



From mountain to sea

The Safe Transport of Children and Young People

Draft Guidance for Parents and Carers

September 2017



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This guidance was written by the Education and Children’s Services
Additional Support Needs Team

Version	Date	Status	Reason for update
1.0	2013	Guidance	Original document
2.0	June 2017	Draft guidance	Update and refresh
2.1	September 2017	Draft guidance	GIRFEC information and enable hyperlinks

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Introduction

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to offering an excellent service to pupils, their parents / carers, schools and contractors. The following information is intended to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all those involved in the movement of pupils between home and school on organised transport.

GIRFEC

Children and young people have their needs assessed on an individual basis and support will be provided as required in line with [GIRFEC](#). The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is a national approach to improving the Wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland. Aims from GIRFEC which particularly apply in this guidance are:

- Put the child or young person at the centre of any assessment, planning and support, actively promoting their participation and engagement in any processes.
- Promote shared language through a [National Practice Model](#) providing a consistent approach to safeguard, ensure and promote the Wellbeing of children and young people.
- Embed individual a unique professional responsibility and accountability towards supporting children and young people

Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) for more information about GIRFEC and the 5 questions, together with [website links](#).

There is a statutory requirement for education authorities and their partners to work together to ensure the wellbeing needs of the child/young person as detailed in the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#).

Parameters for the allocation of free transport to pupils

The Council provides free transport to all children who live over two miles walking distance from school, in the case of primary school children, and three miles for secondary school pupils. School transport routes are determined by the pick-up locations required for pupils who are entitled to free school transport.

Free transport can be provided in a number of different ways.

- Some children will be given season tickets to use on public buses or trains
- Other children will be transported on buses / taxis contracted by Aberdeenshire Council.
- In some isolated circumstances payments will be made to parents to transport their children to and from school (see Parent Contracts).

The Council does not guarantee "door to door" transport. The child may have to walk to and from home to meet the school transport within a reasonable distance

Out with these parameters provision of transport for pupils is at the discretion of the School / Quality Improvements Officer or Additional Support Needs Manager.

Head teachers may wish to apply for free transport for pupils with additional support needs in the following instances, when pupils live within the 'in zone' catchment distances:

- The pupil is non-ambulant (wheelchair or buggy user) and lives over 1km from the school
- The pupil has medical reasons for requiring transport (e.g. heart disorder, poor balance / coordination) which would make walking to school very difficult or likely to exacerbate their condition
- The pupil has a younger / older sibling at another primary school and the parent cannot be at both schools for start / finish times
- A pupil has a severe form of Autism Spectrum disorder and cannot manage to walk to school due to traffic noise / other sensory issues.

In zone transport provision for pupils with additional support needs is not mandatory, but will relate to the needs of the pupil.

Mediation / Dispute Resolution

If you are not satisfied with the decision made regarding school transport please refer to:

Aberdeenshire Council: Resolving disagreements

<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/additional-support-needs/info-for-parents-carers/>

For Further information access Enquire at;

Email: info@enquire.org.uk

<http://enquire.org.uk/>

Responsibilities

- A Parent / Carer's responsibility is to ensure that all necessary information for the safe and comfortable transport of their child is made available to the escort / driver.
This may include information as to how to divert your child's attention if they become anxious in order to prevent further distress to them or alarm to other children ([Appendix 2](#)). This information needs to be provided to relief escorts as well as the usual escort for the child.

- Parents / Carers are responsible for informing their child's school, and escort if they will not be using transport due to illness or an appointment.
- For out-of-authority placements, parents are required to contact the ASN Team Administrator with this information. If a parent of a pupil attending an out-of-authority placement is aware that there will be a reduction in the need for an escort (reduced hours or termination of transport) they are responsible for notifying the ASN Team Administrator, at least 1 month in advance. Escorts are entitled to redeployment or redundancy, and unnecessary costs incurred by the Authority may be passed on to parents who give insufficient notice.

General guidelines and procedures

It is your responsibility to ensure that the escort / driver is given a current copy of your contact telephone numbers ([Appendix 2](#)). An emergency contact must also be provided, this should be a member of your family or friend who lives nearby and would be able to provide cover in exceptional circumstances.

