



Guidelines for Special Educational Needs Place Specialised Transport

September 2025

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Introduction

Welcome to Place Specialised Transport, Home to School Transport (HTST) Guidance.

This guidance has been developed to support safe, consistent, and high-quality transport for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The PLACE Department's Specialised Transport Service at Derbyshire County Council is responsible for delivering HTST across the county. Each day, we support over 2,000 children and young people, including those with SEND, those in the care of Children's Social Care, and those with behavioural needs, by providing reliable, tailored transport to and from school.

This guidance is intended for everyone involved in HTST, including:

- Parents and carers
- Children and young people who use the service
- Transport operators, drivers, and passenger assistants (PAs)
- Schools and colleges

It sets out the key standards, expectations, and responsibilities that help us work together to ensure every journey is safe, respectful, and supportive.

You'll find important information on:

- How to apply for transport assistance
- The types of transport or travel support available
- What level of service to expect
- How to raise a concern or make an enquiry

We understand that consistency is especially important for children and young people who rely on routine. When transport is provided (e.g. taxis or minibuses), we aim to maintain the same driver, PA, and vehicle wherever possible. If a change becomes necessary, we will make every effort to provide at least 10 working days' notice to help you prepare your child or young person for the transition.

We hope you find this guidance helpful. If you have any questions or need further support, our contact details can be found at the end of this document.

Our Commitment

At Derbyshire County Council, we are committed to delivering high-quality Home to School Transport (HTST) for children and young people. We expect all transport operators working on our behalf to uphold the same high standards of care, safety, and professionalism.

We understand that the journey to and from school is more than just a routine, it's an important part of your child's day. Providing the right transport helps ensure that your child arrives at school ready to learn and returns home without unnecessary stress. This can make a meaningful difference to their educational progress, emotional wellbeing, and social development.

If your child is eligible for transport support, we are committed to ensuring that their journey is:

- Safe – with trained staff and well-maintained vehicles
- Secure – with appropriate supervision and safeguarding in place
- Comfortable – with consideration for individual needs and preferences

Where appropriate, we also aim to promote independence and confidence through the transport experience, helping children and young people develop important life skills.

Guidance for Parents

Applying for SEND/HTST

Guidance and information on the application process and the application forms are available online at: [Home to School Transport - Stage 1 - Information - Self \(achieveservice.com\)](https://www.achieveservice.com)

All information regarding Derbyshire County Council's Home to School Transport Service, including our most up to date Policy Statements can be found on our Local Offer: [Home to School Transport - Derbyshire Local Offer](#)

If you are unable to access the SEND/HTST application forms online, then please email sendtransport@derbyshire.gov.uk

Whilst we will make every effort to arrange transport or mileage reimbursement payments in time for the start of the new academic year, we cannot guarantee this for applications received after the published closing date. However, please be assured that all late applications will still be processed as soon as possible.

Applications for Children Aged Under 5 (Nursery-Aged Children)

Travel assistance for children under the age of 5, prior to the term in which they turn five, will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, and is subject to meeting the standard transport eligibility criteria. Each online application [Home to School Transport - Stage 1 - Information - Self](#) is assessed on an individual basis. Therefore, parents and carers should not assume automatic entitlement to transport support for nursery-aged children.

Applications for Children Aged 5-16.

Statutory school age begins at the start of the term following a child's 5th birthday and ends on the last Friday in July of the academic year in which they turn 16. Children who are below statutory school age are not automatically entitled to transport to an early-years setting or school.

An online application [Home to School Transport - Stage 1 - Information - Self](#) must be completed for all students requiring transport if they are:

- Applying for transport for the first time
- Moving to a new address
- Transferring between schools or sites
- Moving from primary to secondary education (typically at age 11)

If none of the above applies and you have previously submitted an online transport application, you do not need to reapply. Transport will continue to be provided until you are contacted and advised to submit a new application.

Submitting Your Online Transport Application

The information you provide through the online application form serves two key purposes:

1. It enables the SEND Transport team, within our Children's Services department, to assess your child's eligibility for transport in line with Derbyshire's published Home to School Transport (HTST) policy.
2. If your child is found eligible, it allows the PLACE Specialised Transport Service to determine the most appropriate type of transport and support required.

To ensure your application can be properly assessed, please complete the form in full [Home to School Transport - Stage 1 - Information - Self](#) and include as much detail as possible about your child's transport needs. Eligibility cannot be considered until a completed application has been submitted.

We recommend submitting your application as soon as possible after receiving confirmation of your child's school placement. However, please note that completing the form does not guarantee that transport will be provided eligibility must still be confirmed.

Applications for Young People Aged 16-25.

An online transport application [Home to School Transport - Stage 1 - Information - Self](#) must be submitted for each academic year for young people aged 16–25 who require travel assistance.

As with all transport applications, we need to assess both eligibility and the individual needs of the young person. Providing detailed and accurate information in the application form will help us make a fair and timely assessment.

Please note that a charge applies for post-16 transport. Full details of the current charges can be found on our website. These charges are reviewed annually and may be subject to change.

Applications for Alternate Provision

Parents/carers/schools/ must submit a new Transport Application Form (TA1) each academic year if your child does not have an EHCP or attending an Alternate Provision, due to behavioural difficulties. As with the SEND/HTST transport application process, we need to assess eligibility for your child's/young person, so a fully completed application will help us to do this.

Applications must be made by submitting an electronic TA1 Form to our new Alternate Provision and Children's Social Care Transport Team.

Link: [TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM 25/26](#)

Email: Place.AlternateTransport@derbyshire.gov.uk

Applications for Children's Social Care (Children Looked After)

Social workers must submit an online application form [Home to School Transport - Stage 1 - Information - Self](#) , if your child does not have an EHCP and is either a looked after child, under

Derbyshire Children's Social Care Team. As with the SEND/HTST transport application process, we need to assess eligibility for your child's/young person, so a fully completed application will help us to do this.

Change of Address

If you are moving house or your child is changing address, it's important to notify us as early as possible. A change of address may affect your child's eligibility for transport, especially if the move is outside Derbyshire and could result in a change of transport provider.

Processing Time

Please allow up to 20 working days for new travel arrangements to be processed. This may take longer during busy periods, such as the summer transport planning season (June-September).

What You Need to Do

- A new online transport application [Home to School Transport - Stage 1 - Information - Self](#) must be completed for any child who changes address, whether before the start of a new term or during the school year.
- Travel arrangements will not be updated until the new application is submitted, and an eligibility assessment has been completed.

Mileage Reimbursement

If your child receives mileage reimbursement:

- Payments will be suspended until a new application is submitted and reviewed.
- A change of address may also affect the amount of reimbursement you receive.

The earlier you submit your application, the more likely it is that transport will be in place in time for your move.

Change of School, Site/Campus, or Age Range

If a pupil or student is:

- Moving to a new school
- Changing site or campus within the same school
- Transitioning from primary to secondary education

A new online transport application must be completed [Home to School Transport - Stage 1 - Information - Self](#).

Important:

Transport will not be provided to the new school or site until:

- The application has been submitted and received
- An eligibility assessment has been completed and entitlement confirmed

To Avoid Disruption:

Please notify us at least 20 working days in advance of any changes. Failure to do so may result in a delay or gap in transport provision.

Change in Child/Young Person Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND)

If there has been a change in your child's needs, whether medical or behavioural, please let the Specialised Transport Team know as soon as possible. You can do this by completing the updated Transport Information Form, which will be made available through our new 'Contact Us' page. For more information, phone: 01629 536 736, select option 2 or

Email: SpecialisedTransport.Services@derbyshire.gov.uk

Keeping this information up to date helps us ensure that transport arrangements remain safe, appropriate, and responsive to your child's individual requirements.

Whilst Transport Is Being Arranged

Once your transport application has been authorised, PLACE Specialised Transport requires a minimum of 20 working days to arrange suitable transport. This timeframe begins from the date your application is approved, not the date it was submitted.

During This Period:

- Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their child or young person continues to attend school.
- Derbyshire County Council does not offer financial reimbursement for travel costs incurred during the transport planning period.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation while we work to put appropriate arrangements in place to support your child's journey.

The Transport we Provide

From September 2025, Derbyshire County Council will offer a range of travel options to support school attendance for eligible children and young people. These options are designed to meet individual needs and promote safe, reliable, and inclusive travel.

- **Mileage Reimbursement Payments**
Reimbursement at 45p per mile, for up to four journeys per day, where parents or carers transport their child.
- **Contracted Minibuses and PSV Vehicles**
Used for group transport where appropriate, operated by approved providers.
- **Taxis**
Provided for individual or small group travel, based on assessed need.
- **Independent Travel Training**

Support for young people to develop the skills and confidence to travel independently, where appropriate.

- **Bus Passes/Railcards**
For children and young people who are assessed as able to travel independently using public transport, support may be provided in the form of a bus pass or railcard, depending on individual needs.

Shared Transport and Journey Times

Transport will usually be shared with other children or young people, unless your child is identified as clinically extremely vulnerable. This will be determined during the application process and reviewed regularly.

We aim to ensure that journey times are reasonable and appropriate for each child or young person. As a general guideline:

- For primary-aged children, journeys should not exceed 45 minutes each way.
- For older children and young people, journeys should not exceed 75 minutes each way.

However, there may be exceptions in certain circumstances, for example, if your child attends a school that is a significant distance from your home, is located out of county, or if a shorter journey time is specified in your child's risk assessment.

