



# WARWICKSHIRE PARENT CARER VOICE

## Home School Transport (October 2025)

This report outlines the themes of the feedback given about Home School Transport via our Feedback wall and engagement with parent carers from April-October 2025.

### Themes

- Communication

- For the last 9 years I have had reminder email to apply for Transport this year no reminder so forgot. Now face weeks of juggling work and transport even though absolutely nothing has changed. Surely they could just send an email asking if student is continuing at same establishment rather than a whole new application. The system is a joke and takes no account of ND parents. Can't even get any support backdated for mileage. Guess it all helps with the budget.
- My son starts year 7 on Wednesday. His transport funding was agreed in February, I'm submitted all information requested on time, and the LA risk assessment was completed a few months ago. We are now two weekdays from him starting senior school and we still have no travel plan for him. I've chased the council multiple times and keep being told it's coming but am so frustrated. My son, his primary school, his senior school and us have worked so hard to ensure his transition is as smooth as possible. The fact I can't manage his anxiety around travel arrangements, and that that could derail everything else is really unbelievable. I just can't understand how they can leave it so late for children with high anxiety. Nobody at the LA seems to be listening so I'm looking for other ways to make this issue heard. I know there are other families in the same situation.
- Eligibility for home to school transport was confirmed in February but no confirmation of provider given at that point. No further contact has been received from the transport team to confirm arrangements for this academic year. Only found out arrangements this week because luckily the same provider is being used and I made contact with them to ask if they knew. Better communication with parents from the transport team is needed.
- My son gets a transport bus to his special school, no contact was had over the summer to confirm this was still happening in September. I did manage to text the bus PA who confirmed the day before the start of term that he would still be picked up but it's not really good enough to just have to hope someone turns up in the first day of school as transport plans haven't been confirmed.
- 13 days and still no reply to an email. 4 hours on hold trying to get through to speak to someone and 4 more emails. Still not got anywhere
- Child started on bus this week to trial it prior to senior school in September. Went through the risk assessment and then sent a pass. day one the bus drivers straight us. The stop we'd been told to wait at was incorrect. Caught driver at school and they hadn't been informed to pick him up or of any of his needs. Transport and specialist team throwing it back to each other on who is responsible. We've sorted it with the bus in the meantime but it's been a horrible first start for the child who was already anxious
- Really struggling to even get hold of the transport team at WCC to discuss transport, keep being told my call will be returned but then it isn't.
- After struggling to get hold of anyone I finally got through to transport regarding my son returning to transport, was told risk assessment team would get in touch and she would return to me with details of timings to ensure they work and now 2 weeks later I've still had nothing from them.

## Problems fixed

After today's issues when it was very clear my children weren't safe or happy on the transport I spoke with the council and they have been so helpful and we have a new transport put in place for next week

Rating

Happy :)

- **Timeliness**

- I would like to know why the transport service would know by July or sooner the transport needed for the majority of children across Warwickshire but we are only informed as parents the week before school returns. That they have access to the EHCPs of these children that will frequently state that they need planning and preparation yet there is absolutely no transition. No introduction to drivers in any format. Nothing. Parents are frequently left wondering and it's the biggest barrier to many children being able to go to school because no certainty can be given. There should be a deadline of end of school year and with that info SEN children need to go in transport. Many parents are left with no transport in place every year. Surely the majority do not have any changes and could be sorted before school ends? With actual inclusive practices as per EHCPs?
- 3 weeks into the new school year and still no transport sorted! Rang every other day for updates to be promised that someone would call back and nobody ever does. Meanwhile I continue taking my child without any reimbursement of fuel costs as they haven't told me of any form to fill out either. My child is late to school every day as I also have other children to take too miles apart!
- How long should this take to arrange? I applied at the start of July when we got our new school place. I think the application was approved but we are still waiting for news. One month into term, no communication, this is feeling frustrating.

