

The provision of escorts for some learners

Some children have a physical or sensory impairment or severe, profound or multiple learning difficulties which require specialist transport arrangements or supervision. At times parents and carers are keen and able to support their child's journey to school, at other times the needs of the child can lead to consideration of the requirement of transport and an escort.

The responsibility for ensuring safe and acceptable behaviour in travelling to school remains with the parents or carers. Misbehaviour or action which could put others at risk may result in removal of the provision on a temporary or permanent basis.

The provision of escorts

Escorts will only be provided when a risk assessment has been carried out and the need for escorted travel is determined. This will include careful consideration of:

- medical needs requiring an emergency medical protocol, procedure or specific adult support;
- safety needs resulting from other factors such as behaviours due to an additional support need;
- physical or psychological capabilities in some cases; and
- the age of the child

If you feel that any of the criteria above apply you should consider the following questions as part of the risk assessment process:

- Would it be feasible for the child or young person to share an escort?
- Do current transport runs to your setting have an escort?
- Could the child share transport if an escort is provided?

You should make clear if an escort is already supporting a child or young person in your setting and if sharing the escort would be feasible.

Where transport is already in place but circumstances have changed resulting in the need for an escort, the risk assessment should be forwarded to the Public Transport Unit (PTU) and Inclusion Team. The relevant Service Manager (Inclusion) will consider the request for escorted travel by taking account of the criteria listed above. The Service Manager (Inclusion) will liaise with the PTU and inform you of decisions taken.

Where applications are being made for transport for the first time and an escort is considered necessary, the application and risk assessment should both be forwarded to the Public Transport Team and Inclusion Team. The Service Manager (Inclusion) will consider the request.

The need for an escort should be routinely reviewed as part of the risk assessment process.

Only in very exceptional cases will two escorts be granted for a single transport run.

A change of school

Children and young people already receiving transport/escort support who transfer to another school, or who move from primary to secondary school, will not automatically receive transport or an escort.

Transport and escort arrangements must always be considered as part of enhanced transition planning arrangements. The risk assessment process will be initiated by the current school with attendance from a member of staff from the future provision. A change of school will always trigger a review of arrangements.

In some circumstances, e.g. a child transferring into a school or moving into zone at short notice, it will be more difficult to follow the good practice contained in this procedure. Where this is the case, a meeting to compile the risk assessment should be convened as soon as reasonably practical and parents and carers should be advised of the need to make alternative arrangements in the short term. It should be noted that where a child attends a school other than their zoned school as a result of a successful parental placing request there is no duty on the Council to provide transport and transport is not normally provided by Aberdeen City Council.

Transport to placements out with council provision

Transport and escorts for children and young people who are placed in an educational provision outwith the Local Authority's provision will be considered only if the Authority is placing the child or young person rather than by parental placing request. As referred to above, ACC does not make provision for transport where the requirement is as a result of a parental placing request.

In all cases, transport and escort arrangements are subject to yearly review. Transport provision may change as a child or young person's needs change. For example transport may remain in place but an escort may no longer be required or a young person may have progressed to travelling to and from school independently.

Requesting an escort

