



Home to School Travel in Redcar and Cleveland

**A Guide for Children,
Young People, Parents
and Carers**

2025 / 2026



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Introduction

This guide provides information on the transport service Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council provide and outlines the standards we expect in return. The standards ensure that we offer a service that is safe, comfortable, and dependable and represents value for money.

This guide is divided into four parts:

Section 1: For all users of transport

Section 2: For those using dedicated minibuses / taxis.

Section 3: Safeguarding on transport.

Section 4: General Information

If you are assessed as being eligible for support for home to school travel, or offered transport on a discretionary basis, you may be offered one of the following:

- A travel permit to get to school using public transport.
- A school bus pass
- A seat on a vehicle (coach / minibus/ taxi) which will be appropriate to the individual needs of passengers and operated by the Council or an external company.
- Personal Travel Budget (a monthly payment to help parents with the cost of transporting their child to school).
- Independent Travel Training
- Discretionary Spare Seat on a coach or minibus
- Cycling Allowance
- Travel Advice

Please note that a charge may be made for travel passes.

Discretionary spare seats are charged at £13 per week, this fee is a nominal charge and is not reflective of the actual cost of transport to the Council, the charge is agreed each year as part of the Council's Annual Fees and Charges.

We may also offer Passenger Assistants to accompany children along walking routes, for example if both parents have a disability preventing them from accompanying their child and they are unable to make alternate arrangements.



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Section 1: For all users of transport

1.1 Approved operators, vehicles, and drivers

We only use approved operators for providing transport services. Such companies must ensure that they provide vehicles that are clean, roadworthy, and fit for purpose. The same vehicle should be used each day although there will be occasions when a change is needed, for example when vehicles are off the road for maintenance.

We only use approved drivers to provide transport services. We try to minimise changes in drivers, and it should usually be the same driver each day to collect your children for both journeys. There will be occasions when a change of driver is necessary, but this should be the exception. Approved drivers are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and must also attend further driver training. Drivers can be identified by the 'Approved Photo ID badges' which they should wear whilst driving school buses or taxis.

Drivers should drive in a safe manner and must always obey the Highway Code and speed limits. They should be polite and respectful of passengers and other road users and should avoid using language that may cause offence. Drivers should not smoke at least 30 minutes before picking up children. If you have any concerns over the vehicle or driver, please let us know.

1.2 Time Keeping

The transport service needs to operate to time. This means that you also need to be ready on time. Buses/taxis will not wait for those who are late. If you miss the bus/taxi, it is your responsibility to get to school at your own expense. Occasionally transport may be late; severe weather, traffic incidents and road works can all lead to delays but if you are concerned about the level of service please contact the Transport Team.

1.3 Severe Weather

In the event of extreme weather, the transport service may need to be withdrawn or sent early. We make decisions based on local information and there will be times for safety reasons when we will need to withdraw certain services. You are asked to contact us or your child's school for updates in the event of severe weather. Regular updates will be posted on the Council's website, Twitter, and Facebook pages. There will also be times when schools need to close early, and transport will arrive as soon as it can be made available. The staff in the school will make every effort to inform you when this happens so that you can be at home to meet your children.



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1.4 Adverse Weather

During times of adverse weather such as snow/ ice/ extreme heat, access into residential streets for our buses can be difficult and we may invoke our emergency plan. Should this happen, you will be asked to bring your child to a different pick-up point, for example to a main road. The driver or passenger assistant will inform you of any change in the arrangements. You will then need to be at this location for their return trip home.

The driver has discretion to alter the route in accordance with prevailing road conditions and will attempt, where safe, to drop children at the usual drop off points.

1.5 Passenger and Safe Travel Rules

Children and young people need to be aware that their actions on the school journey could have serious consequences. We will act against anyone failing to meet the required standards. Please ensure your child is familiar with the following Passenger Rules and Safe Travel Rules.

1.5.1 Passenger Rules

- Always carry your pass when using school transport and this must be produced when boarding the vehicle. Travel may be refused without a valid pass. There is a charge of £20.00 for replacement permits that have been lost or damaged. School can offer a temporary permit up to 5 days only.
- Behave in a courteous and safe manner which does not threaten the health, safety or comfort of other passengers, staff, or other road users. Bullying will not be tolerated.
- Remain seated in the vehicle during travel and always use the seatbelts.
- Respect the rights and feelings of others.
- Store baggage in appropriate spaces or under seats. Bags should not be left in aisles or on seats.
- Leave the vehicle in a clean and tidy condition, taking any litter with you.
- Do not eat or drink on school transport.
- Do not smoke on transport this includes the use of Vapes and E-Cigarettes. Under no circumstances should lighters and matches be brought onto vehicle (please note that transport providers have their own rules regarding smoking and vaping which may result in an immediate suspension from public transport).

1.5.2 Safe Travel Rules

- When waiting for a bus or other vehicle, stand on the pavement, well back from the road. It is dangerous to play around at bus stops.
- Wait for people to get off the bus before getting on.



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- Follow the driver's instructions and do not distract them.
- If you do need to cross the road after getting off a bus, wait for the bus to move away first. This allows other road users to see you and for you to check that it is safe to cross.