Pick up and drop off points

You will be given a time for collection and drop off for your child. It is your responsibility to meet the vehicle on time and see your child aboard, or meet the vehicle at the appointed time at the end of the school day. Drivers are only obliged to wait a few minutes if an adult is not available to meet their child.

In exceptional circumstances if a parent / carer is not at home at the end of the run and has not made contact with the escort / driver / school a safe destination will be sought for the child via a local police station.

Escorts are not permitted to leave the vehicle (other than in exceptional and agreed circumstances) to collect or deliver a pupil from/to their door.

Parents require to keep a look out for the arrival of transport as escorts are not be expected to ring the doorbell, and drivers are not permitted to use the horn.

Changes to transport arrangements

- A Contractor may notify you of a temporary change of time for collection or return of your child due to road works, adverse weather etc.
- The school (or the administrator for the Inclusion and Integration Team, for out-of-authority placements) will notify you of any permanent changes to the agreed schedule.
- Delays due to escort absence may be unavoidable whilst a replacement is found; for pupils who have a designated escort the driver is not permitted to uplift pupils without an escort.
- You are responsible for informing your child's school if transport is not required on a specified date / time due to illness / hospital appointments

etc. For out-of-authority placements notification must be given to the ASN Team Administrator.

Health and Safety

Your child is required to behave in a safe manner at all times aboard the vehicle.

- Your child must remain seated with their seat belt fastened at all times whilst the vehicle is moving, and when stopped to permit other children to alight or disembark.
- Your child must only remove their seat belt when instructed to do so by the escort.
- It is important to work in partnership with the school to help your child to follow the safety procedures. Assistance to follow procedures will sometimes be supported by visual prompts.
- As a last resort, if a satisfactory resolution cannot be found, it will become your responsibility to transport your child to and from school.
- In the event of an accident or breakdown, the taxi driver will advise the school / transport team, who will contact parents / carers to reassure them and give an estimated time of arrival of the school transport, or update to information.
- If school transport fails to arrive, please contact the school or Client Transport Team.

Medical

If your child requires an asthma inhaler or other medication which is self-administered, you must ensure that it is available in your child's school bag, and is clearly labelled with their name and the dosage. It is your responsibility to ensure that the escort is aware of the location of your child's medication in case assistance is required for the child to find it.

Aberdeenshire Authority policy states that escorts may not administer medication on school transport.

Adverse weather conditions

In the event of severe weather conditions:

- The parent / carer must phone the school weather line (or head teacher for out-of-authority placements) to check if the building will be opened and staffed for pupils on that day. Information is usually posted on the school website.
 - Contractors notify schools, who will display information on their websites / Aberdeenshire council website. The information may be broadcast on local radio stations and on the Council Facebook and Twitter sites. For out-of-authority placements the contractor may notify the parent directly.
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- Parents / carers have the responsibility for making a decision regarding their child's attendance at school if the weather is severe.
- Consideration must be given to possible deterioration in weather conditions during the day, and whether you can collect your child if necessary. If you transport your child to school when school transport is not available in the morning, you must also collect the child at the end of that school day (or earlier in the event of school closure).

Changes to journeys

Journeys may be changed due to the following:

- Additional children joining the vehicle or leaving the route for that vehicle
- Moving escorts to other journeys due to meeting children's needs or the creation of more efficient routing for transport
- Absence of an escort due to illness
- Any changes to journeys for pupils in placements outwith the Authority (e.g. Linn Moor, Camphill or Orchard Brae Schools) are referred to EC&S for agreement. *This is particularly important where changes may be required by Social Work, who must liaise with EC&S as contract variance is a legal procedure (contracts are tendered under European Law for specific journeys)*

When you are notified of changes, it is your responsibility to ensure that your child is suitably prepared for the next journey. A social story may assist some children to understand and accept the changes (please speak to your child's school for details of how to produce this).

Accident, breakdown or failure of transport to arrive, or transport not required

- In the event of the vehicle being involved in an accident or breaking down on the school run, you will be contacted by the school and upraised of the situation.
- In the event of the transport not arriving, please contact the school for an update. For out-of-authority placements please contact the Client Transport Team.
- It is your responsibility to inform the school if transport is not required due to your child's illness or a hospital appointment. For out-of-authority placements please contact the administrator for the Inclusion and Integration Team
- If your child is the only person accompanied on their transport, the school may wish to re-deploy the escort for that time. Please ensure that the school is clear if you are taking your child to an appointment and then returning them to school, as there would be a requirement for transport at the end of the afternoon.

Communication with Aberdeenshire Council Teams

For out-of-authority placements, Parents are responsible for notifying the Client Transport Team in advance, of pupils leaving the school.

There are cost implications when there is a failure to cancel transport, which may be referred to parents if they have not communicated changes in a timely fashion to the authority.

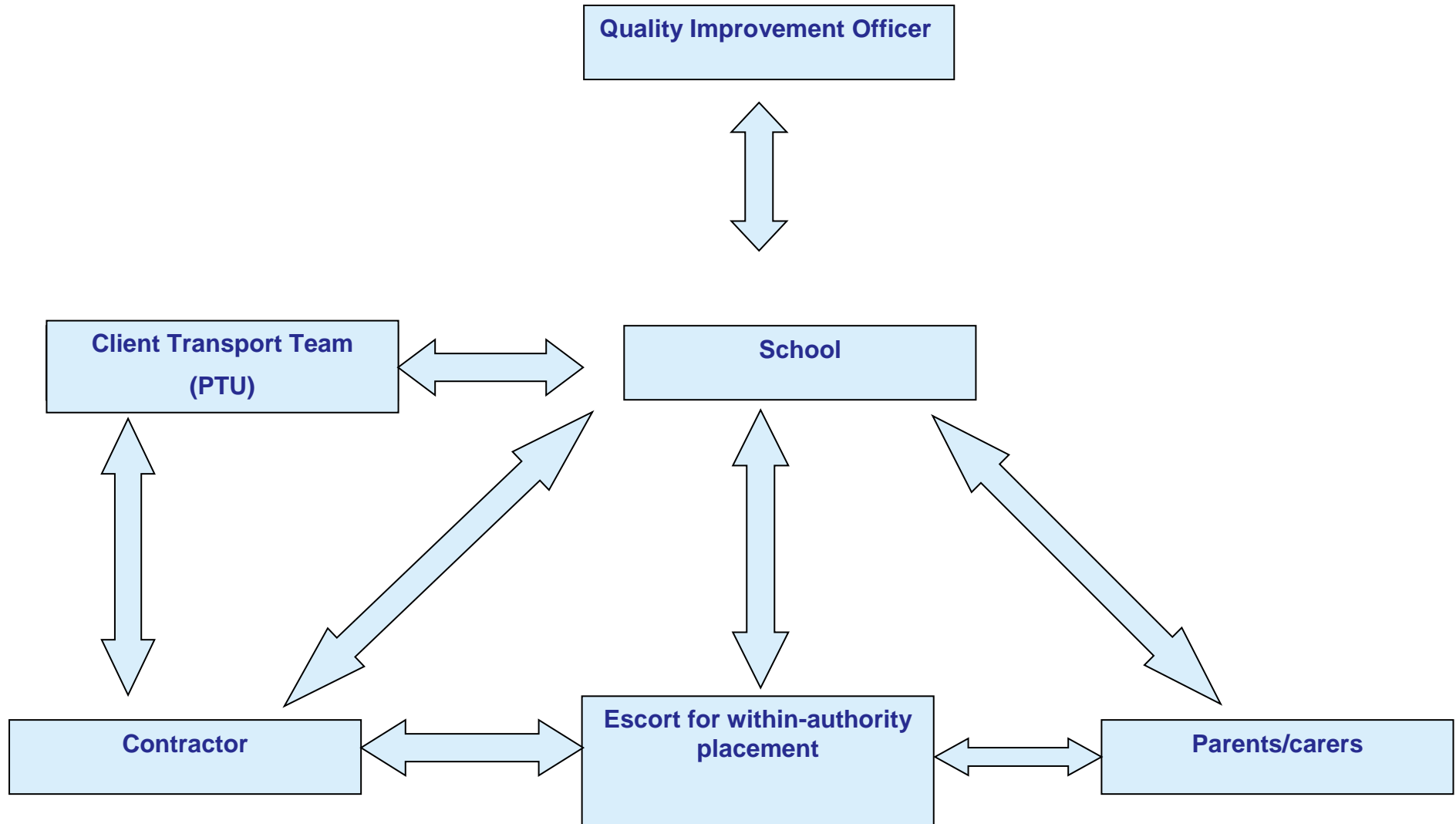
Parent Contracts

Some parents / carers may be able to provide their own child's transport to and from school. Aberdeenshire Council can set up a contract with the parents / carers in order to permit claims and reimbursement for mileage.

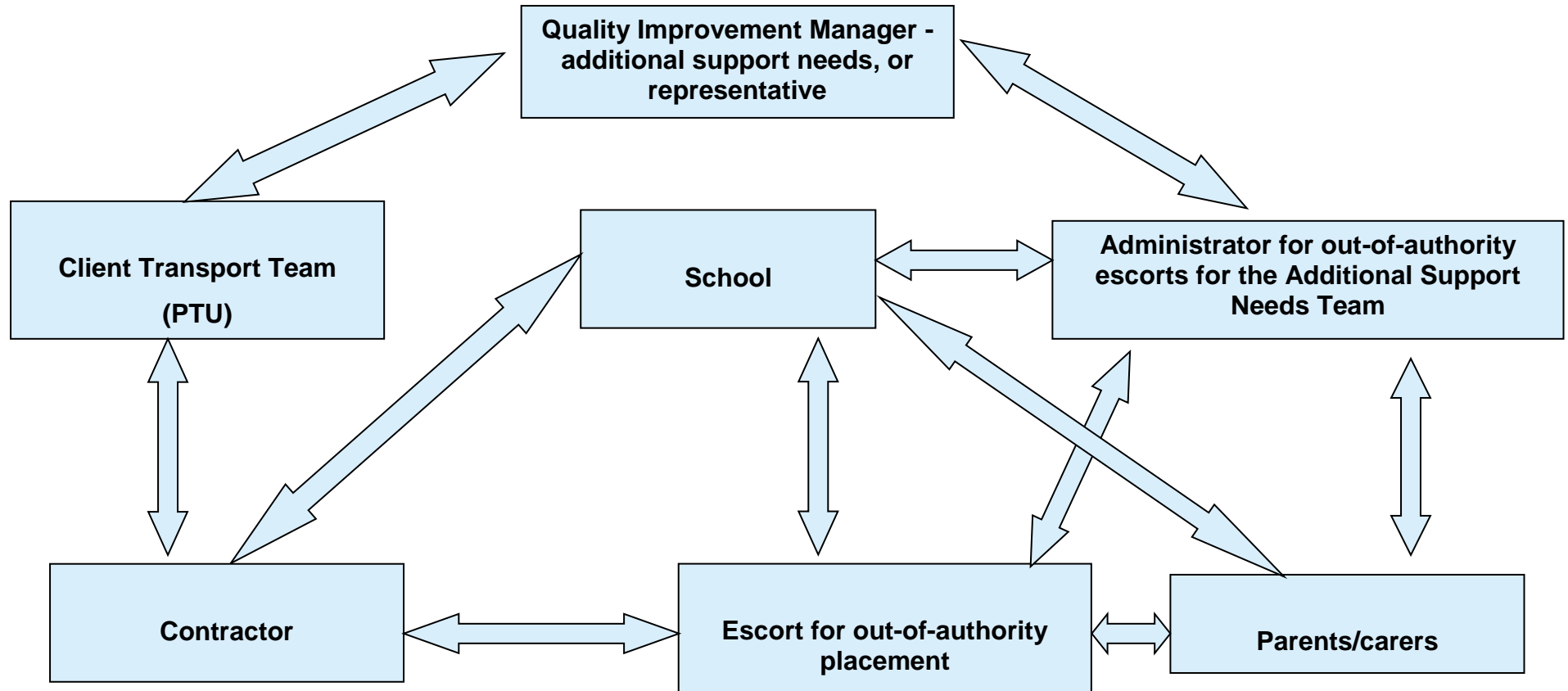
Parents / carers should contact the Client Transport Team for further details.

There is an expectation that where parents / carers have been provided with a Motability vehicle for transporting a child with disabilities, they will use the vehicle to transport their child to and from school. A parent contract can be created for this purpose through the Client Transport Team.

Flow chart of communication for within authority placement



Flow chart of communication for out-of-authority placement



Appendix 1: GIRFEC information and the 5 questions

GIRFEC sets out a vision which aims to:

- Put the child or young person at the centre of any assessment, planning and support, actively promoting their participation and engagement in any processes.
- Promote shared language through a [National Practice Model](#) providing a consistent approach to safeguard, ensure and promote the Wellbeing of children and young people.
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What I need from people who look after me: specific aims are included in:

Everyday care and help: day to day physical and emotional care, enabling educational opportunities, meeting changing needs over time, listening and responding to the child

Keeping me safe: protecting from physical, social and emotional dangers

What I need from people who look after me:

Play, encouragement, fun: stimulation and encouragement to learn and enjoy life, responsiveness to the child or young person's unique needs and abilities, providing an educationally rich environment. Encouragement to the child/young person's progress by sensitive responses to interests and achievements.

The Five GIRFEC Questions

A child or young person's Wellbeing is influenced by everything around them, and by different needs they will have at different points of their life. Wellbeing concerns may arise from a child or young person's individual experiences or circumstance, or be posed by the impact of a family member or significant person's situation (this could include a non-resident partner of a parent/carer, or a peer).

When a Wellbeing concern is identified or raised for a child or young person, you should ask yourself the 5 GIRFEC questions:

1. **What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?**
2. **Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?**
3. **What can I do now to help this child or young person?**
4. **What can my service or organisation do to help this child or young person?**
5. **What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?**

If you don't have all the information you need, you may need to gather further information either by speaking with the child or young person themselves, their parents

or carers, or from other people within your own, or other agencies. This will ensure you have as full a picture as possible to inform your own assessment, and informs any Request for Assistance made to other agencies if needed.

Findings from recent Significant Case Reviews tell us that sharing the right information at the right time can help improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. It can often help prevent low level concerns growing into more serious or entrenched difficulties. In the majority of cases, Wellbeing concerns should be openly discussed with the child, young person, family members or other person, including explicit discussions* around what information may need to be shared, why, and with whom.

**Unless there are child protection concerns*.*

Child Protection Prompt: If at any point concerns are raised which suggests a child or young person is at risk, of harm or neglect, or potentially at risk of harm or neglect, Child Protection Procedures must be followed without delay.

Please refer to the [Aberdeenshire GIRFEC](#) website for more information.

Appendix 2 – Contact details

INFORMATION FOR ESCORT

Education Establishment to attend				
Pupil's Name		d.o.b.		
Parent/Carer's Name				
Address				
Post Code		Tel No.		
Emergency contact name				
Relationship of contact		Tel No.		
Date Transport to Commence				
Days Transport Required	School starting time	School finishing time		
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				

INFORMATION FOR ESCORT continued

Pupil Name:

SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR PUPIL**BUGGY/WHEELCHAIRS****Delete where necessary**

Is the pupil a buggy or wheelchair user?	Yes/No (<i>delete one</i>)
Please provide make & model of buggy/wheelchair:	
Will the pupil travel in their buggy/wheelchair?	Yes/No (<i>delete one</i>)
If no, will the pupil require assistance to their seat?	Yes/No (<i>delete one</i>)

CAR SAFETY SEATS

Is a car seat or booster cushion required?	Yes/No (<i>delete one</i>)
Make & model of car seat (not booster) if required?	

HARNESSES etc.

Does the pupil require special harnesses etc.?	Yes/No (<i>delete one</i>)
Please provide details of harnesses required	

Specialist equipment provided by the school / child's occupational therapist, or other qualified person. For out-of-authority placements equipment provided through the Quality Improvement Manager – additional support needs.

