

Parent's guide to Home to School Transport



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What you can expect from our Home to School Transport Service

Getting your child to school safely and on time is a team effort. Parents and carers, schools, transport operators, and the Council all have a role to play in making sure everything runs smoothly.

This guide explains:

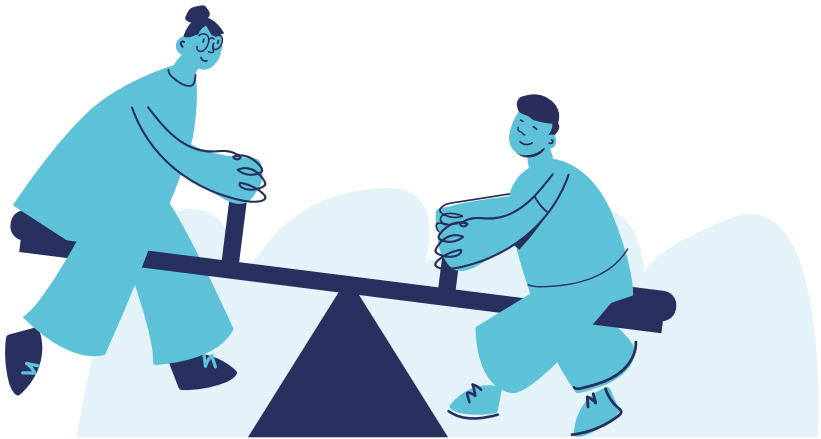
- What you can expect from us
- What we ask of you as parents and carers
- What our transport operators are responsible for

By working together, we can help make the journey to school safe, reliable, and stress-free for everyone.



What is KCC's vision for Home to School Transport?

Our vision is to provide eligible children and young people with a Home-to-School transport service that meets statutory duties and is cost effective whilst ensuring they reach their educational destinations safely, on time and ready to learn. We aim to deliver this essential service in a way that is outcomes-focussed whilst balancing financial sustainability and pupil/parent satisfaction.



Who's involved in KCC?

Three teams work together to deliver Home to School Transport:

- **SEN Team** – Shares information about your child's special educational needs (if they have any) to the Transport Eligibility Team.
- **Transport Eligibility Team** – Applies KCC's transport policy to see if a child qualifies for home to school transport funded by the Council. They also manage travel training and personal transport budgets.
- **Public Transport Team** – Organises and manages the transport your child or young person will be using, based on your child's needs and ability. The team also manages the contracts with transport operators.

How Home to School Transport is arranged

We provide the most suitable transport based on your child's needs, while also making sure we're using council taxpayer funding efficiently.

To find out more about how long it will take to arrange transport services, please see our [guidance to school transport](#) in the section "application timescales".

When we buy new services, we must follow procurement law. This involves commissioning services via the commercial transport market who will submit a proposal for each service. We are unable to choose a transport operator to meet a personal preference or to keep the same transport operator throughout the academic life of the child.

Our services may change whilst your child attends school. Our agreement with transport operators typically last for 3-5 years, but some may change sooner in unexpected circumstances. We will provide you with as much notice as reasonably possible when our services change.

Types of school transport we may provide



We aim to offer the most suitable travel option for your child, based on their needs and what's available in your area. Here's a quick guide to the different types of transport we may arrange:

Public Transport (buses and trains)

If your child can safely and reasonably use public transport, we'll arrange a season ticket for them. We'll check that the journey is practical and that there's a nearby stop or station.

- The ticket will be sent to your child's school for collection.
- You'll receive a letter with details about where and when your child should catch the bus or train.
- Your child must carry their pass and show it when asked—just like any other passenger. If they don't have it, they may be refused travel or asked to pay.

Independent Travel Training (for SEN pupils)

Some children with special educational needs may be ready to use public transport with a bit of extra help. We offer travel training to build their confidence and support them in becoming more independent.

You can find out more on our website:
www.kent.gov.uk/traveltraining.

Personal Transport Budget (PTB)

If you'd prefer to take your child to school yourself, you might be eligible for a personal transport budget to help with the cost.

This depends on certain criteria, which you can check here:

www.kent.gov.uk/ptb

Hired Transport (taxi, minibus or coach)

If public transport isn't accessible to your child or if your child has special educational needs or disabilities that mean travelling on transport is a challenge, we may arrange a taxi, minibus or coach.

- Your child might need to walk to a nearby pick-up point.
- If they can't walk due to their needs or disability, we may arrange for them to be picked up from home.
- Where possible, we'll try to place children on existing services with other pupils.