1.6 Behaviour Protocol

We aim to ensure the safety and well-being of all students travelling on Home to School Transport to enable us to provide a safe, efficient, and reliable transport service. All students using Council organised transport are expected to meet standards of behaviour that will ensure their own safety, and that of Drivers, Passenger Assistants, and other passengers. On occasions, student behaviour may not be to an acceptable level and will need to be addressed.

1.6.1 Behaviour Principles

- Where behaviour is unacceptable, students may be suspended/withdrawn from transport, if they are suspended/withdrawn, it remains the parent/carers responsibility to ensure their child gets to school.
- We will work alongside schools to ensure that students on transport can travel safely, when this is not the case, we may have to look at temporary withdrawal.
- Health and safety is taken extremely seriously and must not be compromised.
- Any action will take into account any special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities the student may have that impact on their presenting behaviour. Where this is the case, the Council will work with schools, parents/carers, and students to identify alternative solutions where possible to safely transport them to their school/educational setting.
- Transport operators reserve the right to report any incidents to the relevant authorities, and/or seek financial compensation from parent/carers for damage to vehicle by the student. Payment does not give immediate right to start travelling on transport again.

1.6.2 Definition of "Unacceptable Behaviour"

Behaviour which is likely to significantly offend or endanger others, including, but not limited to:

- Damage to the vehicle by the student
- Actions which may constitute a health and safety risk to themselves or others.
- Smoking, vaping, e-cigarettes, or carrying lighter/matches onboard vehicles.
- Physical violence (such as nipping, scratching, biting, hitting, spitting, kicking) to Driver, Passenger Assistant, or other students
- Verbal, written or online abuse of other people including but not limited to swearing, taunting, racist, sexist, transphobic or homophobic comments, threatening behaviour.
- Incitement of others to engage in misbehaviour.



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- Making repeated malicious false allegations of mistreatment requiring investigation.
- Serious misuse of a bus pass, including allowing others to use their travel pass.
- Failure to comply with the reasonable instructions of the driver, passenger assistant, Council officer, or authorised member of school / establishment staff.
- Carrying a blade, weapon, or sharp instrument.
- Opening emergency doors.
- Interfering with Driver whilst vehicle is in motion or touching vehicle controls.

1.6.3 Considerations when applying behaviour sanctions

Factors which need to be considered in Applying Sanctions:

- the seriousness of the incident / behaviour, and its impact on others;
- the frequency of such incidents / behaviours by the student.

Consideration should also be given to the:

- age and understanding of the student;
- the student's Special Educational Needs where applicable;
- whether the incident / behaviour was perpetrated alone, or as a part of a group;
- the intention of the student;
- the student's emotional state;
- student's behavioural history on school transport;
- the circumstances preceding the incident;
- the impact of the behaviour on others and /or property;
- interventions/strategies used by school, parents, or professionals to manage/change the student's behaviour;

1.6.4 Behaviour sanctions/ consequences

An incident report form will need to be completed by the Driver, Passenger Assistants, or Transport Supplier so that the incident can be reviewed. A sanction should only be applied after investigation of an incident, which will be carried out with the School to look at measures to improve the behaviour and agree actions to resolve the issue.

1. Where a student's behaviour on transport is causing concern and an incident has occurred, the Transport Team will contact the school, so they can raise concerns with parent/carers as per school behaviour policies. At that stage they will be advised of potential consequences of a failure to improve behaviour and to discuss potential solutions to help to improve and avoid further incidents. Depending on the incident, the Transport Team may need to withdraw/suspend transport after assessing potentials risks.



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2. Where there are repeated incidents or a serious incident within a school year, the Council may withdraw transport assistance on a temporary or permanent basis. The Council will consider withdrawal of transport provision for a reasonable period of time according to circumstances, generally a school term. The decision to withdraw will be made by the Transport Service. If transport is suspended or withdrawn it will be parents' responsibility to ensure their child attends school at their own cost, however, if the student is eligible for transport under the policy and it is withdrawn, the Council may provide a Personal Travel Budget as an alternative.
3. External transport suppliers may also withdraw transport from a student if they deem an individual incident has caused serious concern, risk, damage or safety issues to their vehicle, driver or passenger assistant. In this instance the Transport Team would inform the school to ensure parent/carers are aware of the decision. In such circumstances, there may be a short period of time before transport is reinstated.
4. After the withdrawal exclusion period, schools or parent/carers would need to ensure that discussions and actions have been taken with students to ensure that behaviour issues will no longer cause any risks or safety concerns on transport.

Please note that transport providers can charge parents/ carers for the cost of any damage caused to their vehicle and where appropriate any acts of vandalism, theft, assault (verbal and physical) may be reported to the police.

For vehicles that are fitted with CCTV cameras, recorded images will be used to identify those responsible for any poor behaviour and damage. The images which are of 'prosecution quality' will be used to support any action.

Section 2 – Dedicated minibuses and taxis

This section provides advice for those using minibuses and taxis for the journey to and from school and college.