OTHER SPECIAL / MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

Other specialist requirements/equipment (please specify)	
Is the pupil visually impaired?	Yes/No (<i>delete one</i>)
Does the pupil have a hearing implant?	Yes/No (<i>delete one</i>)
Does the pupil have a medical condition / allergy	Yes/No (<i>delete one</i>)
Please give details of any medical condition / emergency medication	
Can the pupil self-administer medication?	Yes/No (<i>delete one</i>)

**PLEASE NOTE THAT AN ESCORT IS NOT PERMITTED TO ADMINISTER
MEDICATION ON SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

INFORMATION FOR PARENT / CARER

Passenger Assistant's name	
Address	
Passenger Assistant's Tel no.	

Appendix 3 - Specifications for children's car seats

Child car seats: the rules **REVIEW REGULARLY!**

Overview

Children must use the right car seat until they reach 135 centimetres tall or age 12.

The type of car seat your child needs depends on their weight.

Only EU-approved baby seats, child car seats or booster cushions can be used in the UK. These have a label showing a capital 'E' in a circle.

Child car seat types

Type of seat	Weight range
Rear-facing baby seats	Babies up to 13kg
Forward or rear-facing baby seats	Children from 9-18kg
Forward-facing child car seats (booster seats)	Children from 15-25kg
Booster cushions	Children over 22kg

Some seats are adjustable and can be used as your child grows - check the seat label.

Using a child's car seat in the front seat

You can use a child's car seat in the front seat of a vehicle, if it fits.

Side-facing seats

Child car seats must not be used in side-facing seats.

Cars with integral child-sized seats

Some cars have their own (integral) child-sized seats that are only suitable for children. If the seat is approved for use instead of a child's car seat, it will have a label with an 'E' in a circle. The label will also show the weight of the child that it's approved for - usually above 15 kilograms.

If the child-sized seat isn't approved, the child will need to use their car seat.

Car seats for children with disabilities

Normal rules apply for children with disabilities unless a doctor says they're exempt on medical grounds. However, they may use disabled person's seat belts or child restraints designed for their needs.

The child's doctor / occupational therapist will advise about the most appropriate type of seating for the child / young person

For more information please go to the following [link](#): Seat belts: the law

Glossary

Admin E&CS team	Administrator for the Additional Support Needs team responsible for arranging transport for out-of-authority placements
ASAP	As soon as possible
Contractor	Driver or Manager of company employed to provide transport
CTT (PTU)	Client Transport Team (formerly Pupil Transport Unit)
EAR	Employee Annual Review - meeting to discuss training requirements and reflect on working practice
E&CS	Education and Children's Services
EMIS	Employment Management Information Service
HR	Human Resources
HR&OD Team	Human Resources and Organisational Development
i-GRasp	Information system on Arcadia / Arcadia Lite
Journey	Pathway connecting two destinations e.g. home and school
MARS	Movement and Rehabilitation Service (based at Woodend Hospital)
Non-ambulant	Not able to walk
Out-of-authority	Outwith the zone for any school in the Aberdeenshire local authority catchment
Physical Intervention	Use of physical force to change behaviour
PSA	Pupil Support Assistant
PTU 500	Pupil Transport Unit form
PVG	Protection of Vulnerable Groups
QIO	Quality Improvement Officer
QIM ASN	Quality Improvement Manager – additional support needs
Redeployment	Move to another post with the same conditions of service
Redundancy	Termination of contract due to post no longer being required. Some paid notice may be included depending on conditions of service
Seizure	Illness caused by Epilepsy or other trigger resulting in temporary loss of ability to respond, may be accompanied by jerky limb movements and/or other physical signs

Social Stories	Photo or symbol supported stories to assist a child's understanding of acceptable behaviours in a particular situation e.g. travel in a taxi
Transport	To include contracted taxi, minibus, bus, or public transport, or method of conveying child in a vehicle to/from school
Violent incident	Any incident when the child / young person has employed physical force inappropriately with a peer or adult
Visual prompts	Objects of reference, photos or symbols which assist the child's understanding / to follow instructions