Pick-Up Times and Alternative Addresses

We understand that families may have varying schedules and commitments. However, please note the following:

Pick-Up Times

We are unable to arrange transport to meet specific pick-up times tailored to:

- Parent/carer work schedules
- The school start or finish times of siblings

Transport is scheduled based on the most efficient and practical routes for all passengers.

Alternative Addresses

We will consider requests to serve a local alternative address (e.g. a grandparent's or childminder's home), where feasible and within reasonable distance of the main route.

For more details, please refer to the Alternative Address section of this guidance document.

Reviewing and Adjusting Transport Arrangements

There may be times when your child or young person's transport arrangements need to be reviewed. This could happen when:

- Their travel needs change (e.g. due to medical, behavioural, or educational reasons)

- An issue arises with the current transport provision
- A change in school, address, or support requirements occurs

Temporary Suspension or Replacement

In some cases, it may be necessary to temporarily suspend or replace the existing transport while new arrangements are made.

We will always aim to minimise disruption, but please be aware:

- It can take up to 20 working days to arrange alternative transport
- The process may take longer if specific medical or support needs must be accommodated

We appreciate your patience and cooperation while we work to ensure the most appropriate and safe transport is in place.

Changes to Transport Personnel

While we strive to provide consistency in your child's transport arrangements, it is not always possible to guarantee that the same operator, driver, or Passenger Assistant (PA) will always be available.

When changes do occur, we will:

- Make every effort to provide as much notice as possible
- Work with you and the school to support your child through the transition
- Aim to minimise disruption and maintain a sense of routine and familiarity

While we strive to maintain continuity, there may be occasions when Operators must make emergency changes at short notice. In such cases, Operators will contact parents/carers and schools directly to ensure that essential communication takes place, and everyone is informed in a timely manner.

We understand that changes in transport personnel can be unsettling, particularly for children and young people who thrive on routine and consistency. Your patience and cooperation during these times are greatly appreciated.

Our Service Standards – What You Can Expect from Transport

Before transport is arranged, the following steps will take place:

- You will need to complete an online application form. This form allows you to provide important information about your child or young person's needs and enables us to assess their eligibility for transport support.
- Once submitted, the SEND Transport team will review the application and notify you of the outcome by email. This assessment may take up to 10 working days.
- To avoid delays, we strongly recommend that applications are submitted at least 30 working days before transport is required, longer during peak periods, such as the summer holidays.

- Key application deadlines and guidance will be published on our website to help you plan. [Home to School Transport - Derbyshire Local Offer](#)

What You Can Expect From Us:

Once transport has been approved, we will:

- Provide a home to school service, wherever appropriate, to support your child or young person's needs.
- A Passenger Assistant (PA) will be assigned where necessary, based on the individual needs of the child or young person. This is particularly relevant for children attending primary placements.
- PAs will be considered for all primary-aged pupils, especially those aged 8 and under, due to their increased vulnerability and the additional support they may require during transport.
- For older pupils, a PA will be provided where necessary, up to the end of secondary education.
- While we contract PAs of all genders, a gender-specific PA will only be assigned if required by your child's risk assessment.
- Ensure safe and secure seating, including the use of specialist seats or restraints where needed.
- Arrange transport to align with standard school or college start and finish times. Please note that transport cannot be tailored to individual student timetables.
- Always respect your confidentiality. Any information you provide will be used solely for the purpose of arranging and delivering transport services.
- Notify you as soon as possible of any issues that may affect your child's transport, such as a change of operator or a service disruption. While we aim to give advance notice, some changes may occur at short notice.
- Inform you if transport is refused for any reason, including if your child is deemed unfit to travel.

Standards for Drivers and Passenger Assistants (PAs)

All Drivers and Passenger Assistants involved in Home to School Transport are expected to meet the following standards to ensure the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of every child and young person:

- Are fully vetted through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- Always carry and display official identification badges.
- Possess appropriate skills and training relevant to their role.
- Treat children, young people, and families with dignity and respect.
- Will wait up to:
 - 3 minutes for your child or young person to board the vehicle in the event of occasional delays.
 - 5 minutes if your child or young person has physical limitations or uses a wheelchair to access transport.

This approach aims to provide reasonable flexibility while ensuring the service runs efficiently for all passengers.

- Deliver a high standard of customer service.

- Provide a service that meets your child or young person's individual transport needs, as identified through our risk assessment process.
- Communicate any relevant information regarding your child or young person's wellbeing during transport.

Vehicle Standards and Compliance

We are committed to ensuring that all vehicles used for Home to School Transport meet the highest standards of safety, cleanliness, and suitability. All vehicles:

- Are appropriately licensed, roadworthy, and fit for their intended purpose.
- Are always maintained in a clean and tidy condition.

Compliance Monitoring

Our dedicated Transport Compliance Team carries out regular checks and investigations to ensure that all contracted operators meet Derbyshire County Council's required standards. This includes:

- Routine and unannounced compliance inspections
- Investigations into complaints or concerns raised by parents, carers, or schools
- Immediate action where safety or service standards are not being met

In some cases, it may be necessary to suspend transport at short notice due to a compliance issue or ongoing investigation. While we aim to minimise disruption, there may be a delay in arranging alternative transport. We will do our best to keep this gap within 20 working days, but during this time, parents or carers may need to make temporary travel arrangements.

Reporting Concerns

If you have a general concern about the transport service, please contact us: Phone: 01629 536 736, select option 2 or Email: SpecialisedTransport.Services@derbyshire.gov.uk

If you have a compliance-based concern, (Staff training, compliance audit information, vehicle conditions etc) phone: 0161 536 736, select option 4 or Email: place.complianceoffice@derbyshire.gov.uk

Your feedback helps us maintain high standards and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people using our transport services.

How You Can Help Make Transport a Success

Parents and carers play a vital role in ensuring that transport runs smoothly and safely. You can help by:

- Ensuring your child or young person is ready at least 10 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.
- Making sure your child is fit to travel. If a driver or Passenger Assistant (PA) believes your child is unwell or poses a risk to themselves or others, they have the right to refuse transport for that journey.
- Ensure that you or a designated adult escorts your child or young person to the vehicle each morning. It is the parent's or carer's responsibility to ensure the child safely accesses the transport. Transport staff are not responsible for collecting children from the door or escorting them to the vehicle.
- Ensure that you or a designated adult is at home or at the agreed drop-off point when your child or young person is due to return from school. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to meet the vehicle and collect their child. Transport staff are not responsible for escorting children to the door or into the home.
- Treating all transport staff with dignity and respect, just as we expect them to treat you and your child.
- Reporting any concerns about transport directly to PLACE Specialised Transport.
- Understanding that changes to drivers or PAs may occur, sometimes at short notice due to staff illness or availability.
- Letting us know in advance if your child will be absent from school for an extended period.
- Being aware that transport arrangements may change, especially at the start of the academic year. While we aim to provide consistency, some changes are unavoidable. We will try to give you at least 20 working days' notice where possible.
- Supporting your child through transitions, especially when there is a change in transport provider, driver, or PA.
- Keeping us updated with any changes to your child's details, such as:
 - Home address
 - Contact phone numbers
 - Email Address
 - Medical or behavioural needs
 - Seating or equipment requirements

Alternative Address Requests

By law, we are required to provide transport to and from a child's normal home address. However, we understand that some parents and carers, particularly those with work commitments or other school-aged children, may find it difficult to be at home when transport arrives.

While we cannot accommodate every individual circumstance, we will consider requests for transport to or from an alternative address (such as a childcare provider), if both of the following conditions are met:

- There is no additional cost to the Council.
- There is no impact on the journey of other children or young people using the same transport.

Please note:

- Transport to an alternative address is provided at our discretion and is not guaranteed for any specific length of time.
- If transport arrangements change and the alternative address no longer meets the above criteria, the arrangement may be withdrawn with a minimum of 20 working days' notice.
- Any approved alternative address arrangement is valid for one academic year only. A new request must be submitted each year.

To request transport to or from an alternative address: Phone: 01629 536 736, select option 2 or email: SpecialisedTransport.Services@derbyshire.gov.uk

In your email, please include:

- Your child's full name and date of birth
- The alternative address
- The days and times transport are required to or from that address

Note: It is safe to send personal information about your child via this email address.

Transport Requests We Are Unable to Support

While we aim to provide reliable transport for eligible children and young people, there are certain types of journeys that fall outside the scope of our service. These include:

Educational Activities Outside the Standard School Day:

- Offsite education, extracurricular activities, or journeys between institutions during the school day
(Transport for these journeys should be arranged by the organising school or institution.)
- Induction days, taster days, open days, or interviews
- Assessment days (unless specifically required by the SEND Transport Service)
- Work experience placements
- School trips
(Transport for trips should be arranged by the organising school or institution.)

Appointments and Health-Related Travel:

- Dental, medical, or hospital appointments
- Children who become ill during the school day
- Children who are excluded during the school day

Non-Standard Timings:

- Examination timetables
(Transport is only provided at the standard start and finish times of the school or college.)

- Before and after school activities
(Parents/carers or the school are responsible for arranging transport for these activities.)

Short Break (Respite) Care:

- Transport to and from Short Break or residential care
(These requests should be directed to Social Care within our Children's Services Department.)

Promoting Safe and Respectful Travel

Introduction

Every day, many children and young people travel to and from school safely and without incident. However, a small number of cases involving antisocial behaviour on Home to School Transport (HTST) services are becoming an increasing concern. This is part of a wider national trend and is not unique to Derbyshire.

Antisocial behaviour can have serious consequences for everyone involved:

For Children, Young People, and Parents/Carers:

- Compromised safety for passengers and staff
- Delays and disruptions to journeys
- Increased anxiety or distress for those affected
-

For Transport Operators:

- Damage to vehicles and associated repair costs
- Loss of income while vehicles are out of service

For the Council:

- Additional costs to arrange replacement transport
- Strain on resources and service delivery

For Schools:

- Negative impact on the school's reputation within the community
- Disruption to the school day and learning environment

What Is Anti-Social Behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour on home to school transport refers to actions that cause harm, distress, or disruption to others. These behaviours can compromise the safety and wellbeing of passengers, staff, and the wider community.

Examples of Anti-Social Behaviour on School Transport Include:

- Fighting, bullying, or intimidation of other children or young people
- Verbal abuse or harassment directed at Passenger Assistants (PAs) or other passengers
- Physical abuse of drivers, PAs, or fellow passengers
- Vandalism, including graffiti and damage to vehicles

- Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes
- Moving around the vehicle while in motion, distracting the driver
- Throwing objects from the vehicle
- Tampering with emergency exits or doors in non-emergency situations
- Absconding from transport with the intent to cause disruption

What Happens If Anti-Social Behaviour Is Reported?

When an incident of anti-social behaviour is reported on school transport, it is taken seriously and investigated thoroughly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all passengers.

Role of the School

The school is best placed to investigate incidents, as they know the children and young people involved. The investigation process may include:

- Taking written statements from witnesses
- Interviewing those identified as being involved
- Reviewing any available evidence (e.g. CCTV, driver/PA reports)

The school will determine the most appropriate course of action based on their findings.

Role of PLACE Specialised Transport

PLACE Specialised Transport will support the school or college throughout the investigation. We can:

- Provide statements from drivers and Passenger Assistants (PAs)
- Share relevant information in confidence
- Assist in coordinating communication between parties

In Serious Cases

In cases involving significant damage, threats, or criminal behaviour:

- The transport operator may contact the police
- The police may conduct their own investigation and interview those involved

All reports and investigations are handled with sensitivity and confidentiality.

What Action Is Taken Following Anti-Social Behaviour?

Once an investigation has been completed, appropriate action will be agreed between the school and PLACE Specialised Transport. The response will be proportionate to the severity of the incident and considers any previous behaviour.

Possible Sanctions May Include:

- Temporary exclusion from transport for a defined period

- Permanent exclusion from transport in serious or repeated cases
- School-based disciplinary measures, such as after-school detentions, where appropriate and agreed

The aim of any action taken is to:

- Ensure the safety of all passengers and staff
- Reinforce expectations for respectful behaviour
- Prevent further incidents

Each case is considered individually, and decisions are made in the best interests of all involved.

Guidelines for Action Following Anti-Social Behaviour

The response to anti-social behaviour will depend on the severity of the incident and whether the child or young person has been involved in previous incidents. The following provides a general framework to support consistent decision-making, while allowing flexibility to consider individual circumstances.

Minor Incidents

Examples: Moving around the vehicle, distracting the driver, swearing

- First Incident
 - Phone call to the school or college
 - Discussion with parents/carers to raise awareness and address concerns
- Second Incident
 - Possible short-term exclusion from transport (1 to 5 days)
 - Opportunity for the school and parents/carers to work with the child/young person to reflect on their behaviour
- Further Incidents
 - Longer exclusion from transport (5 to 10 days)
 - Extended time for support and intervention

Serious Incidents

Examples: Bullying, verbal or physical abuse, smoking/vaping, damage to the vehicle, or any behaviour that threatens safety

- Initial Response
 - Exclusion from transport for a minimum of 5 days, up to 1 month depending on the severity and previous history
- Repeated Serious Incidents
 - May result in permanent exclusion from transport services

Important Notes

- These are guidelines, not fixed rules. Each case will be considered individually, in consultation with the school.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact PLACE Specialised Transport if their child or young person may require adjustments to travel safely.
- In some cases, transport may be suspended on health and safety grounds until appropriate measures can be put in place to reduce risk to the child/young person and transport staff.

What Happens If a Pupil Is Excluded from Transport?

When a decision is made to exclude a pupil from school transport, the following steps are taken to ensure clear communication and continuity of education:

Notification to Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers will normally be informed verbally, followed by written confirmation via email.
- Where possible, an appropriate notice period will be given before the exclusion begins, allowing time to make alternative transport arrangements.

Responsibility During Exclusion

- During the exclusion period, it is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure the child or young person continues to attend school.
- Any costs associated with alternative transport during this time must be covered by the parent/carer.

Immediate Exclusion (Serious Incidents)

In very serious cases, where the safety of the vehicle, staff, or other passengers is at risk, exclusion may begin immediately and without prior written notice.

In such cases:

- PLACE Specialised Transport and the school will attempt to contact parents/carers immediately.
- Parents/carers may be asked to collect the pupil from school.
- If contact cannot be made, alternative transport will be arranged to ensure the pupil gets home safely.

What If There Has Been Damage to the Taxi or Bus?

If a child or young person causes damage to a vehicle used for school transport, the transport operator may seek to recover the cost of repairs from the parent or carer of the pupil responsible.

Sharing Contact Information

PLACE Specialised Transport may release the contact number and address of the parent/carer to the operator if a reasonable request is made. This allows the operator to pursue recovery of the repair costs directly.

Return to Transport

In some cases, we may require that:

- The cost of repairs is paid, or
- A payment plan is agreed

before the pupil is allowed to return to transport, even if a suspension period has already been served.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping to maintain a safe and respectful transport environment for all.

What Happens When a Pupil Returns to Transport?

After a period of exclusion has ended, a pupil will normally be allowed to return to transport. However, certain conditions or adjustments may be required to support a safe and successful return.

Possible Conditions May Include:

- Use of a designated seat, such as one at the front of the vehicle
- Transfer to a different vehicle or route
- Alternative transport arrangements, such as travel on a public bus service (where available)

Compensation for Damage or Cleaning

If damage or excessive cleaning was required due to the pupil's behaviour, the transport operator may seek compensation from the parent/carers. In some cases, this may need to be resolved before the pupil is permitted to return to transport.

Our goal is to ensure that all pupils can travel safely and respectfully. We will work with families and schools to support a smooth reintegration wherever possible.

What other help is available if there is bullying on the bus?

If bullying occurs on school transport, it is important to take it seriously and act quickly. In many cases, bullying on the bus may also be happening in school, so it's essential that the school is involved in addressing the issue.

What You Should Do:

- Report the incident to the school as soon as possible
- Inform PLACE Specialised Transport if the bullying occurred during the journey
- Encourage your child or young person to speak to a trusted adult about what happened

How We Respond:

- The school will lead on investigating and addressing the behaviour
- PLACE Specialised Transport can support by gathering information from drivers or Passenger Assistants (PAs)
- In serious cases, transport arrangements may be reviewed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all passengers

The Beyond Bullying website is also available for more information www.beyondbullying.com.

To report anti-social behaviour or an incident of bullying, Phone: 01629 536 736, select option 2 or email: SpecialisedTransport.Services@derbyshire.gov.uk

Guidance for Operators

Introduction

Each day, around 2,000 children and young people use Home to School Transport (HTST) to travel safely and without incident to specialist and mainstream primary and secondary schools across Derbyshire.

This guidance outlines key expectations and good practice for all operators delivering HTST contracts on behalf of Derbyshire County Council. These standards are designed to ensure a safe, consistent, and supportive experience for all passengers, particularly those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Operator Expectations and Good Practice

- **Consistency of Personnel and Vehicles**
Where possible, use a regular driver and vehicle, or a small rota of familiar drivers, for each HTST contract. This helps children build trust and routine, and ensures they know who will be collecting them each morning and afternoon.
- **Change of Transport Personnel**
If a change in transport personnel is required, Operators are responsible for informing parents/carers and schools directly to ensure timely and effective communication. This helps maintain consistency and reassurance for the child or young person.

In addition, Operators must notify the Specialised Transport Team of any personnel to ensure that all safeguarding protocols are upheld, and records remain accurate.

- **Approved and Trained Staff Only**
Only use drivers and Passenger Assistants (PAs) who have been:
 - Cleared by Derbyshire County Council through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
 - Made aware of the additional care and responsibility required when working with HTST passengers
 - Hold mandatory Safeguarding Level 1 and First Aid certificates
- **Reliable Communication Channels**
Ensure there is a telephone number and email address where you can be contacted between 9:00am and 5:00pm. This is essential for resolving issues such as:
 - Delays caused by traffic or late-running parents/carers
 - Absences or last-minute changes to pupil attendance
 - Urgent updates from schools or the Council

DBS Checks

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are a vital safeguarding measure used to screen out individuals with a history of harmful behaviour or an unacceptable criminal record.

Mandatory Clearance for All Contracted Personnel

Every person who:

- Enters a vehicle carrying Derbyshire's Home to School Transport students, or
- Has contact with those students while they are travelling

must be DBS cleared by Derbyshire County Council for the specific purpose of that transport contract.

Regulated Activity

Home to School Transport is classified as a regulated activity and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. This means that all relevant criminal history must be disclosed and considered.

