



**Buxton Primary School**

# **Travel Assistance Policy for Friday 3pm bus**

## **December 2025**

<b>Formally adopted by the Governing Body:</b>	<b>Buxton Primary School</b>
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<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	<b>Kathryn Corder</b>
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# 1. Scope and responsibilities

Most journeys between home and school, including those involving children with special educational needs, can be undertaken independently, without the need for travel assistance to be provided.

This policy details the circumstances in which Buxton Primary School will provide travel assistance to school for children living at Badersfield, and how these arrangements will be made for the 3pm Friday journey.

The Policy is made under the provisions of Section 508 and 509 of the Education Act 1996 and Schedule 35B inserted by the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

More information on the relevant legislation and the statutory guidance (Travel to School for Children of Compulsory School Age, January 2024) can be found at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

## 1.1 Parents

References to **parents** in this policy include birth parents, adoptive parents, foster parents, carers and legal guardians with parental responsibility.

It is the responsibility of parents to...

- ✓ Ensure their child attends school regularly
- ✓ Ensure their child is accompanied where necessary
- ✓ Apply for travel assistance, if required
- ✓ Ensure that their child travels safely to/from school if they are not eligible for travel assistance.
- ✓ If travel assistance is provided, ensure that their child uses it safely and appropriately.

This may be achieved by:

- Walking or cycling with their child
- Accompanying their child on public transport
- Transporting their child by other means
- Arranging for another person to do any of these

## 1.2 Buxton Primary School

It is the responsibility of Buxton Primary School to...

- ✓ Provide travel assistance for children who are eligible in accordance with the legislation.
- ✓ Operate within procurement and finance procedures in contracting a supplier for the 3pm Friday bus

- ✓ Ensure best value is achieved in the service it supplies
- ✓ Promote good behaviour when travelling from school, applying the school's own behaviour policies to deal with unacceptable behaviour.
- ✓ Take travel arrangements into account when making changes to their school day/times/term dates.
- ✓ Ensure parents are aware of the school's roles and responsibilities around school travel when children are thinking of gaining a place at their school.

### 1.3 Collective responsibility – promoting independent travel

- ✓ Promote and enable an increase in independent travel, where possible, for all children including those with Special Educational needs and Disabilities.
- ✓ Utilise the existing learning support and the curriculum in place to help maximise the opportunities for independent travel.
- ✓ Recognise that the appropriate level of independence will depend on the child's individual needs and circumstances but that, where possible, this will involve helping children to access walking or cycling routes.

## 2. General travel assistance policy

- Funded travel assistance is provided for eligible children when a child starts school at age 4 years if they will be 5 years old before the following 1st September.
- It is provided for Buxton Primary School's children aged 4-11 years.

## 3. When travel assistance is provided for children of compulsory school age

- Funded travel assistance is provided for children of statutory school age who live within the school's catchment area.
- A dedicated school bus is provided for those children who live at Badersfield as there is no safe walking path between there and school (despite it being within the permitted distance to walk).

Please note:

- Buxton Primary School arranged travel assistance will only be available for the official end time of Lemur Class each Friday at 3pm when school is in operation during term time.
- The parents/carers of children with medical needs are aware there are no supporting adults on the bus for this journey.
- Travel assistance will not be provided for modified timetables or part-day arrangements or for extended school opportunities or extended school provision e.g. breakfast and after school clubs.
- Norfolk County Council provided transport will be provided at 3pm each Friday after Lemur Class finishes. Norfolk County Council will continue to provide transport Monday to Friday mornings and Monday to Friday at 3pm on the days the school is in operation during term time.
- Travel assistance is not provided for children attending induction, taster or transitional days or sessions before joining the school.
- If certain classes, year groups, or children have different start or finish times from the majority of pupils at the school, separate travel arrangements will not be provided. Parents will need to organise their own transport to accommodate these children.
- Travel assistance is not provided for work experience
- Travel assistance will only be provided to the main site of the school where the child is registered and not to any satellite, off-site, or alternative provision.
- Parents are responsible for getting their child to and from the nearest vehicle boarding point (see section 11).
- A pupil's home address is defined as their main residence. For children with separated parents who share custody:
  - The home address is where the child spends most of the week Monday – Friday.
  - If time is equally split between parents, the home address will be that of the parent receiving the child's child benefit.
  - If this is unclear, the address registered with the child's GP will be used.
  - If it is still unclear the school can use its discretion to decide which address will be classed as the main residence.
  - Supporting evidence may be required.
- Travel assistance will only be provided to and from one address and it is parental responsibility to ensure that a child can get to and from school

when residing at an alternative address.

