



Home to School Transport

St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive

Guide for Parents 2023-24

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

Concessionary Seats

Durham County Council provides transport for pupils entitled to free travel from home to school. 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. These are called Concessionary Seats.

Concessionary Seats are not available on local bus services, but pupils may travel on these services by paying a fare.

If you had a Concessionary Seat on the route above in the 2022-23 school year, we will roll our application forward into 2023-24 (unless you chose to opt-out of this). You do not need to re-apply unless your circumstances have changed (for instance, your name or address).

Summary of costs

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.

How to apply

The best way to apply is online at www.durham.gov.uk/concessionaryseats.

You can also apply by completing a postal application. Please contact us by telephone on 03000 264444 (option 3) or by email at passengertransport@durham.gov.uk for a copy.

Routes

You can request a seat on school bus routes listed on our website at www.durham.gov.uk/concessionaryseats. If you do not choose a route, we will select the most suitable route for you.

Seats are not always available, and we may change bus routes and times in future to meet travel needs efficiently. We may move pupils between routes to manage loadings.

Some pupils may wish to travel from an address which is not where they live (for instance, due to childcare arrangements). Please note this on your application as it will help us to select the most suitable route.

Timeline

You can apply for a seat for the 2023-24 school year from June 2023 onwards. To be certain of being considered for a seat for the start of the school year, we will need to receive your application by **14th July 2023**.

For later applications, we will write to you within three weeks of receiving your application.

Seat Allocation

Pupils applying before 14th July 2023 will be usually be assured of a seat on an existing school bus.

We will continue to allocate seats each week for later applicants, in the order they are received. If a seat is available, we will send you an invoice (and a temporary bus pass, if term has started).

If no seat is available on a suitable route, we will write to tell you and add your child to a waiting list for a seat. If there is no suitable route available, we will write to tell you.

Students who live outside of County Durham will always be considered for seats after students who live within County Durham.

Leaving the scheme early

If you no longer need a Concessionary Seat, please tell us as soon as possible. We will ask you to return your bus pass.

Behaviour

Travel is subject to Durham County Council's Behavioural policy (available at www.durham.gov.uk/schooltransport). Any seat may be withdrawn if a pupil does not behave appropriately on the vehicle.

Future Years

Applications for will continue automatically until the pupil leaves school. This means you will not need to re-apply for transport each year.

- For pupils in Years 7-11, applications will continue until the end of Year 11.
- For pupils in Sixth Form, applications will continue until the end of Year 13.

If you do wish to apply for one year only, please note this on your application.

We will write to you each year in June to confirm if a seat is available. If the Concessionary Seat scheme changes from year to year, we will inform you of this. You can tell us at any time if you wish to cancel your application.

If you leave the scheme early at any time and later wish to re-join, you must re-apply as if it were a new application.

Frequently Asked Questions

I have more than one child. How do I apply?

You should complete an application for each pupil. We will treat each application separately.

If you are only interested in seats if all your children can be allocated, please make a note of this on your applications.

If a seat is withdrawn for one child, the other children may usually continue to travel.

Can I apply for a Concessionary Seat on a school taxi?

Yes, but seats may not be available and will depend on the nature of the route and the needs of other passengers. Seats will only be available from existing pick-up points.

If we allocate a seat, you may speak to the taxi operator directly about the route. We will provide contact details.

We do not usually issue passes for taxis.

Can I apply for a Concessionary Seat on a vehicle to a different school?

In some cases, pupils at one school may ask for a seat on a bus to a nearby school. We will try to accommodate these requests. Transport will only be available on days when the main school is open.

Who will you contact?

Bus passes and letters about seat allocation details, behavioural issues and general transport information will be sent to the pupil's home address.

What happens if I move address?

You must get in touch with us immediately.

- If you wish to keep your seat on the same bus, you can do so.
- If you wish to apply for a seat on a different bus, we will handle this like a new application. A seat will be allocated if one is available.

What will happen if my child forgets their bus pass?

Pupils without a pass will usually be taken to school if there are seats available. The driver will give the child a slip which tells the pupil they cannot travel home without a pass. It will direct the pupil to the school office, where a temporary pass may be issued if the pupil is authorised to travel.

Repeated failures to present a valid bus pass will result in removal of the Concessionary Seat.

What should I do if I lose my bus pass?

Replacement bus passes cost £6.50. You can apply and pay by credit or debit card by calling 03000 264444 (option 3).

Alternatively, you can send a cheque or postal order for £6.50, made payable to 'Durham County Council', to:

Integrated Passenger Transport
Durham County Council
County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UQ

Please include the pupil's name and address.

How do I find out about local bus services?

If no school buses are available, a local bus services may be available instead. Local bus services are available on our website at www.durham.gov.uk/busmap. You can also get details from the national Traveline service at www.traveline.info or 0871 200 22 33.

Some bus operators offer season tickets which may provide best value. You should speak to bus operators directly about these.

General Data Protection Regulation

You can view our GDPR Privacy Notice at www.durham.gov.uk/dataprivacy (in the section 'Roads and Transport', click the link to the PDF 'Privacy notice - Integrated Passenger Transport.pdf').

This includes information on how and why we collect and use your data, and our data retention and sharing policy. It also explains what your rights are regarding your data.

Contact Details

Durham County Council – Integrated Passenger Transport
Telephone 03000 264444 (option 3). Email passengertransport@durham.gov.uk

St Bede's School
Telephone 0191 5876220.