Required Level of DBS Clearance

The required level of clearance is:

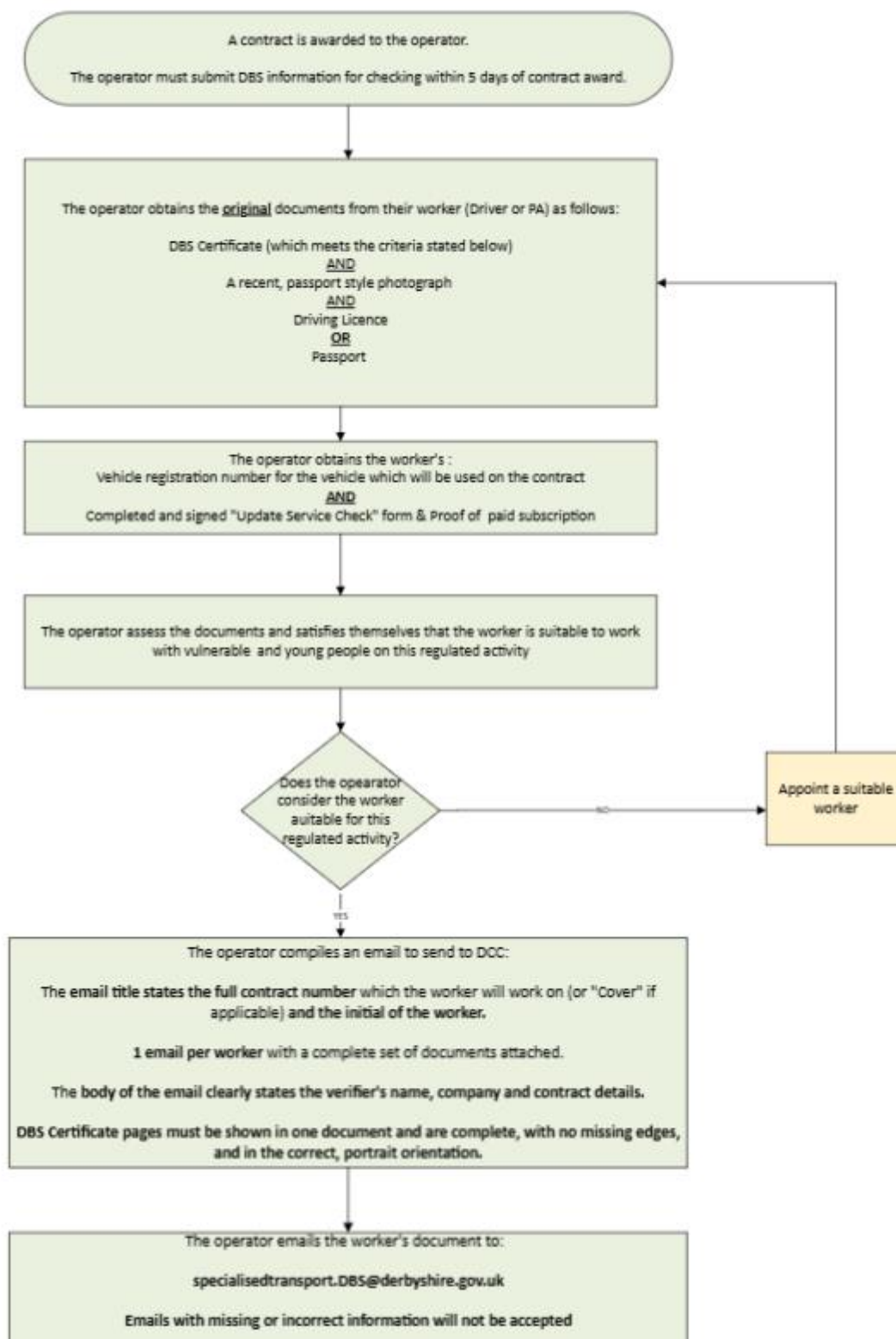
- Enhanced DBS Check
- For the Child and Adult Workforce
- With both Children and Adults Barred Lists Checked
- Signed up to the DBS Update Service

This level of clearance is non-negotiable for both Drivers and Passenger Assistants.

Operators must ensure that no individual is deployed on HTST contracts without the correct and current DBS clearance issued through Derbyshire County Council.

If operators are unsure about DBS requirements, they should seek advice from the DBS Team on 0161 536 736 Option 4 or SpecialisedTransport.DBS@derbyshire.gov.uk

How to present your worker's documents for DBS checking



Presenting your Workers Documents Flowchart Summary

The flowchart titled "How to present your worker's documents for DBS checking" outlines a clear, step-by-step process for Transport Operators to follow when submitting Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) information for their workers. Here's a detailed summary of the process:

1. Contract Award

- A contract is awarded to the operator.

2. Submission Deadline

- The operator must submit the DBS information within 5 days of the contract award.

3. Collect Worker Documents

The operator must obtain the following original documents from the worker (Driver or PA):

- DBS Certificate (must meet specific criteria)
- Recent passport-style photograph
- One of the following:
 - Driving Licence
 - Passport

4. Additional Information

The operator must also collect:

- Vehicle registration number of the vehicle to be used on the contract
- Completed and signed "Update Service Check" form and proof of paid subscription

5. Suitability Assessment

- The operator reviews all documents and determines if the worker is suitable to work with vulnerable and young people in a regulated activity.

6. Decision Point

- If the worker is deemed suitable, the operator appoints the worker.

7. Email Preparation

The operator prepares an email to Derbyshire County Council (DCC) with the following:

- Email title: Full contract number (or "Cover" if applicable) and the initial of the worker
- One email per worker with a complete set of documents attached
- Email body: Clearly states the verifier's name, company, and contract details

8. Document Formatting

- The DBS Certificate must be:

- Shown in one document
- Complete (no missing edges)
- In portrait orientation

9. Submission

- Email the documents to:
specialisteransport.DBS@derbyshire.gov.uk

10. Compliance

- Emails with missing or incorrect information will not be accepted.

This flowchart ensures that operators follow a standardised and compliant process for DBS checks, helping to safeguard vulnerable individuals by verifying the suitability of workers.

Basic Guide to checking a DBS Certificate for Home to School Transport

The heading must state **'Enhanced Certificate'**.

The certificate number must be clear, legible, and identical on every page of the certificate.

Workers NOT subscribed to the DBS Update Service must submit a certificate which is **less than 12 months old**.

Workers who have subscribed to the DBS Update Service only need to provide a copy of the original certificate (which must meet the criteria stated on this page) and a DCC 'Update Service Check Form' (which grants permission to DCC to check on the DBS Update Service).

'Position applied for' must include the words **'Child and Adult workforce'** and **state a job description which relates to the contract role (Driver or PA)**.

Every page of the DBS certificate must be presented for inspection, even if other pages are blank.

'Applicant Personal Details' must exactly match the proof of identity documents.

Any Police records reported here will cause the application to be referred to the Council's DBS panel for consideration.

'DBS Children's Barred List information' must state **'NONE RECORDED'**.

'DBS Adult's Barred List information' must contain the words **'NONE RECORDED'**.

Any 'Other relevant information' reported here will cause the application to be referred to the Council's DBS panel for consideration.

The entire document must be seen; all 4 corners of the certificate must be visible.

DBS Certificate Check Image Summary

The image titled "DBS Certificate Check – Home to School Transport" serves as a visual guide for verifying the authenticity and suitability of a worker's Enhanced DBS Certificate as part of the Home to School Transport Guidance. It outlines 12 key checks that must be completed before a worker (Driver or Passenger Assistant) can be approved for work involving children and vulnerable individuals.

Here's a detailed summary suitable for inclusion in a published guidance document:

DBS Certificate Verification Checklist for Home to School Transport

To ensure safeguarding compliance, operators must verify the following elements on a worker's Enhanced DBS Certificate:

1. Certificate Type
 - The heading must clearly state "Enhanced Certificate".
2. Certificate Number
 - Must be legible and identical on every page of the certificate.
3. Applicant Personal Details
 - Must exactly match the identity documents provided.
4. Police Records
 - If any police records are listed, the application must be referred to the Council's DBS Panel for further consideration.
5. Children's Barred List
 - Must state "NONE RECORDED".
6. Adults' Barred List
 - Must also state "NONE RECORDED".
7. Other Relevant Information
 - If present, the application must be referred to the Council's DBS Panel.
8. Document Presentation
 - The entire certificate must be visible, including all four corners.
9. Certificate Age (Non-Update Service)
 - If the worker is not subscribed to the DBS Update Service, the certificate must be less than 12 months old.
10. Update Service Subscribers
 - Must provide:

- A copy of the original certificate (meeting all criteria above)
- A completed DCC Update Service Check form, granting permission for online status checks.

11. Position Applied For

- Must include the words "Child and Adult Workforce" and a job title relevant to the contract (e.g., Driver or PA).

12. Full Certificate Submission

- Every page of the certificate must be submitted, even if some pages are blank.

This checklist ensures that all Enhanced DBS Certificates are thoroughly reviewed for compliance, safeguarding, and suitability before a worker is approved for Home to School Transport duties.

Minimum Training Standards for Home to School Transport Operators

Purpose

This Guidance Note outlines the minimum training standards required for transport operators delivering specialised Home to School Transport contracts on behalf of Derbyshire County Council, as required under the Terms and Conditions of Contract and the Service Specification.

Background

The Department for Education provides statutory guidance in the document "*Travel to school for children of compulsory school age – Statutory guidance for local authorities*" (January 2024), which is available online.

Operator Responsibilities

Transport operators are responsible for ensuring that all relevant staff receive appropriate training. Operators must also be able to demonstrate to Derbyshire County Council that:

- The required training has been completed.
- Staff possess the necessary skills to safely and effectively carry out specialised Home to School Transport duties.

Council Responsibilities

Derbyshire County Council is responsible for verifying that operators have fulfilled the training requirements. This includes:

- Reviewing evidence of completed training.
- Conducting audits of training records and arrangements as necessary.

