

## **Trafford Travel Co-ordination Unit SERVICE STANDARDS**

These standards are intended to clearly define the specific responsibilities of the Council, transport providers and of parents and carers in relation to the approved travel arrangements offered to children with special educational needs and disability.

Underlying these standards is the principle that if Trafford Council agrees to provide travel assistance, it will be provided in a safe and cost effective manner, taking account of the specific needs of the child and with regard to the best use of the Council's resources.

### **1. Service Personnel**

The quality of travel assistance to and from school can often affect the emotional welfare and behaviour of a child.

All Drivers and Passenger Assistants will:

- Show understanding and empathy with the children, the parents and the school staff.
- Treat children with respect and dignity.
- Greet passengers and parents politely and ensure that all passengers travel in comfort and safely.
- Have undergone a training programme and will be in receipt of DBS checks.

Passenger Assistants will only be provided as part of travel arrangements where a need has been assessed in order to support the safe travel and care of the children on a particular route.

Please be aware that it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to lift their child into and out of their seat if assistance is required. It is the responsibility of the PA to ensure that the passenger is fastened into their seat.

To ensure the safety of children, the consumption of food or drinks is not permitted on board a vehicle.

The Council recognises that change can be unsettling. As a result the Council will make every effort to ensure continuity, however this may not always be possible due to illness, holidays, retirements and changes to suppliers. Changes may also be necessary from time to time to ensure the efficient use of Council resources.

### **2. Vehicles**

Transport will be provided in accordance with contractual standards and legislation. All vehicles will be properly licensed and roadworthy, and will offer the standards of comfort and safety as prescribed in relevant Statutory Law. Regular monitoring of quality and service standards will take place by the Council in respect of the service provider's vehicles.

Vehicles will have specialist wheelchair access and wheelchair tie down and occupant restraint systems where necessary.

### **3. Travelling times**

The Council will endeavour to ensure that pupils arrive at school ready to learn and recognise that the length of the journey to school, if too long, can affect this. We

expect the maximum length of journey for a pupil to be no longer than the statutory guidelines. On occasions there are factors outside the Council's control e.g. unforeseen traffic congestion or bad weather that may affect this.

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to vary planned routes and this may affect pick up and drop off times. Where this is the case the Council will always aim to provide five working days' notice to parents/carers.

These journey times do not apply where pupils are travelling to schools and colleges outside the Borough of Trafford.

### **4. Vehicle waiting times**

To ensure journey times are kept to an absolute minimum and ensure that all pupils arrive at school on time, drivers have waiting time limits which are as follows:-

- a) If your child is not ready, or not at the agreed pick up point, the vehicle will wait for a maximum of 2 minutes after the agreed pick up time and then set off.
- b) If the vehicle arrives early the driver will wait until the set time and then a further 2 minutes before setting off.
- c) If the vehicle arrives late it will move off as soon as all the children have boarded.
- d) When a vehicle arrives at a pick up or drop off point, the horn will **not** be sounded.
- e) It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to bring their child to the vehicle in the morning and collect from the vehicle in the afternoon.

Under these circumstances, if the child misses the transport, the parent/carer is responsible for ensuring their child attends school on time.

If more than two occurrences of delay are caused by parents/carers or children not being available at the official time, travel assistance will be reviewed and may be suspended or permanently withdrawn. In such circumstances parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance at school.

### **5. Absences**

Where a child cannot attend school or college on any particular day due to illness it is the parents/carers responsibility to;

- Contact Trafford's travel coordination unit the night before travel is required, if it is known that the child will be off school the next day or;
- Contact Trafford's travel coordination unit as early as possible in the morning of the day their child is due to travel, if the child has only just begun to show signs of illness. The office is open from 7 am in the morning and can be contacted on 0161 912 5055, you can also contact the office by sending a text message to 07860052684, or emailing [ttcu@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:ttcu@trafford.gov.uk)

Where a child/Adult is on 1 to 1 transport and has an appointment to attend that has plenty of advance notice.

- Parent/carers must notify TTCU as soon as possible to enable the transport to be cancelled, as TTCU will incur the cost should 24 hours' notice not be given.

When travel assistance is cancelled due to illness, it will only be reinstated when the parent/carer notifies the Trafford's travel coordination unit. This notification should be given on the day before the child is due to return to school.

Where parents/carers, on more than two occasions fail to cancel travel assistance for their child before it arrives, the child's transport provision may be suspended for a period of time or permanently withdrawn. Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance at school in such circumstances.

## **6. Making alternative arrangements**

In the event that a parent/carer is unable to meet their child at the specified time and location, transport providers are required to take the child to the nearest place of safety and notify the Council's Social Work Service.

