

30/09/2021

## Home to School Transport

Dear Parent or Carer

I hope that you and your family have had a good start to the new term and that your transport experience has been a positive one.

We appreciate your support during the first few weeks of term and we are aware that there were some 'teething' problems for which we apologise. You will be aware that we had to change one of our providers during the summer holiday which created some unforeseen issues for the service. We have created a very short **(2 minute) survey** to capture your thoughts on the service so far this term, from which we can learn and plan for next year.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MVNXT35>

### Requests for changes to transport

We care for 4,000 children on over 1000 routes and transport them safely to and from school. So, I hope you will appreciate that it is not possible to make last minute changes to routes and transport that has been carefully planned. Some transport routes include a number of children and therefore any delays or interruptions can create stress and anxiety for several vulnerable children and their parents or carers. Once the transport routes have settled and our passengers are all familiar with and comfortable on their transport, we may be able to accommodate some changes, but we do not anticipate this being until after half term.

If you decide not to use Home to School transport for a particular journey for your child, it is imperative that you let Travel Assist your bus/taxi operator and your school know in plenty of time.

Last minute changes create stress for vulnerable passengers and issues for schools and operators who are responsible for the safety of every child and then have to locate children who have been taken off transport by their parent/carer.

### Home to School Parent/Carer Charter

We have created a parent/carer guide for Home to School transport which explains the service in more detail and sets out what we expect from parents/carers in order that the service runs smoothly. It is available [here](#).

Parents and carers are also politely reminded that they need to bring their child to the agreed pick up point in the mornings.

## Improvements for September

We hope that children are beginning to benefit from some of the improvements we have been able to make including some shorter travel times on some journeys. The latest update from the service (24/9/21) shows the following:

- 99% of routes operated successfully
- 99% of routes were on time
- 91% of calls were answered with an average waiting time of less than two minutes

### You are invited to a HATS Open Meeting – Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October

We are inviting parents who use HATS transport to an open meeting next Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October at 6pm. This will provide an opportunity for parents/ carers who may have experienced difficulties with the start of term transport to talk directly to HATS colleagues. This will be attended by HATS staff, Council officers and Councillor Thompson. Please click on the link [here](#) in order to join the Zoom meeting.

Meeting ID: 812 6504 1923, Passcode: 829464

### Delays to Bus Pass applications and renewals

Due to the high volume of applications being received by Travel Assist, after the start of the school year, there is a delay of up to approximately one month in processing some new and renewed Bus Passes, for which we apologise. Before contacting Travel Assist regarding your outstanding application please check your junk mail for Council emails regarding eligibility or bus pass codes and only contact Travel Assist if the application is older than 20 working days.

We are advising applicants to make their own travel arrangements at this time, and for all eligible applications delayed for 20 days or more a reimbursement will be paid for the cost of your child's daily bus fare.

Please send claims to [travelassist@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:travelassist@birmingham.gov.uk) with 'Bus Pass Claim' in the subject field.

We would advise all parents and carers of pupils moving to high school to apply for their child's bus pass immediately their school place is confirmed in March, to avoid delays at the start of term.

## Get in touch

Travel Assist – Tel: 0121 303 4955  
Email: [travelassist@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:travelassist@birmingham.gov.uk)  
[www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk](http://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk)