

Home to School Transport

St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive



Guide for Parents 2018–19

This guide provides information about Durham County Council and St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive's Concessionary Seat scheme. It is intended for parents / carers who already know that their child is NOT entitled to free travel to school or assistance with travelling expenses.

Please read the guidance notes in full as they may have changed from previous versions.

1. What is a Concessionary Seat?

St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive School has entered into a partnership with Durham County Council to ensure school buses continue to be available for pupils who do not qualify for free travel from Durham County Council. This application pack gives details of the special St Bede's school travel scheme.

Durham County Council continues to provide free transport where pupils are eligible under its policy. Details can be found at www.durham.gov.uk/concessionaryseats or by ringing Durham County Council's school transport line on 03000 264444.

2. How much does a Concessionary Seat cost?

You will not have to pay anything. The cost of Concessionary Seats will be met by St Bede's School if your child lives over 2 miles from the school and is travelling on an existing route.

3. How do I apply for a seat?

Simply complete the application form and send it to Transport Services, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UQ as soon as possible.

You can also apply for Concessionary Seats online at www.durham.gov.uk/concessionaryseats.

You can apply at any time but to be certain of being considered for a seat and receiving a pass for the start of the school year from September 2018, we will need to receive your application by 4th June 2018.

You will need to apply for a Concessionary Seat at the start of each school year.

4. Can I choose my bus route?

All secondary schools that have transport provided are listed on the Durham County Council website (www.durham.gov.uk/concessionaryseats). For your school you can find out what bus route contracts are operating and tell us your first and second preference on the application form. If you do not list your preference, we will choose the most suitable route for you. Please note that your preference may not always be available.

Details of bus routes and times may be changed if this is necessary to meet travel needs efficiently. Seat allocations are not guaranteed, and we reserve the right to move pupils between vehicles or re-route vehicles in order to manage loadings.

If your child is not travelling from their home address, please provide details of the journey they wish to make on the reverse of the form.

5. What should I do if I have more than one child travelling?

If you want to apply for Concessionary Seats for more than one child, you will need to fill in an application form for each child.

6. When will I know if a Concessionary Seat is available?

If you apply by Monday 4th June 2018, Durham County Council will contact you in August 2018 with a bus pass for the school year.

If you apply after Monday 4th June 2018, Durham County Council will write to you within three weeks of your application to tell you if we can offer you a Concessionary Seat. If your application is successful, you will receive a bus pass for the remainder of the school year.

If there is a suitable route but no seat available, your child's name will be added to a waiting list and we will contact you if a seat becomes available.

If there is no suitable route, we will write to tell you. You may be interested in travelling on a local bus service instead – see **12. How do I find out about alternative local bus services?**

We will continue to make further offers throughout the year as we receive applications or seats become available.

7. What should I do if I no longer want my Concessionary Seat?

If you decide that you no longer want your Concessionary Seat, you must return your bus pass to Durham County Council.

8. Can a Concessionary Seat be withdrawn?

Travel on school transport is subject to Durham County Council's Behavioural policy. Any seat may be withdrawn if a pupil does not behave appropriately on the vehicle.

9. What happens if my circumstances change or I move address?

You must get in touch with Durham County Council if your circumstances change. If the pupil still wishes to travel on the same bus, you can continue to use the same bus pass.

If the pupil wishes to travel on a different bus, Durham County Council will send you a new bus pass when you return the old one (if a seat is available).

10. What will happen if my child forgets their bus pass?

If a pupil attempts to board the school bus without showing their bus pass, they will usually be taken to school if there are seats available on the bus.

The driver will give the child a 'School Transport – Leaflet for Pupils' slip, which tells the pupil they cannot travel on the bus home from school without a pass. It asks them to take the slip to the school office. The school is able to issue a temporary pass if the pupil is on the list of those authorised to travel.

Pupils who do not have a pass will NOT be allowed to return home on the bus (unless agreed with Durham County Council and the school). Repeated failures to present a valid bus pass will result in removal of the Concessionary Seat.

11. What should I do if I lose my bus pass?

Replacement bus passes cost £5.00. You can apply for a replacement pass and pay by credit or debit card by calling 03000 264444 (option 5).

Alternatively, you can send us a cheque or postal order for £5.00, made payable to 'Durham County Council', to:

Transport Services
Durham County Council
County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UQ

Please include a note of the pupil's name and address.

We will post the replacement pass out, and you should receive this within seven days.

12. How do I find out about alternative local bus services?

If no school buses are available, a fare-paying local bus service may be available instead. You can check with Traveline (www.traveline.info or telephone 0871 200 22 33) for details of local bus services your child could use to make the journey. Often, a weekly or termly pass bought from the bus operator will provide best value.