



Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - Transport Assessment Matrix

1. Using the matrix and Interpreting the Scoring System

The matrix comprises 6 key areas. A single high score in one area may indicate an immediate need for transport. However, a combination of moderate scores across multiple areas may also justify provision of transport support. This scoring approach reflects the cumulative impact on the learner's ability to travel safely and independently.

Transport needs will be assessed using six key areas to provide a consistent and transparent decision-making process. These are:

- Mobility - physical capacity and independence
- Medical - health conditions requiring support during travel
- Regulation - behavioural needs that may pose risk or require additional support
- Vulnerability - cognitive, emotional, sensory or social factors affecting safety
- Practicality - route safety, distance or logistical challenges
- Training - readiness and capacity for independent travel training

Each area will be evaluated through a structured scoring matrix to determine the level and type of support required. This approach enables Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to ensure that all assessments are needs led, equitable and support inclusive access to education across the Western Isles.

2. Matrix Scoring

The matrix uses a scale of 1-5 for each area, measuring need (impact) against likelihood (frequency). The greater the score, the higher the risk.

The Need Score		Likelihood Score	
1	To be noted/aware of	1	Rare
2	Minor	2	Unlikely
3	Moderate	3	Possible
4	Major	4	Likely
5	Severe	5	Certain

3. Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - ASN Transport Assessment Areas

MOBILITY

Need score:

1. A historical note of mobility concerns, however no recent concerns (last 2 years) not currently under monitoring for this, demonstrates physically fit and health within school.
2. Some mobility difficulties but evidence of physical activity, e.g. football, cycling
3. Reduced mobility, but can walk short distance, with or without aids, tires easily, adapted physical education within school.
4. Requires mobility aids at all times, mobility is likely to be less than 200 metres.
5. Unable to walk 20 metres or is a full-time wheelchair user.

Likelihood score

1. No support.
2. Seasonal support (e.g. worse in winter).
3. Intermittent support.
4. Daily support.
5. No other means of transport.

It must also be recorded in this assessment if the person requires a wheelchair adapted vehicle and if the person can transfer from mobility equipment.

MEDICAL

Often the young person has been assessed with the ability to walk. However, their medical needs increase the risk of them coming to harm or requiring medical intervention while completing the journey from home to school. Medical needs are complex and therefore the need score is based on the most common conditions.

Need score.

1. Allergies, Asthma, Eczema
2. Microcephaly, ADHD, Reynard's, Back Pain, Deafness
3. Cystic Fibrosis, COPD, Un-controlled Diabetes, Visual Impairment, ME, Hypermobility, Down Syndrome
4. Uncontrolled Epilepsy /Regular Seizures, Cerebral Palsy, Uncontrolled Diabetes, Cancers, Di George Syndrome, Muscular Dystrophy
5. Spine Bifida, MS, Edwards Syndrome, Peg/Tube Feed, Suction/Breathing apparatus

Please note: this list is not exclusive and will be subject to change. Advice on each condition is taken from NHS guidance and notes in the young person's records.

Likelihood score.

1. To be noted / aware of.
2. Minor – requires monitoring by a medical professional such as a specialist nurse and can have some impact on the young person's ability, but not on a daily basis.
3. Moderate - monitored by a paediatrician or GP, daily impact with good and bad days.
4. Major – under the care of multiple professionals with involvement from health / social care teams.
5. Requires 1-1 support at all times, may have an emergency care plan in place.

Please note that although a number of conditions named are also linked to learning disabilities, this section only looks at the level of medical intervention – a learning disability is covered in more depth under the Vulnerability section.

REGULATION

With some known conditions, the subject of a young person's ability to regulate can impact on their ability to keep those around them safe. Outbursts and aggression can be triggered by fear, frustration or the inability to tolerate a stimulus environment. These triggers need careful management to ensure the young person and those supporting them have the ability and skills to reduce the risk of harm. For this reason, the young person is scored on the following behaviour against the frequency of the occurrences.

Need score

1. Verbal aggression only.
2. Verbal aggression with anger management concerns.
3. Damage to property.
4. Physical assault of either a young person or adult.
5. Unable to be transported with other students.

Likelihood score

1. Not happened in the last year.
2. Not happened in the last term.
3. Happened in the last month.
4. Regular occurrence.
5. Constant and cause for major concern.

VULNERABILITY

This area covers the social interaction element of the assessment and is focused on the ability for the young person to keep themselves safe. This includes.

- Significant social and / or emotional immaturity in comparison with other children of their age.
- Links with cognitive ability or as a result of a specific developmental disorder.
- Some children with moderate to severe learning difficulties, who may be vulnerable in social settings due to their lack of independence and social skills.
- Young people identified as being at risk of exploitation as recognised under the Prevent Programme.
- A significant sensory or communication impairment such as blindness or Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

The matrix will also consider age appropriateness to expected ability.

Need score:

1. Anxious / nervous
2. Autism/ Asperger's (without an LD)
3. Mild learning disability
4. Moderate learning disability / limited communication
5. Severe learning disability / no communication ability / total visual impairment

As this category is often a life condition and impacts on a daily basis, the frequency matrix is based on the likelihood for the young person to come to harm.

Likelihood score

1. Rare.
2. Unlikely.
3. Possible – lack of risk but aware of danger.
4. Likely – can do some simple activities but no sense of danger or risk.
5. Significant – cannot be left alone for risk of harm.

A score of 25 in this group may indicate that the young person cannot be left unsupervised and may require transport support to reduce the risk of coming to harm.

PRACTICALITY

When looking at a safe route, common factors such as exposed walking areas, street lighting and pedestrian crossings should be considered, and other factors are then introduced including:

- Is it a direct route?

- Does it require multiple changes?
- Is the time excessive?

Combining all these variants, the following criteria applies.

Need score

1. Safe route to school with a note or comment to be aware of.
2. Safe route with a number of concerns.
3. Two or more changes in transport.
4. Safe route takes longer than 90 minutes or requires three or more changes.
5. No safe route available.

Likelihood criteria

Is slightly different in the matrix:

1. Only applies occasionally.
3. Short term arrangement.
5. Long term arrangement.

TRAINING

The training matrix is an additional complementary grading as this helps prioritise the level of training required. This grade can only be completed once the other five headings have been addressed and a profile has been created of the individual. This grade highlights if the person is ready for travel training and is graded by need in the following scale:

Need score:

1. No barriers to training, the young person has indicated or demonstrated some ability (e.g. going to the local shop along or travelled on a bus with support).
2. Young person will need some sessions – willing to participate, with some level of capability demonstrated.
3. Young person will need a high number of sessions – no previous experience of independence – some avoidance management, parents concerned about ability.
4. Specialist training required (V.I / guide dog or BSL communicator).
5. Even with training, the young person would be unable to be independent.

Likelihood score - timescale to indicate a realistic start time for potential travel training.

1. The person would be ready for travel training now.
3. The person would be expected to undertake travel training at a specific point in their school journey.

5. The person will not be suitable for travel training.

4. Interpretation of Scores

The score is then placed on a gradient template as shown below:

Matrix		NEED				
		1	3	3	4	5
LIKELIHOOD	1	1	2	3	4	5
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	5	5	10	15	20	25

The maximum combined score is 150 points. The total score guides the level and type of support recommended, based on the following thresholds:

0-25 Points:

The child or young person is assessed as having the capacity to travel independently without transport assistance. For new applicants, transport would not be offered. For those already receiving transport, the withdrawal process would begin with a 14 day notice period.

26-60 Points:

The learner may benefit from support such as an independent travel training programme or a detailed journey plan. The need for transport is not immediate, but guidance and gradual transition may be helpful.

61-96 Points:

Transport assistance is recommended alongside a structured independent travel training plan. This indicates support is likely needed in the short term, with a view to eventual independence after sessions of travel training.

96-115 Points:

The learner should receive transport provision via minibus or taxi, recognising that multiple areas present significant challenges to independent travel. Some learners in this range may later develop independence following therapeutic or educational interventions.

115-150 Points:

Full transport provision with enhanced support is required. This reflects complex needs across several areas and a high level of dependence. Comhairle nan Eilean Siar may consider additional staffing for health-related needs or behavioural support.