



Terry Clark
Head of Commissioning and Health
Integration
Tel: 020 8770 5000
Date: 20 May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Assisted Transport for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

I am writing to update you about assisted travel for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

I understand that this may be a worrying time and that you may have concerns about the return to education as and when it occurs. I want to update you on what we have done, and are doing, to ensure that things are in place for when schools do return.

The council has decided to postpone the reapplication process for assisted travel for the majority of pupils until the next academic year (i.e. from September 2021). We will write to you with more details in 2021. However, if your child/children will be leaving **nursery, Y6, Y11** or **Y14** in July, we have sent an application form to you. This is because your child/children will probably be starting at a new school/college in September 2020. Please make sure you complete the application form to apply for Assisted Travel starting in September 2020.

The current situation has put an unprecedented strain on the transport industry. We continue to work closely with the companies who provide assisted travel to our children and young people to support them so that they can continue to provide services to you once the schools are open.

It is possible that there will be changes to the assisted travel for your child once schools open. This could mean that the driver or passenger assistant that has been supporting your child may no longer be available. If this is the case, we will make sure that an alternative crew with the right skills and training is in place as quickly as possible. We will also make sure that we tell you as soon as possible about any changes.

When the assisted travel for your child starts again, the driver and passenger assistant may be wearing face masks that cover their nose and mouth. I understand that this might make some children anxious. Please take the opportunity to discuss this with your child/children and prepare them for this potential change.

Dependent on government advice and individual school plans there may be some delays in getting services in place. You may decide that you now wish to take your child/children to school using your own transport. If this is the case then will we give you a Personal Travel Budget of £0.45 per mile. If you would like to switch to a personal transport budget, please contact the Cognus Transport Team at SEN.Transport@cognus.org.uk If you decide to take a Personal Travel Budget during the current circumstances, you can go back to your previous assisted travel provision at any time.

We will keep you informed of developments as they happen and will update the Local Offer web pages (<https://www.sutton.gov.uk/localoffer>).

If your child is currently in **Reception, Y1 or Y6** and returning to school after 1 June, the Cognus Transport Team will be contacting you shortly about travel to school. If your child is in **Y10 or Y12** they may be returning to school at a later date. The Cognus Transport Team will contact you once schools have planned the return of pupils in these year groups.

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to or email the Children's SEN Assisted Transport Team:

Transport Officers
Kellie Adair - 020 8323 0408
Victoria Udny-Lister - 020 8323 0418
Business Support Officer
Laura Betts - 020 8323 0432

Yours sincerely

Terry Clark
Head of Commissioning and Health Integration