Minimum Training Requirements

All drivers and passenger assistants working on specialised Home to School Transport contracts must, at a minimum, complete the following training:

1. **Safeguarding (Level 1)**
2. **Emergency Situations and First Aid**
 - A minimum of one day of First Aid training.
 - Practical instruction on responding to medical emergencies and road accidents, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

- Ideally, training should include the use of auto-injectors (e.g., EpiPens).

All First Aid training must be completed within the last three years and certified by a provider recommended by Derbyshire County Council. All Safeguarding (Level1) training is advised being undertaken in line with Department of Education (DfE) guidelines.

Specialist Training

Additional training may be required to meet the specific needs of individual children or young people. These requirements will be detailed in the contract tender documents and may include:

- **Epilepsy Awareness Training** equips individuals with the knowledge and confidence to understand epilepsy
- **Administration of Emergency Epilepsy Medication**, this training provides the knowledge and practical skills needed to safely administer emergency epilepsy medication
- **Autism Awareness and Managing Challenging Behaviours** to support children and young people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and who may display challenging behaviours on transport
- **MIDAS** (or equivalent) minibus driver awareness training and PATS (passenger assistant training scheme)
- **Any additional medical training** required to meet a student's specific needs, such as tracheostomy care or ventilation support, will be identified and arranged as necessary. The team will work closely with Operators and, where appropriate, coordinate with NHS professionals to ensure the required training

For existing contracts, the Specialised Transport Service will either specify the required training or provide a detailed risk assessment for the child or young person being transported.

Training Providers

Operators may use one of the training providers below to undertake training to meet the minimum contractual standards required:

- For Safeguarding Level 1, the Council advise undertaking training supported by the Department of Education (DfE).
- For First Aid, the Council advise a training provider who include in their training how to respond to a medical emergency, or should there be a road accident, as well as including a practical demonstration of CPR. The training should ideally cover the use of Auto Injector Pens, such as Epi Pens.
- The below list indicates suitable and proven training providers, but others are available:

Training	Provider (other providers may be used)
Safeguarding Level 1	<p>Spectrum – Home to School Transport Training Spectrum Courses Ltd – Safeguarding and SEND Awareness Courses for transporting vulnerable children & adults</p> <p>What do you need?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your own email address to register at www.spectrumcourses.co.uk • access to a smart phone, tablet, laptop or PC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £30 (+VAT) to purchase the course <p>Spectrum is an organisation that provides specialised training for Drivers and Personal Assistants (PAs) involved in Home to School transport across England and Wales. Their training programmes are designed to enhance the skills of delegates, ensuring they can effectively protect passengers. The courses offered by Spectrum are certified and accredited, meeting the latest training requirements set by the Department for Education (DfE). The Home to School Transport training, also covers Autism Awareness, Managing Challenging Behaviour and Passenger Assistant Training, at no additional cost.</p> <p>Their offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a 3–4-hour online course consisting of 20 lessons • understanding your role and your passengers • handling emergency situations • understanding disabilities, autism awareness and managing challenging behaviour • explains your safeguarding responsibilities (The 4 Rs) to protect the children in your care • Understanding and meaning of “Appropriate Relationships” and engagement with service users.
Safeguarding Level 1	<p>High Speed Training</p> <p>Safeguarding Training For Taxi Drivers Online CSE Course</p> <p>£31.00 (+VAT) Discounts available for multiple course purchases</p> <p>High Speed Training has industry leading levels of accreditation, with all courses accredited by the CPD Certification Service and meeting the latest training requirements set by the Department for Education (DfE). Their aim is to create and deliver industry-leading training that makes learning and compliance straightforward, simple and engaging.</p> <p>This organisation offers training specifically for taxi drivers and PAs in Safeguarding, and more generally for Autism Awareness and Managing Challenging Behaviour (These are separate courses and will come at an additional cost)</p>

	<p>By completing and passing any of their courses, the delegate will obtain a CPD certificate.</p> <p>Their offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 1-2 hour online Safeguarding course specifically aimed at taxi drivers and PAs. As a taxi driver, you have a duty of care to all passengers, and as someone who works with members of the public and within the local community, you are in a key position to spot signs that someone may need help. • Introduction to Safeguarding • Recognising Types of Abuse • Responding to Safeguarding Concerns
First Aid Training	<p>Safe Haven Training Ltd Tidal Training Ltd Midlands First Aid Training Ltd ProTrainings St John Ambulance Red Cross</p>

If operators are unsure about training requirements, they should seek advice from the Compliance Team on 0161 536 736 Option 4 or SpecialisedTransport.DBS@derbyshire.gov.uk

Severe Weather Conditions

This guidance is intended to support contracted operators who provide statutory Home to School Transport (HTST) on behalf of Derbyshire County Council, particularly when 'one-off' changes to transport are required due to severe weather conditions.

Severe Weather Procedure for Operators

In the event of severe weather, operators are expected to follow the guidance below to ensure safety and maintain communication with all relevant parties.

Before Setting Off

- Check School Status
Confirm whether the school or establishment served by your contract is open. PLACE Specialised Transport will communicate known closures to operators where possible.

- **Prepare Vehicles Appropriately**
Allow extra time to prepare vehicles, especially for morning runs. In sub-zero temperatures, vehicles should be kept running to avoid engine cooling issues.
- **Plan Overnight Parking**
Consider parking arrangements to ensure vehicles best suited to severe conditions are accessible and not blocked in.

During Operation

- **Make Reasonable Efforts to Cover Contracts**
Operators are expected to make every reasonable effort to operate their routes. Use risk assessment principles to determine which routes or sections are safe.
- **Assess Conditions Continuously**
Consider:
 - Whether conditions are improving or worsening
 - The nature of the route
 - The handling characteristics of the vehicle in current conditions
- **Driver Discretion**
Drivers are empowered to:
 - Continue, revise, or terminate the run based on real-time safety assessments
 - Avoid treacherous sections of the route to prevent risk of stranding

Communication Protocols

- **Notify of Route Changes**
If a driver deviates from the published schedule, they must inform their operator, who will then notify:
 - PLACE Specialised Transport
 - The school
 - Parents/carers
- **Report Problems Immediately**
If operators encounter significant issues, they should contact PLACE Specialised Transport directly at: Phone 01629 536736 select option 2, or email:
SpecialisedTransport.Services@derbyshire.gov.uk

Route Cancellation Payments

Operators will be compensated for attempted journeys that are cancelled due to adverse weather conditions, provided the journey was genuinely attempted. However, if a journey is cancelled with at least 24 hours' notice, whether by the Specialised Transport Team, parents/carers, or the school, prior to the scheduled pick-up time, no payment can be claimed for that journey.

Why This Matters

Following these procedures helps ensure that all parties are informed and can make appropriate decisions, whether to wait for transport or arrange alternatives. While this guidance cannot eliminate the impact of severe weather, it helps manage risk and maintain safety.

Safeguarding Guidance for Home to School Transport Operators

Purpose of This Guidance

This guidance is designed by Derbyshire County Council (DCC) to ensure that all transport operators providing services for children, young people, and vulnerable adults fully understand and comply with their safeguarding responsibilities. These responsibilities are outlined in Section 37 of the Contract Terms and Conditions and the other documentation issued to operators in relation to DPS 0059.

The overarching aim is to create a safe, trusted, and supportive transport environment, where the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount. By adhering to this guidance, operators will:

- demonstrate a clear commitment to safeguarding principles
- promote consistent, professional, and respectful conduct
- help prevent harm, abuse, and neglect in all forms
- support a culture of responsibility and continuous improvement in safeguarding practice

Key Responsibilities for Operators

Safeguarding Commitment

- Safeguarding is a shared responsibility; every individual has a role to play in creating a safe and supportive environment.
- Operators are contracted by DCC and have a duty of care to protect all children and young people they transport, from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Place Specialised Transport are committed to promoting the wellbeing of every individual by fostering a culture of safety, respect, and professionalism in all interactions.
- All staff (Drivers and Passenger Assistants) assigned to a Specialised Transport contract must uphold the highest standards of conduct, ensuring that safeguarding principles are embedded in daily practice and decision-making.
- Concerns must be reported promptly and appropriately, with a focus on transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Training & Conduct

- All staff, including drivers and passenger assistants, must complete mandatory safeguarding training prior to commencing their duties. This ensures they are equipped to recognise, respond to, and report safeguarding concerns appropriately.
- Staff are required to always adhere to DCC's Contract Terms and Conditions and guidance documentation demonstrating professionalism, respect, and integrity in their interactions with children and young people and stakeholders.
- Training records must be accurately maintained and will be regularly reviewed, via audit checks to ensure compliance. Safeguarding training should be refreshed at appropriate intervals (Every 2 years) to reflect current best practices, legislation, and policy updates.

- Operators are responsible for monitoring staff conduct and training compliance, fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional responsibility.

Safeguarding Incident & Concern Reporting

All safeguarding concerns, regardless of how minor they may appear, must be reported immediately and through the appropriate channels. Timely and accurate reporting is essential to protect children and young people, and to ensure concerns are addressed in line with safeguarding protocols.

Safeguarding Reporting Procedure

1. Submit an Online Report to the Council

As soon as a safeguarding concern is identified (by a driver, passenger assistant, parent, or any other party), an online report must be submitted via the Council's [Contact Us link].

- Ensure all relevant details are included (e.g., date, time, individuals involved, nature of concern, any immediate actions taken).
- All submissions will be reviewed by the Place Specialised Transport Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

2. Inform the Relevant Setting

Notify the appropriate setting involved in the transport arrangement, such as the school, college, or alternative provision, as soon as possible.

