached 19 but started a course when under 19 and continue to attend that course) who receive education or training and who are ordinarily resident in the local authority's area.

Approximately one in five children will have special needs at some time during their school life - they may be educational needs (such as dyslexia), physical needs (such as a hearing or visual impairment), behavioural needs or social/medical needs.

Getting to and from school for many of these children may be more difficult than for their peers. There may be practical problems such as accessibility of vehicles or specialist equipment may be required to ensure their safety. They may need supervision or help with walking, getting up and down steps or crossing roads.

Over the past twenty years there has been a vast change in the way we view education for pupils with special needs - We recognise that all pupils have the right to enjoy learning and develop to their full potential and that wherever possible they should learn alongside their peers.

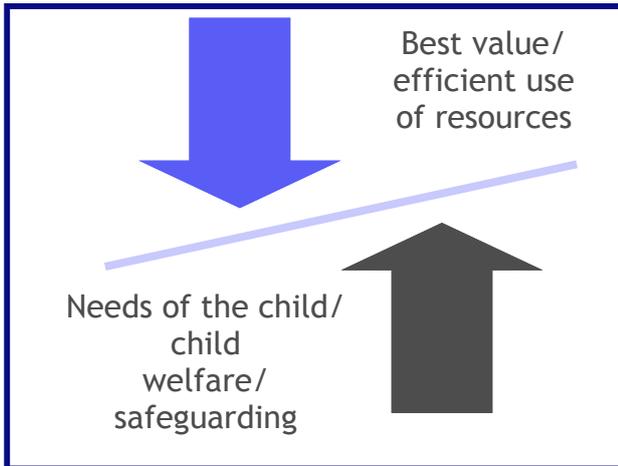
“All children and young people should have access to an appropriate education that affords them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential. The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to promoting inclusive education alongside schools, local authorities and other organisations”

Transport can and should enable and also support this by allowing young people to develop independence while also providing support when needed. However, special education transport costs are expensive and rising fast. In Wales, school transport expenditure for pupils with special needs is rising at more than three times the rate of inflation; although pupil numbers are not increasing. There are many examples of children for whom their transport costs more than their education each year, but where simple changes could achieve significant cost reductions - equivalent to tens of thousands per year, per child.

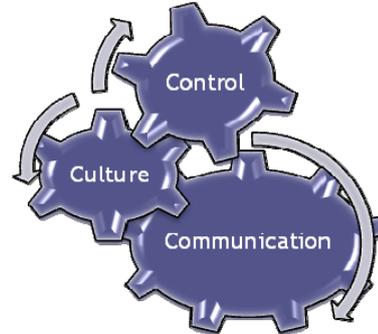
In part the rising costs reflect improving standards. But, they also emphasise the need, at a time of severe public sector financial pressure, for local authorities to ensure they are really doing all they can to deliver value for money and controlling costs.

Local authorities have duties in terms of the welfare of children and meeting their needs, which they must balance against ensuring best value for the tax payer. However, the two are not mutually exclusive.

Why the guidance? (continued)



Successful management of special needs transport includes three key aspects - **communication, control, and culture.**



Often the emphasis of managing special needs transport is on retendering contracts and putting pressure on operators to reduce their costs. These are key elements in managing transport expenditure, but they are not the only ones. Ensuring transport is focussed on those children who need it and that the transport provided is appropriate and reviewed regularly is critical, especially if transport costs are to be managed in the long term.

If there is effective control over costs and provision that concentrates resources where they are most needed, a positive culture that challenges presumptions and meaningful communication between departments, it is possible to contain spending without compromising the quality of transport provision or cutting services.

Who the guidance is for?

This guidance has been written for all involved in home to school transport for pupils and young people with special needs including:

- members - especially those with lead responsibility for transport or children's services;
- Directors of Children's Services;
- transport planners and those working in integrated/passenger transport units responsible for route planning, procurement and monitoring of school transport contracts;
- special needs officers including
 - Special Educational Needs Coordinators;
 - social services staff including key workers;
 - local authority staff making placement decisions and assessing pupils' educational and non educational needs;
 - school staff/college staff; and
 - local authority staff who are responsible for budget setting and performance monitoring.

What it includes:

The aim of the guidance is to provide very practical and straightforward suggestions about managing demand for special needs transport. It aims to:

- improve communication between staff involved in special needs transport especially to improve understanding of different departments within local authorities;
- change the culture towards one of actively managing home to school transport for pupils with special needs rather than assuming rising

costs and demands are inevitable; and

- improve budgetary control, through knowing what is being spent, and why.

The format of the guidance includes a series of checklists and detailed questions to encourage internal evaluation of a local authority's policies, procedures, provision and practices. It also includes a range of key performance measures that can be used to monitor performance in a meaningful way i.e. measuring the right things rather than the wrong things!

Key principles for the guidance

This guidance has assumed three key principles for special needs transport:

- ability not disability;
- safety and reasonable comfort; and
- cost effectiveness.

Home to school transport for pupils with special needs should be:

- **About ability not disability** - children with special needs should be travelling wherever possible with their peers. Their home to school transport should be supporting their independence and enabling rather than disabling. It is about providing transport in the *least restrictive way*.
- **In safety and reasonable comfort** - means providing the right equipment, the right vehicle, at the right time, with appropriately trained staff; and working effectively with the school, parents, young people and transport providers. It is about providing transport that is *safe and reasonably comfortable*.
- **As cost effective as possible** - means not only making sure school transport provision is focussed on those who need it most, but that it is provided in the most cost effective way; that expenditure and trends are monitored to make sure spending is controlled. This means knowing *what is spent, why, where and when*.

Which type of local authority is yours?

Local authority A

- All our policies and procedures, and information for parents are consistent setting out parents' responsibilities, and that pupils will be entitled to transport on the same basis as other pupils, but that we will meet their transport needs where necessary in the most appropriate way
- We have regular face to face meetings/discussions between education and transport staff
- Those responsible for statementing/assessment and special education work closely with those responsible for transport planning and provision
- Each department understands the other's e.g. tendering requirements for transport, the statementing process, key timescales
- Our requests for transport are received early on in the placement process so that the most cost effective transport can be arranged
- The information transport staff receive about the child is usually sufficient to know whether an escort, home pick up, equipment etc is required and why
- Education staff are given information about the likely costs of transport so they can include transport costs in evaluating and decisions relating to placement, school /provision planning etc
- We regularly visit schools/operators and liaise with the school over behaviour management, handling of medication, and route planning

Local authority B

- Our policies and procedures and information for parents suggest that special needs pupils are treated differently and that transport entitlement is largely automatic
- Most of our communication is via email (or phone) on a daily basis
- Staff in transport and in special education know each others' names but have never met
- We don't really understand what each department does, or why they do things in certain way or why they ask for what they do
- We often get requests for transport to be set up immediately or next week, for example we get requests for transport to be arranged for the next Monday morning
- Usually the request for transport only gives us the child's name and address, we don't get any other information or at best we get 'travels in wheelchair'/'needs and escort', there's no explanation as to why
- We do not have time to visit schools and therefore are reliant on feedback or complaints from operators, parents or schools



Which type of local authority is yours?