- **Changes**

- My son has had the same school taxi for the last couple of years and they have been great. I had an email at the beginning of the week from Transport Operations to say that the travel company will be changing to someone else (So new vehicle, driver and escort) and a new group of children will be on the taxi with him as of 2nd June, after half term! This is so frustrating as my son hates change and will really struggle with this. I don't know why they couldn't wait until after the summer holidays to change company?
- Had a new taxi company for the last half term of the year with 3 different drivers and 4 different escorts and I had a call today from them where I checked who the driver was for starting back to school and it is yet another different driver. This is so frustrating and distressing for my child who already struggles with all these changes and is worried and not wanting to go back to school as it is!

- **Public Transport**

- Experience of using the public bus via Warwickshire has been terrible going from primary to senior. Even though allocated a space months ago the pass only came a couple of days before school started with no info on how it works. Then we found the pass had been set up incorrectly so it's involved house of being

on hold then talking to people and still not sorted. Response to email from bus company was awful too. So stressful and upsetting for a child going alone on a bus for first time

- Safety

- Last week my daughter was taken to the wrong address by a taxi company that is part of the WCC transport service. This follows an incident the week previously where my child was not safely secured in her wheelchair, in a taxi that was not wheelchair accessible. These two incidents happened by separate taxi companies, both commissioned by WCC transport. I was not made aware of this until 1.5 hours after my child was returned home, luckily the house where my daughter was taken to was a parent with a child at the same school, who promptly contacted WCC and the School to make them aware of the extreme safeguarding concern. I will be forever grateful to this parent for taking the time to raise the concern - without them, I would have not known and would have continued to allow the company to transport my daughter. This has obviously launched a high priority safeguarding complaint, which is currently being investigated by WCC.
- Over a week after our son started secondary school, we received a phone call from a taxi company. They wanted to collect our child, and drop him off at school before the school gates open. Our son is socially vulnerable. He's a blue badge holder. He can not be left by himself. I contacted the taxi firm, and they confirmed that they could not drop him off any later, due to potential traffic issues. OK, yes I understand this. So they contacted WCC and confirmed this. After hearing nothing for a couple of days, I contacted WCC myself, to be told that there should be no problem dropping my child off when the school gates open! And they couldn't understand what the problem was. I honestly feel like a referee at a tennis match. My child can't be left, walking around a school, on their own. He has selective mutism, so will not speak with other pupils. If I'd not queried the taxi firm to begin with, I'd hate to think what could have happened
- I emailed the taxi company and travel operations in Warwickshire at the beginning of Sept, to ask to see my son's Risk Assessment for his school taxi, as we haven't had anything since he first started on the taxi about 3 or 4 years ago (and things have changed since then). Still have nothing nearly a month later. I chased it up a week ago (this time I copied in our social worker) and at least got a response this time (no response or acknowledgement to the first email at all) to say they will pass it on to the risk assessors to look into.
- Had a new taxi for my son and he sat in the front passenger seat. I did not feel comfortable with this so asked that he be put in the back, like in his old taxi. They did this but put the escort in the front instead so all the children were in the back and the 2 adults in the front. I am not sure they understand their role as if anything happened in the back they may not know about it or may not be able to deal with it
- My son opened the rear doors to the taxi whilst it was moving - surely child locks should be fitted as part of the risk assessment?

### Suggestions for next steps:

- Check information on Local Offer  
<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/transport-send> is currently factually correct and that all linked documents are current
- Work with Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice to improve the information on the Local Offer (there are too many clicks and contact information is hard to get to!)
- Create clear timelines of the process and what happens at each stage.
- Improve safeguarding
  - Ensure that risk assessments are completed at least annually
  - Use child locks on car doors

- Have a process for checking the child's home address before leaving school
- Gain the attention of the appropriate adult at home / school before unloading the child from the vehicle.
- Use a "safe word" or "code" for safe and secure handovers. If the code is not correct then the driver should not unload the child and must call the emergency contact for the child in question to approve the handover.
- Ensure that "meet and greets" before transport starts with companies actually happens, including going through the risk assessments and care plans, checking that wheelchairs are able to be secured correctly according to the manufacturers reports.
- If changes to a child / young person's transport are needed, communicate this clearly with parent carers and where possible make the change at the start of a term / half term.