For students using small vehicle transport such as people carriers and minibuses please also refer to the Small Vehicle Parent Agreement which is available on the Council's website.

2.1 Passenger Assistants

Passenger Assistants (escorts) may be appointed to support the needs of young people on transport. Passenger Assistants are subject to enhanced DBS checks and are provided with a range of training. Passenger Assistants can be identified by their



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official photo-ID badge / uniform. If you have any concerns over the Passenger Assistant, please contact the Transport Team.

2.2 Pick up and drop off

Some children and young people on dedicated transport will be picked up and dropped off at their home address, others will have alternative pick up and drop off points identified. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to get children ready so they can be picked up on time in the morning and to be present at the drop off for their return.

It is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their child is ready to leave for school by the agreed pick up time when the Home to School Travel vehicle arrives (either at the home or at a designated pick up spot). Where students are collected from home parents need to look out for the driver (please note, drivers and PAs are not usually able to leave their vehicle to knock on doors as they are not permitted to leave other passengers unattended).

If parents are not at the drop off point on time, we will wait for a maximum of two minutes. Where students are dropped off at home, parents need to look out for the driver and open the door (drivers and PAs are not usually able to leave their vehicle to knock on doors as they are not permitted to leave other passengers unattended).

If the parent does not attend to meet their child from transport the driver will then contact the Transport Team who will make attempts to contact parents/ carers. If the Transport Team are unable to reach a parent or any emergency contact the Transport Team will follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Please be aware that the Council will withdraw transport arrangements for any parents / carers who repeatedly cause inconvenience for the service and distress for their children in this way. We may also pass on any additional costs to you (fuel / staffing).

2.3 Reporting school absence to the Council

If a student is absent from school due to sickness, planned leave or suspension, parents must notify the Transport Team that transport is not required. This can be done via the Absence Notification Form on the Council's website.

<https://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-transport-information-for-parents>

Please do not notify drivers, taxi operators or passenger assistance of absence, always inform the Transport Team who will pass on this information.



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2.4 Passengers using wheelchairs

We will only carry passengers in wheelchairs that are appropriate for use on transport. All wheelchairs will be subject to review to ensure that we comply with this standard.

Transport will not be provided for any passengers using a wheelchair that has not been appropriately checked. Wheelchairs will be secured to the vehicle using appropriate four-point restraints. Additionally, a floor mounted seat belt will also be provided for use by the passenger. Use of posture belts are not a suitable substitute for a seatbelt.

3 Safeguarding and safety on transport

The safeguarding of children and young people on transport remains our top priority. All drivers and passenger assistants subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and attend training sessions in 'safeguarding.' Our buses and minibuses display information on who to contact should anyone have any concerns or need advice over any potential safeguarding issues.

Officers from the Council will regularly monitor the quality of the transport service and will conduct both random and planned checks / visits to ensure that our drivers and passengers assistants are working to the standards we expect and the vehicles in operation are well maintained and roadworthy. Any failings in this regard are dealt with instantly to always ensure the safety of our services.

If you wish to report any concerns, please contact Transport Services.

Telephone: 01642 776906 / 01642 444974 / 01642 444998

Email: transport@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

Website: www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk



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4 General Information

4.1 Review of Transport

The provision of transport is reviewed on an annual basis in order to check eligibility against the transport policy and consider the type of transport provided. As children get older and of course in line with their individual development, the emphasis for the review will be focused on independent travel.

Where students have SEND needs the transport team will contact schools to initiate the transport review process, all other students must apply for transport every year. The application form is available on the council's website at:

<https://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-transport-services>

4.2 Changing address and contact details

If you are planning to move address, you must inform the Transport Team immediately, in most cases a reapplication for transport will be required as eligibility for support could be affected.

Parents must ensure that the Transport Team have up to date contact details for parents including telephone number and email address. Please email transport@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk to update your details.

4.3 Independent Travel Training Programme

We will work closely with schools and individuals to develop the independent travel skills of young people, where appropriate. Travel training is the process by which a person works with our Travel Trainers to develop the skills required, and their confidence, to make a trip between two places on their own and with safety. This trip could be as simple as finding their own way to the corner shop or as complicated as undertaking a multi-component journey to another town or city.

Travel training will allow an individual to develop the confidence and skills needed to travel alone in a safe way, making it easier for young people to make new friends, meet up with existing friends, get to school, college or training and become more independent in other areas of their life. Developing travel training skills before leaving school can help students in readiness for their move college and prepare for adulthood.

If you think your child would benefit from independent travel training, please contact the SEN Team via SEN@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk who will put you in touch with our travel training service.



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4.4 Concerns and Complaints

We rely on feedback from children, young people, parents, and carers on the level of service we provide. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are unhappy with the service or wish to complain. It helps if you can provide as much detail as possible; date, name of driver, frequency, what happened etc. Leaving problems to build up does not help and without key information it can be difficult to challenge drivers and transport operators.

We also welcome compliments and positive suggestions for improvement.

4.5 Contacting the Transport Team

To contact the Transport Team

Email: transport@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

Telephone: 01642 776906 / 01642 444974 / 01642 444998



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