What to expect with hired transport (taxis, minibuses, coaches)

Sometimes we use hired transport – like taxis, minibuses, or coaches – when public transport isn't suitable for your child. These services are run by licensed transport operators, not by the Council directly. Here's what you need to know:

Who runs the service?

We have contracts with private transport companies (we also refer to them as transport operators) to provide home to school transport. The transport companies we use are fully licensed by either the local district council (for taxis) or the national Traffic Commissioner (for minibuses and coaches). These transport companies and operators are responsible for their drivers and vehicles, not KCC.

Who are the drivers and assistants?

They are employees of the relevant transport company. All drivers and passenger assistants (if one is provided) will carry an official ID badge.

- Taxi drivers will have a badge from their district council.
- Minibus and coach staff will have a badge issued by Kent County Council.
- They must wear their badge while working so you can easily identify them.
- Passenger assistants (if one is provided) are fully trained.



Here is an example of the ID badges worn by the vehicle crew:



Are the vehicles safe?

All vehicles must meet legal safety standards and be properly licensed.

- Taxis will have a license plate on the back of the vehicle or a disc in the window (for Transport for London vehicles).
- Minibuses and coaches will display a disc in the front window with the operator's name.
- The transport companies are responsible for making sure their vehicles are roadworthy and safe to use, not KCC.

Here is an example of the plates and discs that will be present on the vehicle:

PRIVATE HIRE 

IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ABOUT THIS PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE OR ITS DRIVER PLEASE WRITE TO

THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL
LICENSING DEPARTMENT
PO BOX 9, CECIL STREET,
MARGATE, KENT,
CT9 1XZ
OR EMAIL licensing@thanet.gov.uk

REGISTRATION NO: GK74 ABC
VEHICLE TYPE: Ford Mondeo
EXPIRY DATE: 31/12/2025
LICENSED TO CARRY: 4 Passengers



THIS LICENCE BELONGS TO THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL



HACKNEY CARRIAGE 

IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ABOUT THIS HACKNEY CARRIAGE OR ITS DRIVER PLEASE WRITE TO

THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL
LICENSING DEPARTMENT
PO BOX 9, CECIL STREET,
MARGATE, KENT,
CT9 1XZ
OR EMAIL licensing@thanet.gov.uk

REGISTRATION NO: GK74 ABC
VEHICLE TYPE: Ford Mondeo
EXPIRY DATE: 31/12/2025
LICENSED TO CARRY: 4 Passengers



THIS LICENCE BELONGS TO THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL



Seating and safety

- Every child will have their own seat.
- Seat belts must be worn if they are fitted.

If your child uses a wheelchair, it will be safely secured by the driver before the vehicle sets off.

What background checks are carried out on drivers and passenger assistants?

All drivers and passenger assistants must pass an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check before working with children.