- We will check full address data for a sample of applicants each year, to ensure this is the child's main residence.
- If at any time there is a change to the infrastructure which may affect a child's entitlement to travel assistance (e.g. a new housing development, a change to the network of walking routes or to the school infrastructure), a child's entitlement to travel assistance will be re-assessed. Following this re-assessment, if a child is no longer entitled to free travel assistance it will be withdrawn but will continue for up to 6 weeks up to the next natural term / half term break giving parents time to make alternative arrangements.
- Travel passes are sent by Norfolk County Council by 2<sup>nd</sup> class post and transport details are sent via email.

## 4. How travel assistance is provided

Travel assistance will be provided in the most economically advantageous way for the school. This means that most journeys will be provided using a contracted school bus.

All primary age groups may be mixed on the same vehicle.

Throughout the time your child is receiving travel assistance it is very likely your route, transport provider, driver and passenger assistant (if applicable) may change. Changes are inevitable due to procurement procedures and the need to review transport networks and provision. We arrange contracts with transport operators, therefore we cannot specify which personnel will be driving or assisting in the vehicle on any given day or for the duration of a contract.

The school will make every effort to ensure that the services operate satisfactorily but will not provide reimbursement for any days when the transport does not operate or for days when a child does not use the service.

### 4.1 Specific family circumstances

#### 4.1.1 Emergency moves

Travel assistance may be given on a temporary basis (for a period of up to 6 weeks, to the end of the next term or half-term) if the child is subject to an emergency move of home beyond the family's control to another home within the school's catchment area (dedicated school bus to Badgersfield).

The definition of an emergency move is that the family had no prior warning or knowledge of a move being required, e.g. if they have been given 3 months' notice of an eviction, this is not an emergency as prior warning had been given.

In addition, the move needs to be beyond the family's control, e.g. we will not

provide travel assistance if the family is being evicted due to not paying their rent.

#### 4.1.2 Adults unable to accompany

If a child lives under the qualifying distance, then it is legally a parental responsibility to ensure their child attends school and therefore can get to and from school. However, if the child is too young or vulnerable to walk to school alone and their parent(s) have mobility issues or severe medical conditions meaning they cannot accompany their child, we may provide travel assistance.

To apply, families must provide medical evidence from a third party showing:

- How far the parent can walk
- How often they can walk that distance

If two or more adults live in the family home, including anyone over the age of 18 and regardless of parental responsibility, they must all provide evidence that they cannot accompany the child to school due to their own physical mobility difficulties or severe medical condition.

Parents must also explain:

- Why they cannot transport the child by any other means
- What other options they have explored to ensure attendance

This ensures support is only given where absolutely necessary, there is consideration of all the facts and all options have been considered for parents to undertake their legal duty.

Travel assistance will not be provided if any of the following are reasons the parent(s) cannot get their child to and from school:

- Work or education commitments
- The cost of public transport
- The fact the parent has children attending different schools
- Parents don't drive or don't have access to car
- Being a single parent
- Having other caring responsibilities
- No family or friends close by to help

#### 4.2 Unavailable walking routes

The criteria for the assessment of walking routes is in Appendix 2.

If a route to school is assessed against these criteria as being unavailable for walking, accompanied as necessary, the school will provide free travel assistance for children to Buxton Primary School from Badersfield.

Unavailable walking routes will be reviewed on a regular basis and if any changes to a route mean that it is then assessed as available, according to the criteria, free travel assistance will be withdrawn, and it will become the parent's responsibility to get their child to and from school as it will then be their legal responsibility.

Similarly, if an alternative route to school is identified which is available according to the criteria and within the qualifying distance, free travel assistance will be withdrawn, and it will become the parent's responsibility to get their child to and from school.

In both instances the school will give at least 6 weeks' notice of the withdrawal of free travel assistance, up to the next natural term / half-term break, to allow time for parents to make alternative arrangements.

## 5. Travelling times

The school will aim to provide single journeys, assessed using the door-to-door time, that do not exceed:

- 45 minutes at primary school age

However, these times are a guideline only and the efficiency of the transport provision will be the over-riding, principal factor, particularly considering the rural nature of the county.