Parents/carers must provide an emergency address, located within one mile of their home address or the pick-up point, where their child can be dropped off in an emergency.

At times, parents/carers may need to make emergency alternative arrangements for the handover of their child to a nominated responsible adult. In these cases parents/carers must notify Trafford's travel coordination unit in writing either by email or text message and make suitable arrangements to ensure their child's safety.

Where emergency arrangements are put in place on more than two occasions, travel assistance will be reviewed and may be suspended or permanently withdrawn. In such circumstances parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance at school.

In circumstances where vehicles are delayed or late arriving the parent/carer should contact TTCU. If there are more than 3 instances of a vehicle being late in any 4 week period please contact Trafford's travel coordination unit and they will take steps to directly address the situation with the service provider.

## **7. Extra journeys**

The provision of travel assistance only applies to journeys to and from school/college at the beginning and the end of the school day. Travel assistance is not provided on any other occasions, for example, travel between schools, sports facilities, for work experience, other curriculum activities and medical appointments.

Where a child attends more than one school, they may require additional transport. The school, which is the child's main school, will be responsible for arranging and meeting the cost of such transport.

Where a child is based full time at a school, but visits other schools or a Pupil Referral Unit, the school where the pupil is 'on roll' will be responsible for arranging transport and for the cost of such transport. Parents/carers should, in these circumstances, address any issues directly to the child's school.

## **8. Travel Assistance for parents/carers to attend meetings/events**

Where a parent/carer is required to attend school for a meeting/event, it is their responsibility to make their own travel arrangements. Subject to the following conditions, parents/carers may be allowed to travel on their child's vehicle where:

- (a) Permission is granted by Trafford's Travel Coordination Unit prior to the journey (this is essential for insurance purposes) and;
- (b) there is a spare seat available on the vehicle;
- (c) the vehicle is not diverting from its regular route.

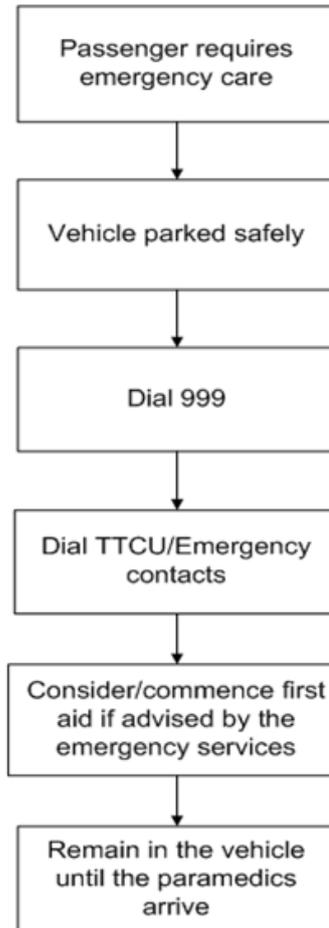
## **9. Medical assistance**

Passenger Assistants are trained in basic First Aid and Epilepsy Awareness. However, in the event of an emergency, Travel Assistants will contact 999 to request a paramedic support. Passenger Assistants will follow one of the following

- Emergency Care Pathway
- Epilepsy Care Pathway

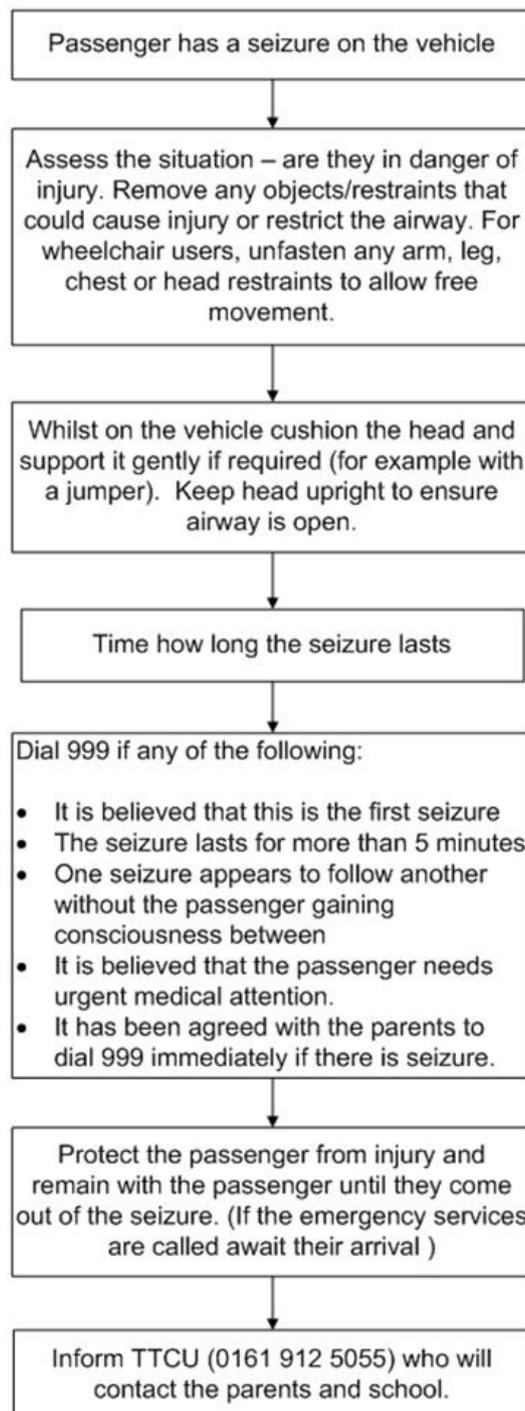
## Emergency Care Pathway

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## Epilepsy Care Pathway

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## **10. Safeguarding children**

The Council's nominated Child Protection Officer will be advised of any safety issues that may be encountered during the provision of travel assistance. The nominated officer will take appropriate action to safeguard the child as deemed appropriate and in line with Council procedures. The school, social workers and other agencies may be contacted depending on the individual circumstances as necessary.

## **11. Expected behavioural standards for children**

As a result of their special educational needs, any child may experience behavioural difficulties as a direct result of their particular needs. In these cases Trafford Council will make every effort to work with the schools, parents and transport providers to manage instances where the child exhibits these extreme behavioural characteristics. Wherever possible these considerations will be taken into account when determining an appropriate and safe form of travel assistance. Specialist advice will always be sought from the child's school regarding whether the behaviour is directly linked to the special educational needs and appropriate action accordingly taken.

It is, however, recognised that general poor behaviour not directly attributable to a child's particular special educational needs and circumstances cannot be taken into account when determining an appropriate safe travel plan. It is paramount to have and to enforce clear standards of acceptable behaviour in the interests of ensuring a safe journey for all pupils and staff as well as other road users.

In consultation with schools, Trafford Council may be required to instigate permanent or fixed periods of exclusion from travel assistance. In the event the Council is unable to provide safe transport, either on a temporary or permanent basis, parents/carers will be responsible for transporting their child and ensuring their regular attendance at school.

When considering whether to exclude any child from travel assistance, the Council will require written statements from drivers and Passenger Assistants in relation to the alleged incidents. Consultation will also take place with the relevant Head Teacher and other relevant specialists.

The application of any sanctions as detailed below does not prejudice the rights of any individual to instigate criminal proceedings against a person resulting from unacceptable behaviour.

### **a. Verbal abuse:**

The first instance of offensive verbal abuse to staff, other passengers or the general public will result in a formal warning

The second instance of verbal abuse will result in a written warning.

The third occurrence will result in a five-day exclusion from travel assistance.

### **b. Vandalism:**

The first instance of vandalism to a vehicle will result in five-day exclusion.

The costs of making good the damage will be charged to the parent/carer.

The second instance of vandalism will result in permanent exclusion from travel assistance. The costs of making good the damage will be charged to the parent/carer.

**c. Physical abuse:**

The first instance of physical abuse will result in a two-week exclusion from travel assistance pending full investigation. Travel assistance may be reintroduced when the Head Teacher and Trafford's Travel Coordination Manager are both satisfied (and in line with school's specific behaviour policies) that the child's behaviour has improved satisfactorily – Any further occurrence of physical abuse will result in permanent exclusion from travel assistance.

## **12. Charging**

Children of statutory school age (5-16) who are eligible for travel assistance will be provided with travel assistance free of charge.

For those children and young people who fall outside of the statutory school age which includes children aged between 2 and 4 years of age and those of 6<sup>th</sup> form age, (16 to 19 year old) and where the Council has agreed to provide travel assistance, there will be a charge for providing this service.

The charges are £170 per term payable in advance at the beginning of each term, totalling £510 per year. If the charges are not paid, travel assistance may be withdrawn.

For those families in financial hardship, the charges are £85 per term, totally £255 per year. Further information can be found on page 7 [All Age Travel Assistance Policy](#)

## **13. Feedback and questions**

Trafford Council is constantly seeking ways to improve the quality of services and feedback from parents/carers is very important and positively encouraged.

If you have any comment or a question about the provision of travel assistance or these service standards, please direct these to the Trafford Travel Co-ordination Unit, 2nd Floor, Sale Waterside, Sale, M33 7ZF or by emailing [ttcu@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:ttcu@trafford.gov.uk)

## **14. Further information**

For further information, please refer to the [All Age Travel Assistance Policy](#)