3. Operator DSL Recordkeeping

The Transport Operator's Designated Safeguarding Lead must:

- Record the incident internally, following the organisation's safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure that all records are stored securely and in compliance with data protection regulations (e.g., GDPR).
- Monitor the concern and follow up where necessary, in coordination with the Council and relevant setting.

Key Reminders

- Never delay reporting a concern, even if you are unsure, it is better to report and seek guidance.
- Always maintain confidentiality. Only share information with those who need to know.
- If a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact emergency services first (call 999), then follow the above reporting procedure.

The 5 Rs of Safeguarding

The 5 Rs provide a clear and practical framework for responding to safeguarding concerns. All staff should be familiar with these steps and apply them consistently in their roles:

1. Recognise

Be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. These may be physical, emotional, behavioural, or situational. Trust your instincts, if something doesn't feel right, it's worth reporting.

2. **Respond**

React calmly, sensitively, and without judgement. Reassure the individual that they are being listened to and taken seriously. Avoid making promises you cannot keep, such as guaranteeing confidentiality.

3. **Report**

Share your concern immediately with your organisation's DSL or designated person. Timely reporting is essential to ensure appropriate action is taken.

4. **Record**

Document the concern accurately, objectively, and securely. Include dates, times, what was said or observed, and any actions taken. Stick to the facts, avoid assumptions or personal opinions.

5. **Refer**

Allow the DSL to escalate the concern to the appropriate external agencies or authorities, such as social care or the police, in line with DCC's safeguarding procedures.

DBS & Vetting Requirements

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, young people, and vulnerable adults, all transport staff, assigned to a contract must meet strict vetting standards before undertaking any duties.

Enhanced DBS Checks (Child & Adult Workforce)

All drivers and passenger assistants are required to:

- Undergo an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, covering both the Child Workforce and Adult Workforce categories.
- Be registered with the DBS Update Service, enabling ongoing monitoring and ensuring that their DBS status remains current and valid.
- Present valid identification and a current DBS certificate to the Council for verification prior to commencing service.

Ongoing Compliance

- Operators must ensure that DBS checks are renewed as required and that staff remain subscribed to the Update Service throughout.
- Any changes in DBS status must be reported immediately to the Council and appropriate action taken.

Identity Badges

To maintain a secure and trustworthy transport environment, all staff must be clearly identifiable and properly vetted.

- All drivers and passenger assistants are required to always wear a valid DCC ID badge while on duty. This ensures children, young people, families, and school staff can easily verify their identity.
- ID badges are issued only after successful completion of enhanced DBS checks. (Place Specialised Transport are working towards mandatory safeguarding training, to be included as part of vetting process). This process helps confirm that only appropriately vetted individuals are authorised to work on specialised transport contracts.

- The use of unauthorised or unbadged staff is strictly prohibited and may constitute a serious breach of contract. Such breaches may result in immediate suspension or termination of the contract with DCC.

Health, Safety & Passenger Needs

Transport operators play a vital role in ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of all passengers. To meet these responsibilities, operators must implement robust health and safety measures and respond effectively to individual passenger needs.

Operators are required to:

- **Appoint a designated Health & Safety Lead**
This individual will oversee the implementation and monitoring of all health and safety procedures, ensuring compliance with contractual obligations.
- **Maintain a comprehensive Health & Safety Policy**
The policy must be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current legislation, best practices, and operational risks.
- **Conduct thorough risk assessments for all services**
Risk assessments should cover vehicles, routes, passenger needs, and emergency procedures. Identified risks must be mitigated through appropriate controls.
- **Facilitate and prioritise staff access to training opportunities to maintain compliance and professional standards**
This includes mandatory First Aid courses and Safeguarding Level 1, contract specific training and procedures for responding to incidents involving vulnerable passengers.
- **Carry and securely store Individual Risk Assessments (IRAs), where applicable**
IRAs contain essential information about a passenger's specific needs, preferences, and support requirements. These must be treated as confidential and used to tailor service delivery appropriately.

Safeguarding Lead Role

Each transport operator must appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who holds overall responsibility for safeguarding within their organisation. The DSL plays a critical role in ensuring that safeguarding procedures are understood, followed, and embedded in daily practice.

Key Responsibilities of the DSL:

- Act as the primary point of contact for all safeguarding concerns raised by staff, passengers, or external stakeholders.
- Provide guidance and support to staff in recognising, responding to, and reporting safeguarding issues appropriately and confidently.
- Refer safeguarding concerns to the appropriate authorities, including DCC, Police, or Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), in line with statutory and contractual obligations.
- Promote a culture of safeguarding awareness, encouraging open communication, active listening, and a proactive approach to identifying and addressing risks.
- Ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date, clearly communicated, and consistently applied across the organisation.
- Maintain accurate and confidential records of all safeguarding concerns and actions taken.

Legal & Contractual Compliance

All transport operators are contractually and legally obligated to uphold the highest standards of conduct and transparency in safeguarding matters. Compliance with these requirements is essential to maintain trust, ensure passenger safety, and fulfil contractual obligations with the Council.

Operators must:

- Immediately notify the Council of any staff arrests, criminal charges, or ongoing legal proceedings that may impact their suitability to work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults.
- Fully cooperate with any safeguarding investigations conducted by the Council, Police, or other relevant authorities, including the timely provision of requested documentation and access to relevant personnel.
- Maintain and provide their own safeguarding policy upon request, ensuring it aligns with contractual obligations, guidance and DCC expectations.
- Understand that failure to comply with legal or contractual safeguarding requirements may result in serious consequences, including suspension from the DPS or termination of the contract.

Key Contacts

- **Specialised Transport Team:** 01629 536736
- **Adult Social Care Team:** 01629 533965
- **School Bus Team:** 01629 536739
- **For any other Safeguarding Concerns (That are not linked to Home to School Transport)** Call Derbyshire – 01629 533190
- **Emergency:** Call 999

Guidance for Drivers

Arrival at the Home to Collect in the Morning

To ensure a safe and respectful start to the day for children, young people, and their families, drivers must follow these procedures when collecting from home:

Stopping Safely

- Stop the vehicle in a safe and legal location, as close as possible to the child or young person's home.
- Avoid blocking driveways, footpaths, or access routes, and always be mindful of local traffic and pedestrian safety.

Timeliness and Waiting

- Arrive promptly at the scheduled time. If early, wait discreetly and do not knock or sound the horn before the agreed time.
- Wait for a reasonable period (usually up to 3 minutes) after the scheduled time. If the child or young person has not appeared, follow the agreed no-show procedure (e.g. contact the operator or PLACE Specialised Transport).

Handover and Support

- Where required (If there is no Passenger Assistant), assist the child or young person safely to the vehicle, especially if they have mobility or additional needs.
- If Applicable, ensure that Passenger Assistants (PAs) are present and ready to support where applicable.
- If the child or young person is not ready or there are concerns, do not leave without informing your operator.

If you encounter any issues or delays, contact your operator immediately so they can inform PLACE Specialised Transport and the family if needed.

Arrival at School in the Morning

To ensure a safe and smooth start to the school day, drivers must follow these procedures when arriving at school:

Stopping and Parking

- Stop as close to the main school entrance as possible.
- If the school has allocated a specific parking bay, always use it as instructed.

Early Arrival

- If transport arrives before the scheduled time, children and young people should remain on the vehicle until a member of school staff is available to receive them.
- If the vehicle can be safely left, drivers may be required to escort vulnerable children/young people into the school's reception area. The same applies for collection in the afternoon.

Scheduled Early Arrival

- If transport is scheduled to arrive more than 10 minutes before the school start time for operational reasons, appropriate supervision arrangements must be agreed in consultation with the school.
- If the school has a queuing process, drivers must comply with it.

If you have any concerns about arrival procedures or supervision, please contact PLACE Specialised Transport for guidance.

Afternoon Journeys – Drop-Off Procedures

To ensure the safe return of children and young people at the end of the school day, drivers must follow the procedures below:

Early Arrival at Home

- If you arrive before the scheduled drop-off time, you must wait until the agreed time before allowing the child or young person to leave the vehicle.
- Parents/carers are advised to be at home to receive their child/young person at the scheduled time.

No One to Meet the Child/Young Person

If a child or young person is normally met, or has told you they will be met, and no one is present at the drop-off point:

1. Do not allow the child/young person to leave the vehicle.
2. Contact PLACE Specialised Transport immediately for guidance.

Alternative Responsible Adult

- If a responsible adult is available and the parent/carer has informed the operator that this person is authorised to receive the child/young person:
 - The child/young person may be released into their care.
 - The operator must inform both the driver and PLACE Specialised Transport of the arrangement.
- If there are any concerns, the driver or operator must contact PLACE Specialised Transport immediately.

If No One Is Available

If no parent/carer or responsible adult is available, and the child/young person cannot be safely dropped off:

1. Keep the child/young person on the vehicle and inform your operator immediately.
2. The operator will contact PLACE Specialised Transport, who will advise one of the following actions:
 - Return to School: If the school agrees and your schedule allows, return the child/young person to school.
 - Meet-Up Arrangement: PLACE will attempt to contact the parent/carer to arrange a meeting point.

- Emergency Social Care: If all contact attempts fail, PLACE will contact the Emergency Duty Social Work Team to arrange collection or emergency respite.
- Police Station: As a last resort, PLACE may direct the vehicle to the nearest police station.

Key Reminders

- The safety of the child or young person is paramount; this takes priority over any delay to the transport schedule.
- Keep PLACE Specialised Transport informed at every stage so accurate updates can be provided to all parties.
- Reassure all passengers on board that they are safe and will be taken home.

To report any of the above incidents, Phone: 01629 536 736, select option 2 or email:

SpecialisedTransport.Services@derbyshire.gov.uk

Before Setting Out

Before beginning your journey, please ensure the following checks and preparations are completed:

- Route Identification: Clearly display the correct contracted route number (if applicable) in a visible location on the vehicle.
- Child Warning Signs: Ensure that all required child warning signs are properly positioned and clearly visible.
- Route Familiarity: Confirm that you are fully familiar with the designated route, including any known hazards, pick-up/drop-off points, and any recent changes.
- Vehicle Safety Checks: Conduct all required pre-departure safety checks, including:
 - Brakes, lights, and indicators
 - Tyres (condition and pressure)
 - Mirrors and windows (clean and undamaged)
 - Fuel and oil levels
- Interior Condition: Inspect the interior of the vehicle to ensure it is clean, safe, and free from hazards or obstructions.

For any advice/information on the above vehicle safety checks, contact the Compliance Team on 0161 536 736 Option 4 or SpecialisedTransport.DBS@derbyshire.gov.uk

On the Journey

At Pick-Up Points

- Approach slowly and with care. Keep doors closed until the vehicle is at a complete standstill.
- Wait at least 3 minutes to allow the child/young person time to board.

- Ensure doors are fully closed before moving off. Check that nothing is caught and be alert for latecomers. Always check the nearside mirror before departure.
- Do not move off until all passengers are seated and securely fastened in.

Passenger Safety

- Ensure children/young people and their belongings are completely clear of the vehicle before closing doors and moving off.
- Discourage crossing in front of or behind the vehicle.
 - If reversing is necessary in the morning, do so after boarding.
 - In the afternoon, reverse before children are seated.
- Avoid physical contact and maintain a courteous, professional distance.
- Always use appropriate language and avoid sensitive or inappropriate topics.
- Report inappropriate language used by passengers.

Behaviour Management

- Report misbehaviour to your Operator or PLACE Specialised Transport as soon as possible.
- Do not remove a child/young person from the vehicle due to behaviour unless authorised by PLACE and the school agrees to accept them back.
- Stop the vehicle if behaviour becomes unsafe. Contact PLACE Specialised Transport in extreme cases.
- Unruly passengers must be transported unless officially banned by the school or PLACE.

Weather and Route Adjustments

- Take extra care in severe weather.
- Avoid dangerous sections of the route if necessary and inform your Operator of any diversions as soon as practicable.

End of Journey Checks

- Inspect the vehicle for damage and ensure no children or belongings are left behind.

Prohibited Activities

- No smoking or vaping at any time.
- No food or drink to be consumed during the school run.
- Do not allow unauthorised persons to board or travel.
- Do not take photographs of children/young people.
- Do not allow early drop-offs in the morning unless due to an emergency.
- Do not return children to school in the afternoon due to behaviour unless authorised and the school is closer than the first drop-off point.
- Do not play pre-recorded media. The radio may be used at a moderate volume but must be turned off if it causes distress.

Communication and Instructions

- Do not use mobile phones while driving, even hands-free. Stop safely and turn off the engine before making any calls.
- Do not follow instructions from children/young people regarding changes to pick-up or drop-off points. Always verify with PLACE or parents/carers.

To report any of the above, Phone: 01629 536 736, select option 2 or email:
SpecialisedTransport.Services@derbyshire.gov.uk

In the Event of a Breakdown or Accident

Immediate Actions

- Keep children/young people on the vehicle unless it is unsafe to do so (e.g. fire, risk of collision, or other hazards).
- Always remain with the passengers to ensure their safety and reassurance.

Communication

- Notify your Operator immediately. They will arrange a replacement vehicle and inform PLACE Specialised Transport.
- If you are unable to contact your Operator, call PLACE Specialised Transport directly
- If you are unable to make contact, ensure the children/young people remain with the vehicle and do not attempt to make their own way home.

Passenger Safety and Supervision

- Instruct children/young people to stay with the vehicle until alternative arrangements are confirmed. This helps avoid confusion, distress, or the risk of absconding.
- Be alert to signs of injury or shock, even if not immediately obvious. If in doubt, call an ambulance.

Reporting

- Report all accidents involving children/young people, no matter how minor, to PLACE Specialised Transport.
- A full written report must be submitted as soon as possible, preferably by email.
- Include all relevant details: time, location, nature of the incident, actions taken, and any injuries or damage.

To report any of the above, Phone: 01629 536 736, select option 2 or email:
SpecialisedTransport.Services@derbyshire.gov.uk

In School Grounds

- Follow all instructions given by duty school staff.
- Be especially vigilant for children/young people moving between vehicles and barriers. Younger children may not be fully aware of traffic dangers.
- Report any concerns to the school staff on duty first, then to your Operator.
- Only collect and transport children/young people as specified in your contract. Do not make changes unless authorised.

Seat Belts

- Inform all passengers that seat belts must be always worn during the journey.
- If there is no Passenger Assistant (PA) on the route, it is the driver's responsibility to ensure compliance.
- Do not fasten or adjust seat belts for children/young people. However, you may demonstrate how the belts work.
- If you are unsure about seat belt regulations, consult your Operator or PLACE Specialised Transport for guidance.

Training and Development (Drivers)

- **Commitment to Ongoing Training**
All drivers are expected to actively engage in training to maintain high standards of safety, professionalism, and care. This includes:
 - Attending mandatory training sessions provided or approved by Derbyshire County Council or PLACE Specialised Transport.
 - Completing refresher courses on safeguarding, first aid, emergency procedures, and supporting children and young people with additional needs.
 - Staying up to date with regulatory requirements, including licensing, vehicle safety, and passenger care.
 - Being open to constructive feedback and guidance to improve service quality and ensure compliance with contract expectations.

Training ensures that drivers are fully prepared to manage a wide range of situations, from vehicle incidents to behavioural challenges, while maintaining a calm, professional, and supportive environment for all passengers.

Code of Conduct

Drivers of contracted taxis, minibuses, and PSV vehicles must always conduct themselves with professionalism. Specifically, drivers must:

- Dress appropriately and maintain a clean, presentable appearance.
- Always wear their Derbyshire County Council ID badge while on duty.
- Ensure their actions do not pose any health or safety risks to passengers or others.
- Never engage in personal communication (email, phone, text, or social media) with children/young people.
- Never exchange telephone numbers with children/young people under any circumstances, even if related to Home to School Transport (HTST).
- Only communicate with parents/carers for matters directly related to HTST.
- Never use inappropriate language at any time during transport.

Consequences for Misconduct

Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct or any part of this guidance may result in:

- Immediate suspension from the contract pending investigation.
- Formal investigation by PLACE Specialised Transport and/or Derbyshire County Council.
- Termination of contract for serious or repeated breaches.
- Referral to safeguarding authorities or the police where misconduct involves safeguarding concerns or criminal behaviour.
- Notification to the DVSA or licensing authority, which may affect your ability to work in the transport sector.

All concerns or allegations will be taken seriously and investigated in line with Derbyshire County Council's safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

Guidance for Passenger Assistants

This guidance is designed to support the delivery of high-quality, escorted Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) transport services on behalf of Derbyshire County Council.

Role of the Passenger Assistant (PA)

PAs play a vital role in ensuring the safety, comfort, and wellbeing of children and young people during their journeys to and from school. Their presence provides reassurance and practical support to passengers, particularly those with additional needs.

Key principles of the role include:

- **Consistency:** Wherever possible, the same PA should accompany the same passengers on each journey. This helps build trust, familiarity, and a sense of routine for the children/young people.
- **Awareness:** PAs should be familiar with the individual needs of each passenger, including any medical, behavioural, or communication requirements.
- **Supportive Presence:** PAs should maintain a calm, professional, and attentive manner, offering reassurance and assistance as needed throughout the journey.
- **Communication:** PAs should maintain clear and appropriate communication with drivers, parents/carers, schools, and PLACE Specialised Transport, always respecting confidentiality and safeguarding protocols.

Passenger Assistant Requirements

Passenger Assistants (PAs) play a key role in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people during transport. All PAs must meet the following requirements:

- **Communication Skills**
PAs must have a good level of spoken English and be able to communicate effectively with school staff, parents/carers, and transport operators.
- **Physical Fitness**
PAs must be physically capable of performing the duties of the role, including assisting with seat belts, harnesses, and supporting children/young people as needed.
- **Supervision on the Vehicle**
PAs must always remain on the vehicle when children/young people are on board. They are responsible for ensuring safe handover to school staff in the morning and to parents/carers in the afternoon.
- **Seat Belt and Harness Safety**
PAs must ensure that all passengers are securely fastened into seat belts or harnesses before informing the driver that the vehicle is ready to depart. If harnesses have been removed, PAs are responsible for refitting them.
- **Confidentiality and Professionalism**
PAs must respect the confidentiality of all information relating to the children/young people

and their families. As a key link between home and school, PAs must always act professionally.

- **Authorised Passengers Only**
Only children/young people authorised by PLACE Specialised Transport may be transported. No unauthorised passengers are permitted.
- **End-of-Journey Checks**
At the end of each journey, PAs must check the vehicle to ensure that no children/young people or belongings have been left behind.
- **No Photography**
PAs must not take photographs of children/young people under any circumstances.

Training and Development

- **Willingness to Undertake Training**
All Passenger Assistants are expected to demonstrate a commitment to ongoing learning and development. This includes:
 - Attending mandatory training sessions provided or approved by Derbyshire County Council or PLACE Specialised Transport.
 - Participating in refresher courses, safeguarding updates, and any additional training relevant to the needs of the children/young people being transported.
 - Being open to feedback and guidance to improve the quality and safety of the service provided.

Training ensures that PAs are equipped with the knowledge and skills to respond appropriately to a range of situations, including medical needs, behavioural challenges, and emergency procedures.

Maintaining Consistency

Many of Derbyshire's transport users have special educational needs, which can make it difficult for them to cope with changes in routine. A change in Passenger Assistant (PA) can cause distress at the start of the day, potentially leading to an unsettled and unproductive day at school.

To support the wellbeing of children and young people:

- **Consistency is key:** Wherever possible, the same PA should be assigned to a transport route for the duration of at least one academic year.
- **Planned changes:** If a change in PA is necessary (e.g. due to resignation or reassignment), the operator will make every effort to provide advance notice to parents/carers and schools. This allows time for professionals and families to prepare the child or young person for the change.
- **Emergency cover:** In unavoidable situations such as PA sickness, last-minute changes may be required. In these cases, the operator will provide emergency cover to ensure transport continuity until the regular PA returns.

Maintaining consistency helps build trust, reduces anxiety, and supports a smoother start to the school day for children and young people with additional needs.

Timekeeping

Punctuality is essential to the smooth running of Home to School Transport services. PAs must understand that both lateness and arriving too early can cause significant disruption for children, young people, and their families.

- Be mindful of timing: While traffic conditions and pupil attendance can affect journey times, PAs should aim to arrive as close to the scheduled pick-up time as possible.
- Avoid early pick-ups: Arriving earlier than expected can be just as problematic as being late, especially for families with strict routines or children who struggle with unexpected changes.
- Work collaboratively: PAs should build a professional and communicative relationship with their driver to help maintain consistent and appropriate timing on all routes.

Maintaining reliable timekeeping helps reduce anxiety for children and young people and supports a calm and predictable start to the school day.

Information on Service User Needs

PLACE Specialised Transport is committed to ensuring that Passenger Assistants (PAs) and drivers are well-informed about the needs of the children and young people they support.

- Initial Information: We provide as much relevant information as possible about a passenger's special educational needs or disabilities at the start of the contract. This includes any known medical, behavioural, or mobility-related needs.
- Risk Assessments: Where appropriate, a risk assessment will be completed to identify any specific support strategies, safety considerations, or equipment requirements. These assessments are designed to help PAs and drivers manage individual needs confidently and safely.
- Ongoing Awareness: We recognise that some additional needs may only become apparent once transport has commenced. In such cases, risk assessments may be updated or newly created to reflect emerging concerns.
- Importance of Feedback: Regular feedback from both PAs and drivers is essential. Your observations help us:

- Identify and respond to emerging needs
- Update risk assessments and support plans
- Share relevant information with schools, parents/carers, and other professionals

By working together and maintaining open communication, we can ensure that every child or young person receives the support they need for a safe and positive transport experience.

Procedure for the Collection of Children/Young People

To ensure a safe and consistent start to the school day, the following procedure must be followed when collecting children and young people for transport:

- **Arrival and Waiting Time**

Transport will arrive at the agreed time and location. The vehicle will wait for a maximum of 3 minutes.

- Exceptions may be made at the Passenger Assistant's (PA's) discretion if the vehicle arrives earlier than scheduled.

- **Handover by a Responsible Adult**

A responsible adult must bring the child/young person to the vehicle.

- Drivers and PAs must not leave the vehicle to collect the pupil from the house, as their primary responsibility is to supervise those already on board.
- Exception: If the child/young person is a solo traveller, the PA may assist with collection if it is safe to do so.

- **Securing the Passenger**

The PA must ensure that the child/young person is safely secured in their seat or harness before informing the driver that the vehicle is ready to depart.

- **If the Child/Young Person Is Not Ready**

If the pupil is not brought to the vehicle within the 3-minute window:

- The driver has the right to move off.
- The driver must report the situation to their operator.
- The driver and/or PA must make every reasonable effort to inform the parents/carers that the vehicle has had to leave.

Procedure for the Return of Children/Young People at the End of the School Day

To ensure a safe and smooth return home for all children and young people, the following procedure must be followed:

- **Handover to a Responsible Adult**

When transport arrives at the agreed time and location, a responsible adult must be present to collect the child/young person from the vehicle.

- PAs must not leave the vehicle to accompany the child/young person to the door, as their primary responsibility is to supervise those still on board.

- Exception: If the child/young person is a solo traveller, the PA may assist with handover if it is safe to do so.

If No One Is Available

If no parent/carer or responsible adult is available, and the child/young person cannot be safely dropped off:

- Keep the child/young person on the vehicle and inform your operator immediately.
- The operator will contact PLACE Specialised Transport, who will advise one of the following actions:
 - Return to School: If the school agrees and your schedule allows, return the child/young person to school.
 - Meet-Up Arrangement: PLACE will attempt to contact the parent/carer to arrange a meeting point.
 - Emergency Social Care: If all contact attempts fail, PLACE will contact the Emergency Duty Social Work Team to arrange collection or emergency respite.
 - Police Station: As a last resort, PLACE may direct the vehicle to the nearest police station.

If there are multiple passengers on the Transport Contract:

- **If No One Is Home**

If no one is available to receive the child/young person:

- The PA must contact PLACE Specialised Transport immediately.
- Every effort should be made to inform parents/carers that the vehicle must continue its journey to avoid delays for other passengers.

- **Informing Parents/Carers**

The PA must contact the parents/carers to inform them of the child/young person's location and the steps taken.

Key Reminders

- The safety of the child or young person is paramount; this takes priority over any delay to the transport schedule.
- Keep PLACE Specialised Transport informed at every stage so accurate updates can be provided to all parties.
- Reassure all passengers on board that they are safe and will be taken home.
- Parental Responsibility for Collection
Parents/carers are responsible for making their own arrangements to collect their child/young person from the designated place of safety.

To report any of the above, Phone: 01629 536 736, select option 2 or email:

SpecialisedTransport.Services@derbyshire.gov.uk

Code of Conduct – Passenger Assistants

Passenger Assistants (PAs) must always conduct themselves in a professional, respectful, and responsible manner. Specifically, PAs must:

- Dress appropriately and maintain a clean, presentable appearance always.
- Wear their Derbyshire County Council ID badge while on duty.
- Ensure their actions do not expose any person to health or safety risks.
- Never engage in personal communication (email, phone, text, or social media) with children/young people.
- Never exchange telephone numbers with children/young people under any circumstances, even if related to Home to School Transport (HTST).
- Never use inappropriate language at any time during transport.
- Remain in the vehicle whenever children/young people are on board.
- Ensure safe handover of children/young people to school staff in the morning and to parents/carers in the afternoon.

Consequences of Misconduct – Passenger Assistants

Failure to follow the Code of Conduct or any part of this guidance may result in serious consequences. These are in place to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and to maintain the integrity of the transport service.

Misconduct may lead to:

- Immediate suspension from duties pending investigation.
- Formal investigation by PLACE Specialised Transport and/or Derbyshire County Council.
- Termination of contract or removal from the route for serious or repeated breaches.
- Referral to safeguarding authorities or the police where misconduct involves safeguarding concerns or potential criminal behaviour.
- Notification to relevant regulatory or licensing bodies, which may affect future employment in similar roles.
- All concerns or allegations will be taken seriously and handled in accordance with Derbyshire County Council's safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

Contact Information

SEND Transport

Email: sendtransport@derbyshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01629 536 736, Option 1

For parents/carers/ please contact SEND Transport for the following:

- specialised or mainstream transport application queries.
- assistance regarding completing our online form.
- specialised or mainstream transport eligibility queries.
- specialised or mainstream transport re-charges for post-16.
- specialised or mainstream eligibility/application complaints.

PLACE Specialised Transport

Email: SpecialisedTransport.Services@derbyshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01629 536 736, Option 2

For parents/carers/schools/operators please contact PLACE Specialised Transport for the following:

- specialised or mainstream transport queries.
- specialised or mainstream transport mobilisation queries.
- specialised or mainstream transport information.

Alternate Provision and Children's Social Care Transport

Email: Place.Alternate.Transport@derbyshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01629 536 736, Option 2

For parents/carers/social worker/schools/operators please contact Behaviour Support and Children's Social Care Transport for the following:

- behaviour support and children's social care transport application submissions.
- behaviour support and children's social care transport application queries.
- assistance regarding completing our transport application form.
- behaviour support and children's social care transport eligibility queries.
- behaviour support and children's social care transport eligibility/application complaints.

Finance

Email: send.payments@derbyshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01629 536 736, Option 3

For parents/carers/operators/schools please contact our finance team for the following:

- operator invoice submission
- operator invoice queries
- parental mileage submission
- parental mileage queries
- finance queries

Compliance Team

Email: place.complianceoffice@derbyshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01629 536 736, Option 4

For parents/carers/operators/schools please contact our compliance team for the following:

- Training queries
- Compliance audit information

DBS Team

Email: SpecialisedTransport.DBS@derbyshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01629 536 736, Option 4

For parents/carers/operators/schools please contact our DBS team for the following:

- DBS queries

Safeguarding

Email: SpecialisedTransportSafeguarding@derbyshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01629 536736, Option 2

For parents/carers/social worker/schools/operators please contact PLACE Specialised Transport Safeguarding for the following:

- submit a safeguarding concern
- discuss any safeguarding queries