Local authority A

Local authority B

CULTURE

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our policies, procedures and guidance for parents /young people and schools is clear that transport provision is based on need, and we will encourage and support independence wherever possible. • We usually assume that a child can travel independently unless we are told otherwise • We usually presume that a child will travel on mainstream transport wherever possible • Senior managers encourage staff to question transport requests and query information that isn't clear or is insufficient • We wouldn't provide a child with a taxi /own route unless there is no alternative - we would always look at managing behaviour, changing routes, working with schools/parents before this | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our policies and procedures assume that home to school transport is automatically provided to children attending special schools/ placements/PRUs etc • Parents and schools assume that transport for children with special needs will continue until age 19, so we usually do not change arrangements unless we are told to do so • We assume that most children with special needs will need a taxi or small vehicle to pick them up from home • We always provide an escort for pupils with special needs to ensure their safety • Special needs staff know best the child therefore whatever transport they request is automatically provided - it isn't transport's role to question entitlement decisions |
|---|---|

Which type of local authority is yours?

Local authority A

Local authority B

CONTROL

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We regularly review if, and what transport is necessary - at least at each annual review and at the transitional review • Special education and transport staff know how many children we transport, to where, and why • All relevant special education and transport staff know what transport expenditure is on a monthly basis, and understand what the major drivers of costs are • Our contract monitoring is able to identify high costs routes, low vehicle utilisation, cost per pupil, cost per school and this information is shared with education staff/budget holders • We share key performance monitoring information between transport and education staff on a regular basis so that we can identify early any potential overspends and take remedial action | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child qualifies for special needs transport that will continue until they leave school • The transport, but not children's services' staff know approximately how many pupils we transport on any given day • Transport staff, but not children's services' staff, know approximately how much we spent on special needs transport last year • Transport staff and special education staff presume the main pressures on costs are that we are transporting more children in wheelchairs and because of more stringent health and safety requirements such as additional escort training • We only know at the end of the year whether we are overspent or not |
|---|---|



1. Getting the basics right

What is special needs transport?

Special needs transport is the term used in this guidance to include all transport for pupils where they qualify on the basis of their special needs - whether they are:

- attending a mainstream school;
- specialist unit;
- residential or day special schools; and
- other provision such as Pupil Referral Units.

It also includes those receiving transport aged 16-19 years who are going to further education or sixth form, who qualify for transport because of their learning difficulties or disabilities.

The guidance also applies to those who do not have additional educational needs but who receive transport because of medical/mobility needs e.g. severe asthma, or a broken leg, who may not need special education, but who may require an adapted vehicle or additional help with travel to and from school or college.

How many children and young people does this include?

The SEN Code of Practice for Wales suggests it is helpful to view pupils' educational needs and requirements as falling within a number of broad areas:

- cognition and learning;
- behaviour, emotional and social development;
- communication and interaction;
- sensory and/or physical.

There are almost 100,000 pupils with special needs identified in Wales - about one in five of the school population. Only about 14,000 of these have a statement of special needs (and this number is falling).

The main reason why children have a statement of special needs is because of learning disabilities/difficulties.

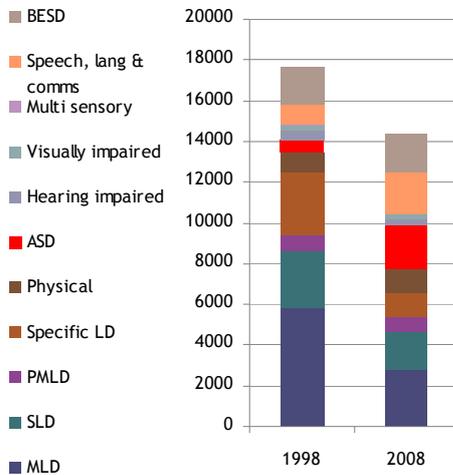
However over recent years the nature of needs identified is also changing, in part as diagnoses improve and awareness of conditions such as autism increase.

There are now more pupils recorded as having autistic spectrum disorders, but also more with behavioural, emotional and social disorders and fewer stated with learning or physical difficulties.

Monitoring how special needs are changing in a local authority is important, as they affect the type of transport and support that is likely to be required and the type of escort and driver training that is required. The vast majority of young people with special needs attend mainstream schools. Only 4,000 of pupils with special needs are in special schools (although this number is rising up from 3,814 in 2004/5).

The majority are educated within primary or secondary schools. A small but rapidly increasing number of pupils are in Pupil Referral Units (PRU). Although absolute numbers remain small there has been a 52% increase in the past four years in the number of pupils in PRUs, to 647 pupils).

Number of pupils with statements by need, 1998 and 2008



Sources of information

The main source of data on the numbers of pupils with special needs and education provision is StatsWales, which includes information for individual local authorities and overall totals for Wales. www.statswales.wales.gov.uk

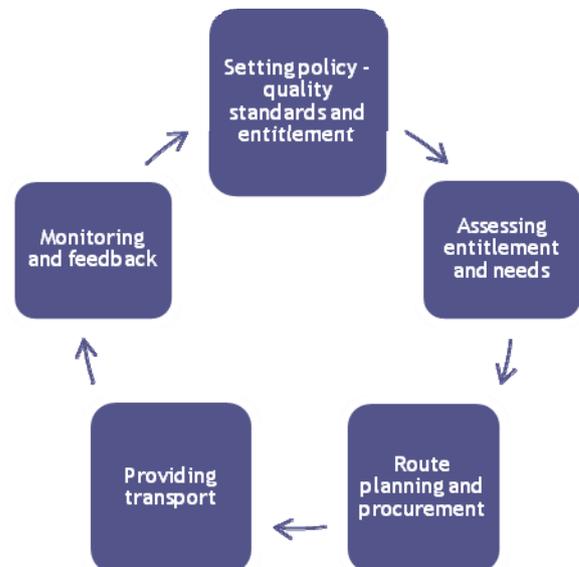
For expenditure data on school transport the main source is the section 52 return. These are available within the local finance section of StatsWales, but there are wide discrepancies in coding between local authorities from year to year. However, this data is useful for providing overall trends in school transport.

The Welsh Assembly Government's **Guidance for School Information Management Systems** (WAGC 24-07) includes information on definitions and types of special needs.

Who is responsible for special needs transport?

The responsibility for home to school transport for pupils with special needs is often split between different departments and different staff within local authorities. This is frequently a cause of confusion and complaint for parents and for schools.

Often different departments are unclear on who is responsible for doing what, and why. Too frequently staff have not met and rely on email communication or phone contact.