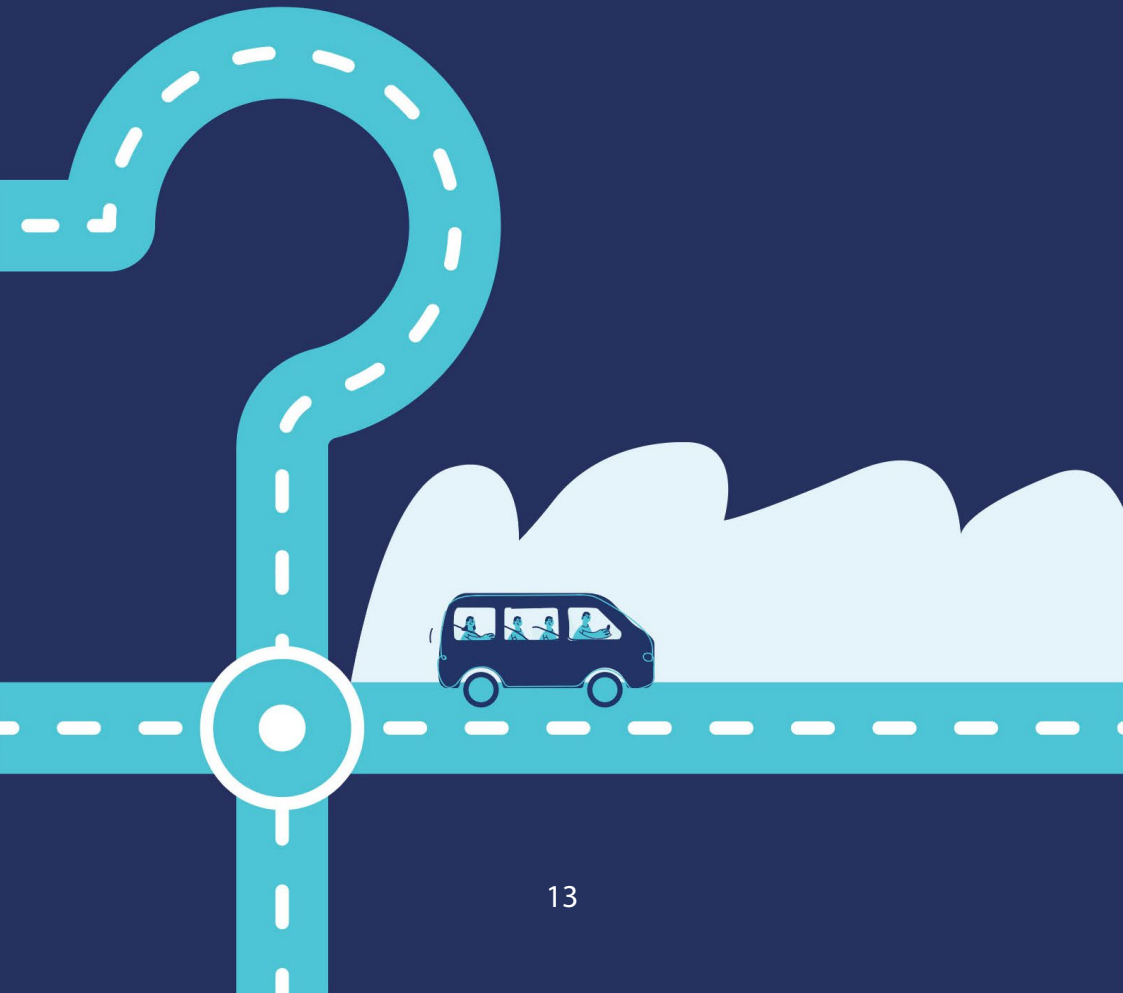
How are pick-ups and drop-offs arranged?

The transport company will contact you before the service starts to agree on pick-up and drop-off times. While some parents expect KCC to provide this information, this would slow things down and mean your child waits longer for their transport.



How you can help

What we ask of parents and carers



We all have a part to play in making school transport run smoothly. Here's how you can support your child's journey:

Use our travel passport



- Complete the form and share with your transport operator to assist your child whilst travelling to and from school.

www.kent.gov.uk/travelpassport

Be ready on time



- Please make sure your child is ready to board the vehicle at the agreed time.
- Drivers are advised to wait no more than 5 minutes at a pick-up point or home address before moving on.

At the end of the day

- If your child is dropped off at home, a responsible adult must be there to meet them.
- Drivers and passenger assistants are expected to hand your child over safely, but they cannot enter your home – please be ready to meet them at the vehicle or edge of your property.



Let your transport operator know about absences



- If your child won't be travelling on a particular day, please let the transport operator know as soon as possible. This helps avoid unnecessary journeys.

We can't make personal changes



- Unfortunately, your child's driver can't change pick-up or drop-off times or locations to fit around work schedules or personal plans.
- Transport is planned carefully to meet the needs of all pupils and must stick to the agreed route and timings.

There are, of course, situations out of our control and that of your child's driver, such as traffic delays or other unforeseen circumstances, and we ask for your flexibility and patience if these situations occur.

More information

You can find full details of your responsibilities in the Home to School Transport guidance on our website:

www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransport



If you have a problem with the service

Services may not always run as smoothly as we would like. Kent is a very large county that provides services to many families and children. Home to School Transport provides more than 20,000 individual trips per day for children with varying needs and abilities that can be very complex.

If you have any problems or concerns about the home to school transport your child receives, here's what to do:

1. Speak to the transport operator first – they can often resolve issues quickly.
2. Still need help? Contact our team:

For mainstream pupils:

MainstreamSchoolsTransport@kent.gov.uk

For pupils with SEN:

ClientTransport@kent.gov.uk

We aim to respond within 5 working days.

Encouraging good behaviour

Parents and carers play a vital role in helping home to school transport services run smoothly.

Please talk to your child about behaving safely and respectfully while travelling. You can read our full Code of Conduct here:

www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransport

Let us know about any changes to your circumstance

If your circumstances change – like moving house or your child changing school – please tell us straight away. This may affect your child's transport eligibility.

You can update us here: www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransport

