

## **GUIDE TO ARRANGING TRANSPORT FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

This guide is to assist social work staff who require to put transport arrangements in place for children and young people who are looked after.

### **1. School transport for Looked After children and young people that live in their school catchment area**

The Council's current policy is to provide free home to school transport for:

- a primary school aged child who attends his/her catchment area school or other educational establishment and lives more than one mile from it, by the shortest available walking route;
- a secondary school aged young person who attends his/her catchment area school or other educational establishment and lives more than two miles from it, by the shortest available walking route;
- a child or young person who has additional support needs and free transport is proposed through a planning and review meeting and the full completion of a Transport Request Form.

School staff can request a travel pass for a child or young people that meets the above criteria and lives in an area with a school bus. If there is no suitable bus service available a taxi/minibus may be provided instead. School staff are also responsible for requesting transport for a child or young person with additional support needs by submitting a Transport Request Form to Education Transport. Social work staff should liaise direct with school staff to put transport arrangements in place in the above circumstances.

### **2. School transport for Looked After and Accommodated children and young people that live with carers outwith their existing school catchment area**

Roads & Transportation Services will arrange long term school transport for looked after and accommodated children and young people living with foster carers, in residential care, or placed in formal kinship care. In all cases the child or young person must be looked after away from their normal place of residence and attending a school that is not a catchment area school for that address.

Transport normally takes 5-7 working days to be organised from receipt of a Transport Request Form, but this cannot be guaranteed. The time taken can be affected by the complexity of the request, the overall demand for transport (e.g. the start of the summer term in August is always busy) and the availability of suitable vehicles and drivers.

Social work staff should use the Social Work Taxi Booking Procedure to make all short term transport arrangements. This includes interim transport arrangements until Roads & Transportation make the requested longer term transport arrangements.

A long term placement is one that is longer than 3 months duration. Any transport expected to operate less than 1 month will not be considered. Requests for transport between 1 and 3 months duration must be agreed by Roads & Transportation in advance. The email address below should be used to make an enquiry.

If the request meets the above criteria for transport, a completed Transport Request Form should be submitted for each child and young person. All Transport Request Forms must be approved by the Team Manager.

Copies of the current Transport Request Forms are available at the bottom of the School Transport page on the Council website.

[School transport | Fife Council](#)

All new requests for transport and any changes to existing arrangements should be sent to the following e-mail address:

[Transportation.additionalsupportneeds@fife.gov.uk](mailto:Transportation.additionalsupportneeds@fife.gov.uk)

Social work staff requesting transport for a child or young person are responsible for informing the school transport team of any changes or cancellations. These should be sent as far in advance as possible. Where the amount of notice is less than the normal 5–7 day period it may not be possible to implement the change in the given timescale. A new Transport Request Form should be submitted if a child or young person changes their address or their travel pattern. Social work staff must advise the school transport team, as soon as possible, when transport for a young person is no longer required so any arrangements can be cancelled and payments stopped.

Temporary changes to transport arrangements for respite care, contact visits and other ad hoc journeys are the responsibility of social work staff to organise. In some circumstances it may be possible to incorporate these journeys into an existing transport contract where the alternative address is in the same area and the overall mileage is unaffected. Roads & Transportation will make changes to accommodate SQA exams but advance notice must be given to ensure that the arrangements are made in time for any exams.

If a looked after and accommodated child or young person requires an adult to travel with them it is the responsibility of social work staff to provide someone to take on this travel escort role.

### **3. All other journeys for Looked After children and young people**

The Social Work Taxi Booking Procedure should be used by social work staff to arrange all other journeys that are required for looked after children. These include, but are not restricted to:

- Emergency placements
- Evenings and weekends
- Contact visits
- Respite
- Nursery transport
- Temporary school transport (less than 3 months duration)
- School transport when the criteria in 1. and 2. above are not met
- Short term bookings until more permanent arrangements are made
- Ad hoc journeys