School transport involves key stages as shown above - from setting policies through to monitoring. Usually within local authorities these roles are split between children's services and transport teams, and provision of transport services is often by private contractors (such as taxi and private hire car operators) or an in house vehicle fleet.

Children's services departments have responsibility for ensuring the provision of suitable and sufficient education in their area. In relation to special needs

these departments work within a legal framework that is set out in the SEN Code of Practice. This details the assessment process, reviews and format of these that children's services must adhere to.

In addition schools will have a Special Educational Needs Coordinator who ensures the delivery of the statement/ education plan for each child at school level. Key workers and social services staff will also often be involved in providing advice and support to young people and parents.

Local authorities also have a duty under the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 to assess the travel needs of young people up to the age of 19 in their area. Transport departments within local authorities have a legal duty to ensure coordination of passenger transport

overall to obtain best value. This must include social services transport, public transport and school transport.

In addition, they are required to comply with tendering requirements (both under the Transport Acts for local bus services) and the local authority's financial regulations and standing orders, which will set specific criteria for what must be formally tendered. There are also European directives that require the local authority to advertise and follow specific procurement protocols and timetables regarding stand down periods and award of contract.

As a result, adequate lead times for arranging transport are crucial if the local authority is to meet its procurement obligations.

Checklist

Do you know the main trends in special needs in your local authority? (Numbers of pupils, types of needs and how these are changing, types of education provision)?

Check your local authority's section 52 budget and outturn statements. Ensure year on year coding is consistent to allow monitoring of trends, and know what is coded to each budget line e.g. does it include escort costs, where are administration costs coded to?

Be familiar with:

- The SEN Code of Practice and
- The Learner Travel Measure and associated operational and risk assessment guidance.

Do you understand the main responsibilities of children's services and transport departments?

Do you know who is responsible for each stage of the school transport process?

Have you had a face to face meeting with all those involved in special needs transport?



2. Ability not disability

Children with special needs should be travelling wherever possible with their peers. Their transport should be supporting their independence where possible and focussing on enabling rather than disabling. It is about providing transport in the **least restrictive way**.

The problem

Too often local authorities have school transport policies, procedures and practices that assume if a child has special needs or s/he is attending a special school then transport will be provided. Some make assumptions that if transport is required at the start of a child's school career it will need to continue in the same form until they leave school - often sixteen years later! There are often assumptions made, frequently because there is little information available, about the child or young person. For example, assumptions are made that because a child has a statement for behavioural needs they will need an escort, a home pick up or a taxi to travel in on their own. This can result in transport arrangements continuing unchecked which may be expensive, poor use of resources, or provision that is inappropriate for the young person.

There are examples where young teenagers with moderate learning difficulties have been provided with a taxi from home to school, yet are able to use a bus pass to travel on public transport at weekend.

Such an approach is also inconsistent with the policies of encouraging independence and inclusion (as well as often making poor use of resources).

Introduction

Looking at several key measures can indicate whether a local authority is managing special needs transport effectively in terms of focussing resources on those most in need and ensuring that transport is appropriate. For example, what proportions of pupils with statements and with special needs are receiving home to school transport? It is unlikely that in any local authority all pupils with special needs or with statements will need transport. How many children with special needs are being provided with independent travel training, and using local bus services to travel to and from school?

Key measures

- Proportion of pupils who have a statement of special needs being transported?
- Proportion of pupils with special needs being transported?
- Number of pupils receiving transport on the basis of medical need?
- Number/proportion of routes with an escort?
- Number of pupils receiving independent travel training?

Many special schools and units have large catchment areas because they are serving pupils from a wide area. However, it is likely there will be some pupils living very locally to school who receive a door to door taxi, despite being capable of walking with their parents/carer. There are also likely to



be taxis providing transport taking pupils with special needs into primary and secondary schools that duplicates mainstream school transport - providing segregated transport to integrated education!

Communication

Who is entitled to transport - policies

All local authorities should review their home to school transport entitlement policies on a regular basis. The policy should be published, readily available, and set out clearly who is entitled to transport, the application process, and the mechanism for appeals.

The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 sets out the legal framework for home to school transport in Wales. Under the Measure children receiving primary education are entitled to free transport if they live 2 miles or more from their nearest suitable school, and children receiving secondary education if they live 3 or more miles from their nearest suitable school.

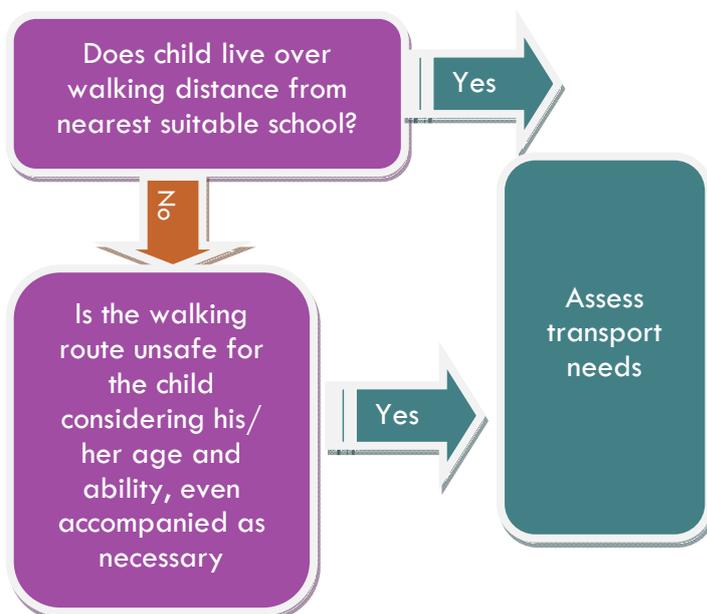
The **Learner Travel Operational Guidance**, published in April 2009, sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's interpretation of the law for school transport, and provides a view about how local authorities should discharge their legal duties. The distances set out in the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure, which give rise to the entitlement to free transport to school, are referred to as "walking distances" in this guidance. Walking distances should be measured by the shortest available route. A route is considered to be "available" if it is safe for a child without a disability or learning difficulty to walk the route alone or with an escort if the age of the child would call for such an escort. Policies should also be clear as to

whether transport will be provided for entitled pupils only for journeys to and from school, or at lunchtimes/other times, to dual locations and to respite care for parental visits to residential placements or holiday visits etc.

The general criteria should be exactly the same for all pupils. Clearly the suitability of a walking route may be different for a child with special needs and the transport provided may need to be specialised, but the entitlement criteria should not be any different.

The policy should make it clear how transport entitlement will be assessed (for example at the statementing assessment, annual and transitional review) and how transport needs will then be considered. It should emphasise that transport entitlement and needs will be regularly reviewed and transport will not automatically be provided. Many children with special needs will have no specific transport needs and a place on an existing school contract route or a local bus will be appropriate. For some pupils with complex needs adapted vehicles and supervision will be necessary.

