

At Elm Tree we are...



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# HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

## (2016 – 2017)

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## **1. Principles**

The purpose of this document is to explain Elm Tree Primary School's policy and provision for Home to School Transport for children with statements of Special Educational Needs (SEND) or Education and Health Care Plans (EHC).

This document should be read in conjunction with Lancashire County Council's Home to Mainstream School Transport Policy, which outlines the general Home to School Transport principles, which apply to all children and young people.

## **2. Legal Framework**

Under Section 508(B) of the Education Act 1996, we must provide free transport to and from school for your child if they are ages 5 to 11 and they live outside the legal walking distance between home and the school.

Free home to school transport assistance will be provided to children of compulsory school age if they live:

- More than 2 miles from home for a child under 8;
- More than 3 miles from home for a child aged 8 or over.

The duty applies to home to school travel arrangements at the start of the day, and school to home travel arrangements at the end of the day. It does not relate to travel between education establishments, medical appointments, collection from school due to illness or parental attendance due to meetings.

## **3. Entitlement**

Transport assistance will be provided to compulsory school aged children to the school if the child lives further than the statutory walking distance from the school.

Parents will be made aware of transport issues as part of the statementing/EHC process and particularly during transition review meetings.

### **The Decision to Provide Transport**

It is important to bear in mind that the decision to provide transport is based on the pupil's needs. This means that Elm Tree School are not able to take the following into account when considering home to school transport arrangements;

- Parent's work or other commitments
- Attendance by siblings / other children at other schools.

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- A journey from one educational establishment to another.
- Ad hoc visits to other schools or other establishments
- Out of hours clubs / after school clubs / child minders.
- Travel to / from dental, clinical, medical or hospital appointments.

In these instances, transport arrangements will be the sole responsibility of the child's parent or carer. The provision of transport will be reviewed as part of the annual review of the Statement / EHC Plan.

#### **4. What Transport Support Will Be Provided**

All Home to School transport is allocated on an annual basis with the review of transport taking place before the start of a new academic year.

The School provide transport on school 17 seater minibuses with a Home School Liaison Officer, who is a trained member of school staff.

#### **5. Travel Times**

Due to the School being located in Skelmersdale, with a catchment area which includes Chorley, Bamber Bridge, Leyland, Preston etc it is in most cases necessary for children to travel over 1 hour on school transport to and from school each day. Routes are planned to try to minimise the time each child has to spend on transport.

Given that most School Transport is dependent on Motorway travel, there of course will be unavoidable occasions whereby traffic/road closures determine that buses will be delayed in picking up or dropping of children. The school will endeavour to inform parents/carers on these occasions via the School Text Messaging System. It is therefore important that we have up to date mobile contact details for all parents/carers.

#### **6. Collection and Drop-off Arrangements**

Parents/carers are responsible for their children's safety in getting to and from the School Transport. They are also responsible for their children while they are waiting for transport and when they leave transport at the end of the day. Parents are advised not to leave their children unattended whilst waiting for school transport.

In the event that parents/carers are not in attendance to collect their children from School Transport at the end of the school day, School Transport may be withdrawn and parents/carers will be expected to attend a meeting at the school before School Transport will be re-instated.

**Children must be ready for collection at their home/scheduled pick up point at least five minutes before the scheduled pick up time to ensure that they do not miss their school transport. School Transport will not wait for children to get ready and will leave to move on to the next child's pick up.**

## **7. What if a Child Needs to Go To a Different Address?**

All home to school transport is arranged on the basis of ONE agreed pick up and drop off point. If a child needs to go to an alternative address, in an EMERGENCY, or there is a permanent change to the Collection / Set Down Location, this can only take place if authorised by the School and the address has been agreed in advance of the journey taking place. In any event, children will not be transported to an address which is more than 1 mile outside of their normal bus route.

## **8. Home School Liaison Officers**

There is no specific duty on the School to provide Home School Liaison Officers for children on Home to School Transport. However, fulfilling a duty of care to passengers and others, School Buses are attended by Home School Liaison Officers when more than one pupil is travelling.

## **9. Route Reviews / Amendments**

Children are admitted to Elm Tree School throughout the school year, and not just in September. Over a period of time the children travelling to and from school from a particular area changes, which means that school transport is subject to review/amendment throughout the school year. Consultation with parents/carers will not take place as part of a route review. This is to enable route reviews to be carried out in a timely and efficient manner. Changes may involve changes to Driver / Home School Liaison Officer / School and pickup and drop off times.

## **10. Transport Safety**

The safety of those travelling on School Transport provision is of paramount concern. Elm Tree School reserves the right to refuse to provide transport on School Transport where a pupil's behaviour is such that it is unacceptable to the Driver, Home School Liaison Officer or other passengers. If a pupil is temporarily suspended from transport, parents and carers will become responsible for transporting their own children to school, for the duration of the suspension.

## **11. Electrical Devices / Mobile Telephones**

Children are not permitted to bring their own electrical devices such as tablets, games consoles etc for use when travelling on School Transport. The school provide school owned hand-held games consoles and tablets with age appropriate games, which are available for children when travelling on School Transport. These devices have no internet accessibility.