

ANNEX 1 - ASN Home-to-School Transport – Service Standards

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is committed to ensuring that transport services for children and young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) are safe, comfortable, reliable and meet the highest standards of care and accessibility. These service standards set out the minimum expectations for all transport arrangements. By regularly reviewing and improving transport provision, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is committed to delivering a high-quality service that promotes inclusion and child wellbeing.

Transport Services will be delivered in compliance with:

- The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, which places a duty on local authorities to provide the necessary support for the child or young persons with additional needs.
- The Equality Act 2010, which ensures that the child or young persons with disabilities have equal access to education.
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, which sets requirements for managing risks in the provision of transport.
- Best practice standards in ASN transport, including staff training, vehicle safety, and passenger care.
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar will regularly monitor and review transport services to ensure compliance with these standards and to continually improve service quality.

Risk Management and Health & Safety

- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is responsible for managing risks in ASN transport provision as part of its health and safety obligations.
- Individual risk assessments will be conducted for all proposed transport solutions to ensure that the child or young person's needs are safely accommodated.
- Transport providers must comply with all legal requirements, including vehicle licensing, insurance, taxation, and Vehicle Construction and Use Regulations.
- Where in-house vehicles are used, they must meet all Comhairle safety and maintenance standards.
- All vehicles must be equipped with a communication system, such as a mobile phone or radio, for emergency use.
- Journey times will be minimised to prevent stress and ensure child or young person's well-being, following Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's standard for maximum travel duration, with individual child or young person's needs considered.

Driver and Passenger Assistant (Escort) Requirements

- All drivers and escorts must be members of the Disclosure Scotland PVG Scheme (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) before working with the child or young person.

- Photo identification must be always carried by drivers and escorts while on duty.
- All minibus drivers and escorts must undertake ASN Driver and Escort Training provided by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. This training is to include de-escalation techniques.
- Regular drivers of 9-seater minibuses should be MiDAS trained, where possible.
- Drivers and escorts must know what to do in the event of a medical emergency and must follow clear protocols.
- Additional training may include:
 - Minibus Emergency Evacuation Procedures (MEEP).
 - Conflict resolution and de-escalation strategies.
 - Safe handling techniques for assisting child or young persons with mobility difficulties.
 - First aid training, including anaphylaxis and EpiPen use.
 - Awareness training for working with children with complex medical needs or disabilities.

Medical and Emergency Procedures

- All drivers and escorts must receive basic first aid training. Additionally, trained escorts may be assigned for child or young persons with complex medical needs.
- If child or young person requires emergency medication, such as an EpiPen, drivers and escorts must be trained in its administration and understand their responsibilities and liabilities.
- Where a child or young person has life-threatening conditions, transport must include a specific care plan that has been agreed with:
 - The school.
 - Parents/carers.
 - The responsible medical practitioner.

These care plans must outline:

- Regular medical support needs.
- Emergency response steps.
- Appropriate intervention measures.

Vehicle Safety and Accessibility

- All vehicles used for ASN transport must be fully maintained, roadworthy, and legally compliant.
- Escorts should be positioned to see all children or young people at all times to monitor their safety and well-being.
- Transport must be adapted to meet the children or young people's needs, including:
 - Provision of wheelchair-accessible vehicles as appropriate.
 - Tail lifts, ramps, where necessary.

- Secure seating, harnesses, and restraints for safe travel.
- Provision to secure wheelchairs to the floor, using tracking systems, during transit.

Vehicles must have:

- Clearly marked emergency exits.
- Safe boarding and disembarking areas.
- Designated pick-up and drop-off points at schools must be:
 - Clearly marked and close to the entrance.
 - Safe for child or young persons with mobility difficulties.
 - Large enough to accommodate ASN transport vehicles.

Communication and Information Sharing

- Essential contact details and emergency information must be provided to transport staff using an ASN pupil passport.
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar will ensure that parents and carers are given clear information about transport arrangements, including:
 - Pick-up and drop-off times and locations.
 - Parental responsibility for ensuring child or young person is ready five minutes before pick-up.
 - Expected wait times at pick-up points.
 - Procedures for notifying transport providers if the child or young person is unable to travel.
 - How parents/carers will be contacted in case of an emergency or a delay.

Support for Child or Young Person with Complex Needs

Where child or young person has complex needs or anxiety, additional measures may be taken, such as:

- Introductory meetings between parents/carers, child or young person, and transport staff before travel begins.
- Consistent assignment of drivers and escorts where possible.
- Planned transitions if staff changes are necessary.
- Transport operators encouraged to maintain stable staffing to provide continuity and minimise disruption for a child or young person.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is committed to ongoing monitoring and service improvement. This will include:
 - Annual reviews of transport arrangements for each child or young person.
 - Regular audits of transport providers to ensure compliance with safety and service standards.

- Feedback mechanisms for parents/carers, schools and child or young person to report concerns or suggest improvements.
- Ongoing training and professional development for transport staff.
- Rapid response to complaints and safety concerns.