However, for all pupils the same process should apply as below:



Needs assessment

If a child has been identified as likely to have special needs there is a statutory **assessment** process (see the Code of Practice) that will review the child's educational and non educational needs. This assessment includes input from parents, medical and social workers and provides a useful opportunity to elicit information about transport needs. Again, this should focus on what the child is able to do, rather than assuming what s/he is not able to do.

The annual review and transition review also provide good opportunities to gather information about how transport needs are changing as the young person gets older and ensure that transport provision continues to be appropriate. Sample forms are included in the back of this guidance.

Changing culture

For most local authorities including children with special needs in their general transport policies and moving from a presumption of transport and assumption of escorts, home pick-ups and taxis will mean a significant culture change.

Transport should always be provided in the least restrictive (and most sustainable) way possible i.e. wherever possible, the aim should be to move towards the lower rung of the table below.

Increasing independence/least restrictive 	Specialist transport with trained escort/nurse, door to door service	Increasing cost 
	Dedicated transport, e.g. solo taxi with escort, door to door service	
	Shared transport, home pick up, with escort	
	Walk to bus stop, shared transport with escort	
	Walk to bus stop, use shared school transport, no escort	
	Supported travel on public transport – with buddy/training	
	Travelling with peers on mainstream routes	
	Travelling independently on public transport, walking or cycling	

If this change is to work all those involved will need to understand why the approach is changing, and information across the local authority and from all staff (including Members) will need to be consistent. For example:

Schools

Should include pupils with special needs as part of their school travel plans, and encourage and support them to walk and cycle, or use public transport. Travel training can provide key skills from learning routes to understanding using buses.

Highways

School entrances and routes to schools should support walking and cycling. Local signage, speed limits, drop kerbs, improved public transport facilities such as bus stops can all help to encourage and enable independent travel.

Special needs including social services staff and key workers

Should include information about transport in the annual, initial and transition assessments, focussing on the least restrictive transport, and encouraging inclusion. They will need to be familiar with transport policies and provision to provide effective support and advice to parents and young people.

Transport staff

Where possible if a child is able to travel more independently arrangement should support this e.g. escorting a child on a mainstream bus or local bus at the start of term may enable them to travel unescorted later in the year.

Transport staff should also be willing to challenge special needs requests for solo transport, home pick-ups, escort provision or out-authority placement -

all of which significantly increase transport costs. Unless there is clear justification for these, they should not be provided; and if provided reviewed regularly. For solo routes and out of local authority placements annual transport costs exceeding £10,000 per child are not unusual.

Parents

Information for parents must be clear, setting out the entitlement criteria for transport, including that transport assessments will be regularly reviewed, entitlement will not be open ended, and setting out clearly parents' responsibilities (including meeting or accompanying the child to and from transport/school).

Members and senior management

Need to understand why this change of approach; and that it underpins inclusion and best value. However, Members and senior managers will need to support officers' decisions and assessments where these have been properly applied. 'Special needs' is an emotive topic and changes to entitlement criteria or provision are likely to provoke a mixture of positive and negative reaction from all involved, including potential challenges to the policy, appeals and individual officers' decisions.

Control

There is always pressure on local authorities to provide more free transport to more pupils, and to interpret their entitlement criteria more generously. However, if authorities are to ensure resources are focussed and that policies are implemented consistently and fairly they will need monitoring.



It is worth regularly reviewing the quality and timing of information received with transport requests, and making sure that transport is considered as part of the annual/regular review process.

It is also recommended that local authorities monitor the numbers of pupils who are qualifying for transport, and the basis they are qualifying e.g. behavioural reasons, physical needs etc. One of the greatest factors contributing to rising special education transport costs is the number of routes where

there is only one child travelling (often called 'solo routes') so monitoring the number of and reason for these is crucial. Even if a child's behaviour has resulted in a request for solo transport, this should be the last resort and for the shortest time possible. Reviewing medication timing, additional training in behaviour management for escorts, ensuring behaviour management is consistent with school policies, or changing the combination of pupils on vehicles may all be effective alternatives to consider before removing a child to a solo route.

Checklist:

- Do home to school transport policies and procedures encourage including children with special needs on mainstream transport?
- Are entitlement criteria consistent for all pupils and make clear that entitlement will be based on distance and within this on need?
- Is the assessment regarding the type of transport needed based on what the child/young person is capable of rather than assuming they can't do things?
- Is the information about the child gathered at the time of assessment sufficient for transport planners to enable them to provide appropriate transport?
- Is it assumed a child needs a home pick up, an escort, a taxi/small vehicle or to travel alone? If so why?
- Are transport entitlement and needs reviewed regularly? At least annually.
- Are transport needs and options discussed at transition review?
- Do you provide travel training/ independence training to encourage and enable the use of public transport, walking or cycling?
- Do you provide transport to support travel training e.g. recognise that school transport may be required from time to time if needs change, or temporarily if a young person is having difficulties?



3. Safety and reasonable comfort

School transport should be provided in safety and reasonable comfort this means providing the right equipment, the right vehicle and appropriately trained staff, working effectively with the school, parents, young people and transport providers. It is about children feeling safe as well as being safe when travelling to school.

Introduction

Home to school transport has an excellent safety record - and continues to improve. However, that does not mean that safety cannot continue to be improved, or that parents and pupils are not concerned about both road safety and personal security. We also know that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly vulnerable, especially to bullying.

For pupils who are in receipt of local authority transport to and from school the authority has a standard of care equivalent to that of a reasonable parent. The test should always therefore be - is this how you would be willing to let your child travel?

The Welsh Assembly Government has published guidance for local authorities and operators on carrying out risk assessments for home to school transport - which can be used for bus, coach, minibus, taxi and private hire car operators.

Some key measures as to whether your local authority is providing safe and secure home to school transport are below.

Key measures

- Number of injuries and accidents
- Number of complaints and incidents reported including of bullying
- Are all drivers and escorts trained and vetted?
- How many children have journey times of more than an hour?
- Feedback from parents, pupils and schools - do children feel safe travelling to and from school?

Communication

Contract standards

Within local authorities it is often transport departments who decide on policies relating to transport safety and standards. Operator, driver and vehicle licensing, maintenance, construct and use standards are already included in legislation which all registered operators must comply with. Conditions of contract should not 'gold plate' as this has the effect of usually pushing up contract prices and reducing the number of operators able or willing to bid for school transport work. However, if there are specific requirements over and above legal minima that are required for specific routes then contracts should clearly these out.

There is however a need to consider other aspects of the school journey that



will affect safety and comfort. Journey times, particularly for younger pupils and for those with severe needs, may be particularly important to consider. It is recommended that the local authority have general policies for all home to school transport in line with the Learner Travel Measure of no more than 45 minutes for primary aged children and an hour for older children.

However, journey times should also be considered as part of the child's assessment and where there are particular issues such as medication to be given at particular times, or within certain times this be considered on a case by case basis.

Adequate information and lead times

Ensuring that the information from the initial needs assessment is sufficient, and passed to transport staff in adequate time is essential, for many reasons:

- Equipment such as wheelchair securement systems are often chair specific, so **exact** information such as make and model is needed, and often there is a lead time needed to order such equipment.
- The space needed in a vehicle will depend on the size/weight of chairs, and whether other equipment e.g. walkers or luggage needs to be taken, or oxygen/assistance dog need to be carried
- If specific staff training is required then there needs to be adequate time to arrange this.

- Specific needs including child protection issues may affect which children are sharing vehicles, or where children are dropped off/picked up.

Regular reviews are needed as equipment and children's needs may change, conditions may improve or degenerate, or children may become more able as they get older. Schools, parents and young people as well as operators need to ensure that if equipment or circumstances change then transport staff are aware of these.

- **A half day workshop bringing together transport and special needs staff is useful. This can be used to improve understanding of each department's role e.g. Children's Services and Transport, the statementing and assessment process and changing provision.**
- **It will also improve the understanding of why (and when) specific information is needed for transport.**

Managing incidents and accidents

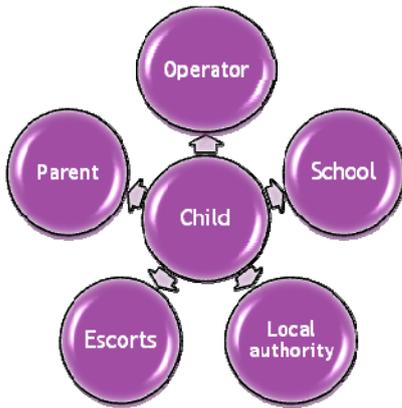
Local authorities should have in place clear procedures to deal with any school transport incidents and accidents that occur, including procedures for keeping parents informed, and dealing with media enquiries.

It is also important for all concerned to **learn from these incidents** and to have in place a process to identify trends, what went wrong, what lessons can be learned and to ensure these are implemented.



Culture

Safety and security are a shared responsibility, and there should be a culture of encouraging reporting of incidents, monitoring and of improvement.



Schools

Need to ensure that dropping off and picking up is **adequately supervised** and managed. If **school sites** are being redesigned or renovated, it is important that transport is considered. There needs to be adequate kerb side space that can be effectively supervised and enables several vehicles to drop off and pick up to minimise long delays. Pedestrians, cyclists, cars and school transport needs to be segregated as much as possible at school entrances.

School staff have a critical role in encouraging safety, providing **feedback** on services, reporting problems, and providing information on known changes to children, equipment or arrangements. Schools can also provide valuable support in escort training e.g. ensuring that escorts know and understand school **policies on behaviour management, bullying, handovers, and transferring medication** between home and school.

Highways

Transport staff are responsible for ensuring routes used by school children

are safe - including walking routes, and those used by contractors/local buses. (The Welsh Assembly Government has developed guidance on the risk assessment for school transport routes). Pick up and drop off locations should also be appropriate for the age and abilities of the child.

Parents

Continue to have a responsibility even if their child receives free home to school transport. Information for parents should be clear about this. Parents have a responsibility to ensure their child is at the pick-up point on time, suitably dressed (for example ensuring there are no trailing scarves that might get caught in doors/lifts), with relevant equipment, and met when dropped off in the afternoon. They need to liaise with transport staff if there are changes to their child's needs or equipment, and be encouraged to provide constructive feedback.

Escorts and drivers

These are key to the safety and welfare of children. The authority has a duty to ensure that they receive adequate training to do their job safely. Their training is likely to include:

- their duties, responsibilities e.g. wearing ID, suitable clothing, reporting incidents;
- lifting and handling;
- basic first aid;
- the correct use of equipment including wheelchair securement and safety harnesses/ car seats;
- behaviour management; and
- confidentiality of pupils' information.

Some local authorities are increasingly recognising the positive role escorts and drivers have in child protection and personal safety and offering advice and training on topics such as managing bullying.

Young people

Young people, themselves have a role in ensuring their safety and security, and the Welsh Assembly Government has produced a behaviour code. Young people should understand that behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable and that transport can and will be removed if they do not respect safety.

The Travel Behaviour Code Statutory Guidance published by the Welsh Assembly Government in December 2009 states that if a learner has special educational needs it is particularly important to consider the nature of the individual's circumstances and discuss any potential sanctions with their place of learning; and regard should be given to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales and in particular reference to dealing with misbehaviour.

Control - Monitoring and feedback

In November 2009 the Welsh Assembly Government published guidance for local authorities and operators in carrying out risk assessments on home to school transport ("Guidance on Home to School Transport Risk Assessments"). It is for use by bus, coach, minibus and taxi operators who undertake local authorities' home to school contracts.

Conditions of contract should set out clearly requirements for operators to report incidents and accidents. In addition, authorities should be monitoring complaints. Increasingly authorities are taking into account

performance and quality when assessing school transport contract bids, but any criteria should be clear and easy to understand.

As a minimum, authorities should have a pre qualification procedure for school transport operators to ensure all legal criteria are complied with e.g. insurance, vehicle, operator and driver licensing, vetting/CRB checks etc.

Local authority transport staff should regularly be visiting special schools, e.g. to discuss proposed routes prior to tendering. Schools can provide valuable input regarding proposed routes, for example advising on combinations of pupils. This information can save considerable time later by avoiding behavioural issues or the need to amend routes. Such visits can be combined with spot checks on operators and monitoring of drop off/pick up arrangements and timings.

Schools, parents, escorts, operators and pupils should be encouraged to provide constructive feedback (either through a regular survey, focus groups or on line) and to report concerns that can be used to monitor safety and quality.

Attending parents' evening can also be useful for transport staff in obtaining feedback.

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement should be strived for in school transport. Monitoring incidents and quality of service can be used to focus training for escorts and drivers. Improved standards can be reinforced through the "carrot" of longer contracts or weighing evaluation criteria for tenders towards quality performance, or the use of "stick" such as having penalty clause



schemes for non compliance with contracts.

Special needs transport is particularly challenging as equipment is often highly complex, and there is ongoing change and progress in terms of assistive devices that children may be using. Improving the information passed from special needs staff, schools or parents to transport staff is only useful if transport staff know the significance of it!

Local authority staff should therefore as a minimum have some regularly updated training. ATCO offers school transport workshops, or in house

staff such as safeguarding staff may be willing to provide training.

Alternatively, some time in special schools can often be useful to understand different types of needs and equipment used. Ongoing training will be needed in:

- disability awareness and the main impact different disabilities will have on mobility/safety;
- safeguarding /child protection including bullying
- safety equipment e.g. correct use of seat belts, car seats, lifts; and
- wheelchair securement and the main types of securement systems.

Checklist

- Is there a prequalification process in place for operators, ensuring they have the relevant documentation, insurance, licensing etc.
- Are conditions of contract clear in terms of the safety requirements?
- Are operators encouraged to improve safety and quality through procurement processes?
- Is feedback and reporting of incidents encouraged and these monitored to identify trends and possible counter measures?
- Are there clear policies and procedures on minimising journey times, and ensuring routes are safe e.g. pick up and drop off locations?
- Is information about pupils adequate and received in time to ensure equipment and vehicles are safe and suitable
- Is there a programme of staff training for escorts and drivers?
- Do you make regular school visits to monitor boarding and alighting, check contractors and liaise with the schools?
- Are parents and students contacted for their views on school transport safety and security?



4. Cost effective

As cost effective as possible means not only making sure transport provision is focussed on those who need it most, provided in the most cost effective way, but also that expenditure and trends are monitored to ensure expenditure is controlled. It is about knowing *what is spent, why, where and when*.

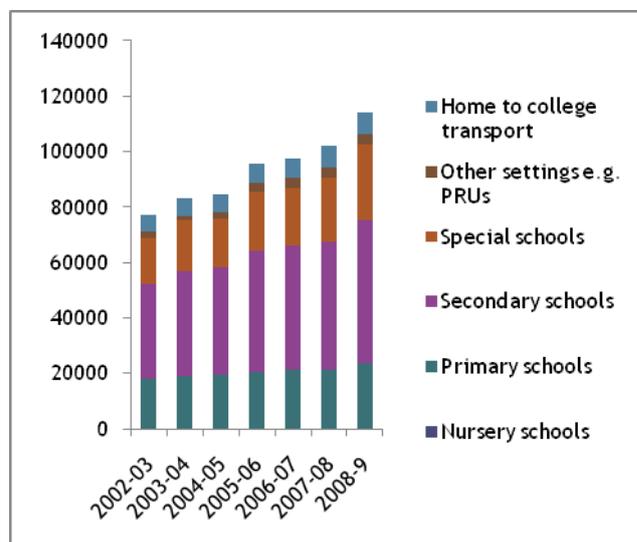
Traditionally, local authorities have focussed on the provision (and planning) parts of the school transport process to address costs e.g. negotiating with operators, increasing charges for pupils who are transported on a concessionary basis, regularly retendering to try and achieve lower daily rates or use of own fleet vehicles to try and introduce greater competition and thereby reduce costs.

These can each be effective methods in controlling costs, but often generate only relatively short term reductions in expenditure. Without tackling the problems of managing demand for special needs transport in the longer term, it is unlikely that authorities will achieve longer term control of expenditure or be able to demonstrate value for money.

Overall trends

Home to school transport expenditure in Wales has been rising in recent years, from approximately £77 million in 2002/3 to over £114 million in 2008/9. The largest element of this remains transport for pupils attending secondary schools, but expenditure for special needs transport has risen from less than £19m to over £30m during the past six years.

Figure 1: Home to school transport expenditure £000s by sector, all Wales



Communication

Local authorities should be clear on who is responsible for the budget for special needs transport and for mainstream home to school transport; and how this is set, and monitored, what is coded to which line and why. This is essential if there is to be consistent year on year information, and effective benchmarking and monitoring.

Often local authority staff are dependent upon the end of year out-turn figures to know what has happened! However, by then it is usually too late to prevent any overspend, and simply knowing there is an overspend is unlikely to help in knowing why costs have risen, what is driving them or how they can be controlled. Using the measures above can give an indication of what is driving costs.

Effective communication of key monitoring information, shared regularly between transport and special needs staff is essential. It is useful, on a monthly basis, for the following information to be shared between transport and education / children's services staff.

	Why
Total number transported	Gives overall trends and can see if this following overall trends for special needs
New transport requests	Again monitors trends, and any significant increases can be identified early
Total daily cost of transport	Provides an ongoing indication that can be used to estimate (*190 days) likely yearly outturn
No of solo routes	A list of these can be useful to review regularly - and identify and challenge whether solo route appropriate in each case
Number out county/ authority	Generally out of authority travel is longer distance, more likely to involve small numbers of pupils and therefore disproportionately expensive. If there is an ongoing demand for out- authority placements this may need to be taken into account in planning and evaluating the need for future resource requirements in the authority
Number of schools served	The more schools served the less likelihood there is of increasing vehicle utilisation, and more likely to have solo routes. Should feed back to staff making placement decisions. Where appropriate to the child's educational needs preference should always be given to placement at school where other pupils who are transported already attending.

Culture

The culture within the local authority should not assume that transport costs rising at three times the rate of inflation are inevitable.

Transport should be considered early and often in special needs. It should to be considered at the start of the assessment process, taken into account when placements are being decided, and reviewed regularly - at least annually.

If there are two suitable but similar placements these may have very different transport implications. Often, at the present time, transport is considered late in the process and too often placements are made with little, if any, regard for the cost implications of transport.

Control

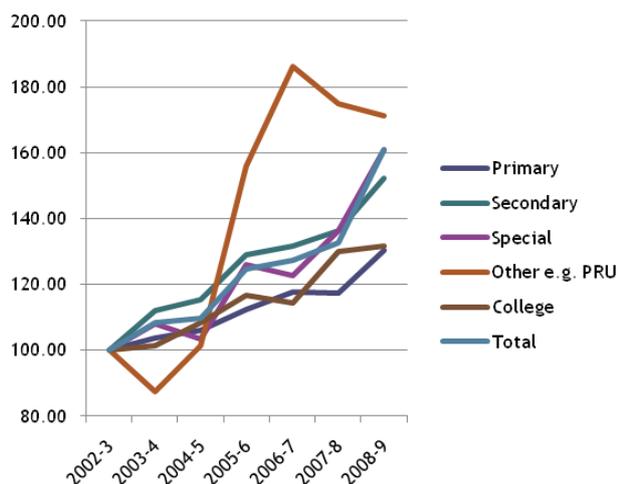
Being able to monitor what is being spent is critical to being able to control costs.

Understanding what is driving costs is essential if local authorities are going to manage their budgets. There should be regular, ongoing, monitoring of the overall spend on a month by month basis.

Reviewing trends over several years can be useful, and the section 52 data provided on the StatsWales website (or via county treasurers) can provide a comparison with other Welsh authorities, and ongoing trends.

Index of school transport costs 2002-3 = 100





Home to school transport expenditure overall has risen by about 60% in the past six years, driven largely by special needs transport. This may be due to coding on the section 52 returns, but does suggest some notable pressure on home to school transport for pupils with special needs.

Monitoring the proportion of expenditure on special needs transport and how this is changing is also a useful measure for local authorities. Generally more urban authorities have a higher proportion of school transport expenditure on special needs transport, reflecting the fact that fewer pupils will live more than walking distance from school. Rural authorities typically spend a lower proportion of their budget on special needs transport. In Wales overall, about 23% of home to school transport expenditure is on special needs transport - but the range is wide from about 10% to more than 60%.

Benchmarking

Whilst monitoring national figures for Wales is useful, so is benchmarking between individual authorities, however, caution should be exercised when comparing cost per pupil to ensure that comparisons are like for like.

Overall, comparison of trends, and comparisons of average unit costs are the most useful and comparable between authorities using current data.

Within the local authority

School transport databases should be up to date and able to calculate spare capacity/vehicle utilisation, costs per pupil, daily rates, annual rates for contracts, and readily be able to identify those routes with very high costs, low utilisation, or solo routes.

Total local expenditure by month/contract daily rates

Many local authorities contract for home to school transport with operators paid on the basis of day rates. Monitoring the total cost of daily transport can provide useful information as to overall trends and pressures within the authority. A spreadsheet that calculates an annualised rate on the basis of daily rate (usually *190 days) can also give an indication of likely year end spend and is useful to monitor against budget.

Reviewing the range of daily rates can also be useful. Typically rates will be higher for accessible vehicles or for larger vehicles. For example, knowing that the range in daily rates for vehicles has changed from £15 per day for the cheapest taxi runs and more than £150 for larger vehicles to now being £10 per day for the cheapest taxi runs but that the larger vehicles are actually costing more at £175 per day suggests that competition/the market is changing.

This may mean that local authorities can revise routes or how tenders are invited to reflect changing markets e.g. using more, smaller vehicles if they are cheaper than larger vehicles.

Cost per pupil

The most useful measure is the unit cost of transport. This is currently difficult to benchmark between authorities as often information on the number of pupils transported is limited. But, typically for special needs transport costs are £2,000-2,500 per year in Wales. However, monitoring this information within an authority can be useful. Local authorities should monitor particularly high costs routes e.g. those that are over £5,000 per pupil p.a. This may be due to them being particularly complex routes, or pupils with very high level of needs, or may be due to an out authority placement/solo route, but should be rigorously reviewed to see if transport can be rationalised, or whether the request is appropriate.

Spare capacity and number of solo routes

Knowing which routes have spare capacity on them is essential to ensuring routes are not duplicated and the network being used efficiently. The number of solo routes (i.e. where there is only one child on a vehicle) is a measure that should be monitored monthly at least. There should be a clear reason why any child is travelling alone.

If a solo route is requested for behavioural reasons this should be the last resort, and provided only after alternatives such as behaviour management, changing combinations of pupils, additional support from the school, review of medication have been tried. Solo routes are currently one of the main drivers of home to school transport expenditure rises.

Checklist

Key questions

- Do you know who holds the budget, how this is set and monitored, and coded in the section 52?
- Do you know the main drivers of costs in your authority - is it overall rises in number of pupils, solo routes, out county placements, rises in contract daily rates?
- Is your contract data base set out so that you can get key measures easily and quickly and be able to monitor changes?
- Is there a culture of considering transport early on in the assessment and placement decision making process?
- Do you provide monthly management information to the budget holder/transport commissioners so that they can see where there are pressures?
- Do you have a mechanism where transport requests can be challenged - e.g. for an out authority placement?



Glossary of terms and acronyms

Annual review	Each child who has a statement of special needs will have an annual review, that reviews educational progress and educational and other needs.
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorders
ATCO	Association of Transport Coordinating Officers - open to all those involved in home to school transport in local authorities.
BESD	Behavioural, Emotional, and Social Difficulties
DCELLS	Welsh Assembly Department for Children, Education and Life Long Learning and Skills
EOTA	Education that is provided other than at school e.g. home tuition.
Escort	Person provided by the local authority to supervise transport - may be specifically allocated to support an individual child, or to supervise all children on one vehicle. Some authorities call these staff monitors. They will ensure safe boarding, alighting and behaviour on the vehicle. However, the parents are also responsible for meeting the bus or taxi/ minibus.
Estyn	HM Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales
HI	Hearing Impaired
Learner Travel Measure	The Welsh legislation and code of practice that sets out the minimum standard for home to school transport in Wales



Glossary of terms and acronyms

MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulties
MSI	Multi Sensory Impairment
PMED	Physical/Medical Difficulties
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
PRUs	Pupil Referral Units
Safeguarding	Previously referred to as child protection.
Seat belt	All children on school transport (other than on a bus) must wear a seat belt (three point i.e. lap and shoulder belt). Seat belts have to meet specific standards for crash protection, and a restraint on a wheelchair or a harness will not offer the same protection.
Section 52	This is the annual financial return that sets out a local authority's budget and actual expenditure on education, including home to school transport, each year.
Special seat	There are specific seats /insets within wheelchairs that may be used to provide additional support to children. Authorities will need to assess each to ensure that children are appropriate secured.
SLCD	Speech, Language Communication Difficulties
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties
SLPD	Specific Learning Difficulties e.g. dyslexia
StatsWales	The Welsh Assembly Government's website that includes local authority financial, pupil and other statistics for each year.
Statement	A formal document that will set out the educational and non educational needs and provision for a child with special needs. Only those children with the most severe needs will have a statement.
Transitional review	This is the review undertaken to plan for a young person's transition from school to college/education/employment and adult life.
VI	Visually Impaired

Useful websites, organisations and references

Websites

Welsh Assembly Government - Education and Skills

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/?lang=en>

Welsh Assembly Government - Integrated transport

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/transport/integrated/?lang=en>

Estyn

<http://www.estyn.gov.uk/home.asp>

Independent Safeguarding Authority

<http://www.isa.gov.org.uk/Default.aspx?page=2>

Children's Commissioner

<http://www.childcomwales.org.uk/>

Useful reference documents, guidance and codes of practice

SEN Code of Practice

http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy_strategy_and_planning/schools/sencodeofpractice/?lang=en

Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/wales/mwa2008/mwa_20080002_en_1

Learner Travel (Wales) Measure - Operational Guidance

<http://wales.gov.uk/legislation/programme/assemblymeasures/draftlearnertravelmeasure/guidance/?lang=en>

Guidance on school transport risk assessment

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/transport/publications/hometoschooltransport/?lang=en>

Travel Behaviour Code

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/transport/publications/travelbehaviourcode/?lang=en>



Transport organisations

Association of Transport Coordinating Officers

<http://atco-uk.com/index.php>

Disability Organisations

Disability Wales

<http://www.disabilitywales.org/>

Learning Disability Wales

<http://www.learningdisabilitywales.org.uk/>

National Autistic Society Wales

<http://www.nas.org.uk/nas/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=408>

RNIB Wales

<http://www.rnib.org.uk/ABOUTUS/CONTACTDETAILS/CYMRU/Pages/cymru.aspx>

RNID Wales

http://www.rnid.org.uk/about/in_your_area/wales/?from=/wales/

Equipment suppliers

Unwins Safety Systems

<http://www.unwin-safety.com/>

Qstraint

http://www.qstraint.com/index.php?lang=en_eu

For young people

Wales Youth Parliament

http://www.walesyouthparliament.com/e_master1.htm

Funky Dragon

<http://www.funkydragon.org.uk/index.asp>

Whizz Kidz

<http://www.whizz-kidz.org.uk/>

PHAB

<http://www.phabengland.org.uk/index.php>



Special Educational Needs Code of Practice

The Code of Practice for Wales sets out the guidance regarding the provision and education of children with special educational needs including the statutory assessment process. It requires that the special educational needs of the great majority of children should be met effectively within mainstream settings. The Code sets out the fundamental principles which should be borne in mind and the critical success factors.

Fundamental Principles

The detailed guidance in this Code is informed by these general principles and should be read with them clearly in mind:

- a child with special educational needs should have their **needs met**
- the special educational needs of children will normally be met *in mainstream schools* or settings
- the *views of the child* should be sought and taken into account
- *parents* (and all those with parental responsibility) have *a vital role* to play in supporting their child's education
- children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education.

The Critical Success Factors listed are:

- the culture, practice, management and deployment of resources in a school or setting are designed to ensure all children's needs are met
- LEAs, schools and settings work together to ensure that any child's special educational needs are *identified early*
- LEAs, schools and settings *exploit best practice* when devising interventions
- those responsible for special educational provision *take into account the wishes of the child* concerned, in the light of their age and understanding
- special education professionals and parents *work in partnership*
- special education professionals *take into account the views of individual parents* in respect of their child's particular needs
- interventions for each child are *reviewed regularly* to assess their impact, the child's progress and the views of the child, their teachers and their parents
- there is close co-operation between all the agencies concerned and *a multi-disciplinary* approach to the resolution of issues
- LEAs make assessments in accordance with the prescribed *time limits*
- where an LEA determines a child's special educational needs, statements are clear and detailed, made within prescribed time limits, *specify monitoring arrangements, and are reviewed annually.*



Home to school transport: Learner Travel Measure

The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 was passed by the National Assembly for Wales on the 30th September 2008 and received Royal Assent on the 10th December 2008. The Measure covers, amongst other things, duties on local authorities to assess learner travel needs and to make transport arrangements for defined groups of learners. It provides a basis for a better joined up approach for pre and post-16 learners. Within a common framework for Wales there is now a defined minimum level of transport entitlement with authorities having discretion to do more.

The guidance to the measure states that “A local authority must consider a pupil’s special educational needs, irrespective of whether the pupil has a SEN statement, when deciding which is the nearest suitable school. Suitable schools for pupils with SEN are often further away than the nearest local school and a high proportion of pupils with SEN will be entitled to free transport. The transport requirements of pupils with SEN or a disability will depend on individual circumstances and the route they must travel. If a pupil cannot walk to school because of the nature of their special education needs or disability, the local authority must provide free home to school transport even if the distance is less than the statutory limit (section 4 of the Measure).

“Local authorities should have a **clear and consistent policy on transport provision** for pupils SEN and for those with disabilities, covering for example, conditions such as autistic spectrum disorder for whom disruption of routine can cause great stress.

“An authority should **review a pupil’s entitlement and transport needs on a regular basis**. For statemented pupils, this might be carried out as part of the annual review of the statement, irrespective of whether or not the statement specifically includes transport matters.

“It is suggested that the following matters are covered by authorities’ policies on transport provision for pupils with disabilities or SEN and where appropriate these matters should also be considered when contracts are tendered:

- groups of pupils covered by the policy and how entitlement for free transport is assessed;
- escort provision;
- transport to mainstream schools, special schools, and residential facilities;
- facilitation of parental preference;
- charges for spare places on dedicated transport for pupils not entitled to free transport;
- standards for staff and vehicles, including child protection arrangements;
- good practice on transporting children in wheelchairs or special seats;
- training for drivers and escorts in disability equality and access to specific additional training for escorts;



- training for drivers and escorts to use special equipment and communication tools to support pupils in managing their behaviour;
- appeals against refusal of requests for free transport;
- complaints procedures; and
- arrangements for monitoring services, including liaison with and feedback from parents and schools.

“As part of their procedures for tendering, authorities must bear in mind their duties under the Data Protection Act 1998 in relation to sensitive personal data. Tender documents must not identify pupils to be transported or information that could be used to identify them. Depending upon the needs of the pupil, authorities should work with schools and operators to ensure that detailed but confidential information is available so that appropriate provision can be made. This might include information about:

- pupil attendance: which schools and days and times a pupil attends;
- pupil needs for supervision, or requirements for specially trained personnel to manage behavioural or other needs;
- wheelchair provision - for example ascertaining details about the make and model of a pupil’s wheelchair to ensure that the transport vehicle is appropriate and that the driver or escort is trained to operate the equipment;
- special seating or harnesses;
- special assistance requirements: for example, lifting or handling of pupils in and out of vehicles;
- medical needs/medication;
- restricted access to addresses or people as a result of a court order; and
- emergency contact telephone numbers”.



Example of a needs assessment form

PUPIL INFORMATION – SPECIAL NEEDS TRANSPORT PUPIL INFORMATION					
Forenames:			Surname:		
Preferred name:					
DOB:		dd/mm/yy	Gender: M		F
Address 1					
Post code:					
Any potential problems for transport with home address(es) e.g. flats with difficult entrance, farm track					
Address 2 (if shared custody and transport to be provided from this address provide days transport needed from this address)					
Post code:					
Parents' /carers' names:					
Parents' contact details		Telephone mobile/home/work		Telephone mobile/home/work	
Any restrictions on releasing child?	Yes	No	If yes – please give details:		
SCHOOL INFORMATION					
School(s) attended:					
Date transport required from: (Note that 10 days lead time is the minimum required to arrange transport)					
Days attending:					
Transport required (tick)	Monday	Tuesday	Weds	Thurs	Friday
am					
Lunchtime					
pm					
If respite transport required (please give details of which days, to where):					

CHILD'S NEEDS AND ABILITIES					
Reason for special needs transport requested e.g.	ASD disabilities BESD Communication Other		Learning difficulties/ Sensory Physical		
Physical needs/abilities:					
Can child walk with/without help	Y	N	Can s/he manage steps	Y	N
Does s/he need to travel in wheelchair	Y	N	If s/he can transfer to bus seat does wheelchair or walker needs to be transported with child	Y	N
Information about wheelchair Make/model/Electric/Manual etc					
Does child need car seat? /Other harness?					
If so what size? Details					
Behavioural needs:					
Any behaviours that transport staff need to be aware of and any required actions?					
Is there a behavioural plan for this pupil? Yes/No					
Communication:					
Please provide any information for transport staff that may be relevant e.g. hearing impaired, visually impaired, needs to sign, use communication equipment, lip reader					
Preferred language: Welsh/English/Other (please give details)					
Medical:					
Any information of relevance to transport staff e.g epilepsy, or other medical need that may not be obvious.					
Does child need to take medication with them to/from school? Yes/No					
Is there a medical plan for this pupil? Yes/No					
Any other information transport staff should be aware of: e.g. allergies; travel sickness etc					