## 6. Transport set-down and boarding points

The set-down points for children of statutory school age are provided as near as possible to home. This is usually no more than 1 mile away from home for children of primary school age. The set-down point for the 3pm Friday bus will be the Costcutter shop at Badersfield.

Boarding points are provided as near as possible to school. For primary age pupils and children with SEND this will be within the school grounds or just outside the school gate.

Children are the responsibility of parents before they board the vehicle and after they alight at the end of the day following use of the 3pm Friday bus.

Children of primary school age (Years R–6) and children with special needs should be collected from school transport at the end of the day by an appropriate adult, i.e. parents should ensure that they or someone else is at the set-down point. If there is no adult present to collect a child, then the child will not be left, which may mean that the school transport continues its route with the child on board whilst the parent is contacted.

## 7. Behaviour

Children, parents, schools and transport providers have a collective responsibility for ensuring good behaviour whilst waiting for school transport and travelling from school.

Any unacceptable behaviour will be reported to the school who have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside of the premises.

Children should comply with any instructions from drivers (or passenger assistants where applicable), particularly in the event of a breakdown or a road incident. Non-compliance with instructions will be regarded as unacceptable behaviour.

All children should behave in an appropriate manner while waiting for school transport and while travelling home on school transport.

Any unacceptable behaviour may result in a temporary withdrawal of travel assistance for up to two months, during which time it will be the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child gets to and from school.

Travel assistance will only be reinstated for banned pupils when they have demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the school, that they are willing and able to behave appropriately.

In cases of gross or persistent misconduct a permanent ban from school travel assistance may be imposed.

Please note that CCTV is now in operation on many vehicles.

Please see Appendix 3 for the Behaviour Policy and Procedure.

# Appendix 1

## Journey information

### Procurement of travel assistance

Travel assistance will be procured in accordance with the school's finance procedures and the requirements of any relevant UK legislation.

Contracts for the provision of passenger transport services for the 3pm Friday bus, will be annually reviewed to ensure best value for money and efficiency of the overall provision of transport. This means that travel assistance could change during a child's time at school.

### Arrival and departure times

Travel assistance will be arranged to leave after school finishes at 3pm on a Friday.

Occasionally due to other factors the transport may be late arriving back to Badersfield due to circumstances out of the school's control e.g. traffic delays experienced by the travel operator. In these instances the school will ensure that appropriate supervision arrangements are made whilst waiting for the bus to arrive at school to collect the children.

### Seatbelts and vehicle loading

In accordance with the seating capacity regulations, a seat for each pupil will be provided.

Seatbelts and other forms of child restraint will be provided where they are required by law. Children are responsible for putting on their own seatbelt.

### Drivers and passenger assistants

Drivers will be DBS checked and supplied by the travel operator contracted to provide the 3pm Friday bus.

Passenger assistants, in addition to the driver, are only provided as follows:

- On vehicles carrying pupils with special needs if a risk assessment of the journey or a specific child indicates that one is required.
- On vehicles where the driver cannot gain access to the passenger compartment without leaving the vehicle or where the driver does not have control of the vehicle doors from their driving position.
- On other vehicles where a specific need is identified

## Travel passes

Travel passes are the property of the County Council and are subject to the conditions set in the Norfolk County Council School and College Travel Assistance Policy and those of transport operators. The County Council must be notified by the parent if a pupil leaves school before the expiry date of the travel pass so that it can be cancelled.

Primary age pupils on a contracted service will be allowed to travel for five days without a travel pass to give them time to get a new one.

Lost and damaged passes (e.g. ones that no longer work on the electronic ticket machine) should be replaced. There is a charge of £13 for a replacement pass to cover the administration costs by Norfolk County Council.

Fraudulent use of a travel pass may result in it being confiscated.

## Other users

Other persons may be given permission to travel on contracted transport e.g. staff, parents helping at the school. Such persons should obtain permission from the school to use the 3pm Friday bus and will only be authorised to travel providing:

- There are spare seats available
- There are no additional costs involved
- A relevant DBS check has been undertaken, where applicable

School staff using the services are expected to supervise the pupils whilst travelling.

## Appendix 2

### Criteria for home to school walking route assessments

Introduction:

For the school to provide travel assistance on the 3pm Friday bus, the route must have special factors that make it particularly hazardous and therefore unavailable to walk or cycle along in reasonable safety, even where a child is accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult.

The school follows the guidance set by **Road Safety GB** when assessing walking routes to school and for a route to be assessed as '**non-hazardous**' the following conditions need to be present, from section A and section B.

#### Section A

A continuous adequate footway on roads which carry normal to heavy traffic (more than 400 vehicles per hour).

or

'Step-offs' on roads which have light traffic flow (240 - 400 vehicles per hour) but adequate sight lines to provide sufficient advance warning to drivers and pedestrians.

or

On roads with very light traffic flow (less than 240 vehicles per hour) no 'step offs' but sufficiently good sight lines to provide adequate advance warning to drivers and pedestrians and the ability of a vehicle to pass a pedestrian.

**Section B** If there is a need to cross the road there must be:

Sufficient gaps in the traffic flow and sight lines to allow enough opportunities to cross safely.

or

Crossing facilities (e.g. zebra, pelican crossings), pedestrian phase at traffic lights (including necessary refuges), school crossing patrol, pedestrian refuges.

## Road crossing assessments

The difficulty of crossing at a site can be assessed by considering the number of gaps in the traffic flow that are acceptable to pedestrians. An acceptable gap to cross from kerb to kerb varies with each person but most people will be able to cross two lanes of normal urban traffic in 4 to 6 seconds. Others may need larger gaps of around 10 to 12 seconds.

Where the two-way (or one-way of a dual carriageway) traffic flow is below 240 vehicles per hour the road is assessed as safe to cross.

All traffic counts and road crossing assessments are taken in the hour before school starts in the morning and in the hour after school ends.

## Other factors

The history of road accidents involving pedestrians along the route will also be considered.

It is assumed that all road users will behave reasonably and responsibly. Drivers are expected to comply with the speed limits. Where they do not, the local police should be asked to take appropriate action.

The presence or absence of street lighting on a route is not considered to be a factor.

## Public rights of way

Public rights of way are determined as any route where access does not constitute trespassing, and include routes such as bridleways, public byways, permissive paths and common land. These routes are generally considered as available walking routes, however a route could be considered unavailable as a walking route, even to a child accompanied by an adult, if an element of the route poses a significant level of risk that cannot be reduced by any reasonable adjustments, e.g. if there is a deep fast-flowing river adjacent to an exposed footpath, where it would be impossible to get out of the river should an incident occur.

## Appendix 3

### Behaviour policy and procedure

#### Guidelines for managing behaviour on school transport

The aim to ensure that school transport is safe for children, transport staff and other passengers.

We therefore need to ensure that all cases of poor and unsafe behaviour are reported and dealt with promptly. This means working with the travel operator to investigate the incident, resolve any issues and take prompt appropriate action where necessary.

All children should behave appropriately whilst travelling. Poor behaviour can be unpleasant for others in the vehicle – but it can also seriously distract the driver, endangering others and putting everyone in that vehicle and other road users at risk.

#### Behaviour we expect from children we provide travel assistance for:

- Queue for the bus in an orderly manner
- Stay in your seat and face forward at all times – stay in your seat until the vehicle stops.
- Be careful and well behaved throughout
- Have your pass with you each time you travel
- Wear seat belts if provided– **it is against the law not to wear a seatbelt if one is provided.**
- Keep bags and equipment out of the gangway
- Do as the driver tells you, especially if there is an emergency or breakdown
- Talk to friends but no shouting, screaming or swearing
- Be polite to the driver and others

#### School will:

- Promote appropriate standards of behaviour and use sanctions to address poor behaviour.
- Promote self-discipline amongst children and encourage positive behaviour

and respect for others.

- Work closely and promptly to investigate any incidents, including questioning and identifying children - in some cases this may include viewing CCTV from the vehicle.

## Behaviour we expect from drivers and operators

- Report issues promptly to the school so that swift action can be taken.
- Treat passengers fairly and respectfully
- Supervise children when boarding and alighting the vehicle, and during any emergency situation like an accident or a breakdown.
- In the event of any misbehaviour, **do not** remove children from the vehicle or refuse to allow them to board – unless the vehicle is at school.
- If any misbehaviour is potentially dangerous, stop the vehicle and call the school or police if required.

## The school's procedure for dealing with issues

If your child does misbehave, there are the three stages:

### 1. Initial warning

Minor incidents of misbehaviour will normally be reported to the school by the travel operator for any action considered necessary, for example a warning to the child. This step may be enough to prevent any escalation to stage 2 or stage 3.

### 2. Written warning

If the travel operator believes the behaviour warrants the school to intervene, rather than just an initial warning, then the travel operator will inform the school.

The travel operator will send in a written report of the incident via email, plus any details of any previous initial warnings, to the school.

After consultation with the school and travel operator, the school will write to parents seeking their help and warning them that any further incidents of unacceptable behaviour may result in a temporary transport ban. It is vital that parents reiterate to their children the importance of good behaviour on school transport to prevent escalation to a transport ban.

### 3. Temporary transport ban

In general, a transport ban will be put in place if we have already issued a previous written warning for a past incident. The incident will be fully investigated by the school and the travel operator - if the incident is confirmed, the school will notify the parents that their child will be banned from travel assistance for a specified period.

The school has the right to override earlier stages in the procedure if the seriousness of the incident warrants this – the school has the right to enforce a

travel assistance ban, without sending a written warning first, if for example the child has previously warned the child about their behaviour and there has been no improvement.

In some cases, due to the severity of the behaviour incident, it may be necessary for a meeting to be held where parent attendance will be necessary.

## Factors that will be considered when reviewing incidents of poor behaviour

- The seriousness of the behaviour/ incident
- The impact of the behaviour on others and property
- Frequency and past history of behaviour
- Age and understanding of the pupil
- Any special educational needs that the pupil may have
- Was the incident/behaviour perpetrated alone or as part of a group
- Response to school interventions / previous consequences implemented to improve pupils' behaviour.

## Immediate exclusion from transport

On occasion, there may be an incident of such a serious nature that it is necessary to ban a child from travel assistance without issuing a previous warning – the ban is implemented as soon as possible after the incident. Please see examples of incidents that justify an immediate ban

- Violent behaviour
- Bullying, harassment, intimidation (physical and/or verbal)
- Damage to the vehicle
- Gross verbal abuse towards other children, staff or other passengers
- Actions which compromise the safety of the vehicle e.g. fighting, distracting the driver, not remaining seated.
- Failure to adhere to the safety rules onboard or to follow driver instructions
- Using the emergency exit inappropriately
- Carrying a blade or any sharp instrument
- Smoking, e-cigarette or drug use
- Throwing objects around the vehicle
- Tampering with health and safety equipment
- Spitting
- Vandalism, damage to the vehicle – criminal damage will be reported to the police and parents will be responsible for the cost of any necessary repairs.

The school has the final say on whether an incident deserves an immediate ban. Transport providers cannot act independently to enforce a ban.

## The duration of transport bans

The length of the first transport ban is at the school's discretion - in most cases it will be for 5 school days, however depending on the severity of the incident it could be more.

The school will take into account the concerns of the travel operator when determining the length of any ban.

For children who continue to misbehave the school can use its discretion and enforce a longer ban, for example, if a week's ban has already been issued the school may decide to authorise a two-week ban. Transport bans can be for up to 2 months.

Parents will be responsible financially for any damage caused to the vehicle as a result of the pupil's behaviour. Failure to reimburse the operator may lead to court action and may result in the ban remaining in place until the damages have been paid for.

In cases of gross or persistent misconduct a permanent ban from school travel assistance may be imposed.

**During any exclusion from transport, parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school or college as usual and they will be marked as an unauthorised absence if they do not attend.**

## Pupils with special educational needs

For some pupils who have Special Educational Needs (SEN) there may be other contributing factors that need to be taken into account when considering their behaviour and any potential ban from travel assistance. However, where disruptive, challenging or unsafe behaviour occurs, which may place the pupil and others at risk, or if the behaviour is beyond that which can be reasonably expected and managed, then action may be taken and travel assistance may need to be stopped whilst the transport provision is reviewed.

The school will work with the travel operators and parents to find positive ways to manage this behaviour wherever possible.

Parents and schools will be asked to the travel operators to understand the reasons for a pupils challenging behaviour and the strategies that might be helpful in managing it.

## Smoking

For incidents of smoking on transport there will be a mandatory minimum travel ban of one week. This includes smoking e-cigs or similar devices.

## Mobile phones

The use of mobile phones or other electronic devices for taking photographs or filming is prohibited on all vehicles.