

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS **Who is entitled to Home to school transport?** Any child who resides over 2 miles from their nearest suitable Primary School or 3 miles from their nearest suitable Post primary within the defined categories. **See Home to School Transport policy**
Where is the measurement taken from?

The measurement is taken from the gate of the permanent home address to the nearest gate of the school to be attended.

Who is responsible for my child's transport?

The Board is responsible for assisting parents with the cost of travel in line with Department of Education Guidelines. It is a parental responsibility to ensure that there is transport already available to or in the vicinity of the school to be attended. Boards are not required to provide additional services where the cost of such provision would result in unreasonable public expenditure.

Who is responsible for getting my child to the bus stop?

It is a parental responsibility to ensure that children are supervised.

Am I entitled to door to door transport?

No.

Only children with severe learning difficulties are entitled to door to door transport as part of their Statement of Special Educational Needs.

Children with moderate learning difficulties or those attending mainstream schools may be required to make their own way to the pick up/drop off point.

How far would my child be expected to travel to a pick up/drop off point?

For children with moderate learning difficulties, advice would be sought from the Statementing Officer.

Mainstream pupils are required to travel up to the statutory distance before consideration is given to additional provision.

My child has a medical condition, would he/she be entitled to transport even though I live within two/three miles of the nearest suitable school?

Yes, provided your child attends the nearest suitable school and a Clinical Medical Officer recommends transport on medical grounds.

I did not attempt to enroll my child in the nearest suitable school but he/she has a medical condition. Would I be entitled to transport?

No, If your child attends a more distant school the Board may consider payment of a travel allowance to the nearest suitable school

How do I find out if I am eligible for transport?

Advice may be sought from the Transport Unit of the Board. No Formal decision will be made until an application form has been submitted. Information is also included in Board publications issued to all parents when children are being enrolled or transferring to post primary schools.

Where can I get an application form?

Primary application forms are available at your local Primary School. Post Primary application forms are forwarded to you with your transfer documentation.
The Transport Unit will also send out applications on request.

How is the distance measured?

I have moved house. Am I still entitled to transport assistance?

If there is a suitable school within 2/3 miles from your home you must attempt to gain admission to that school and be refused a place before becoming eligible for assistance to a school over the statutory distance. The Board will require written confirmation from all schools within the statutory distance Pupils who change address in the penultimate or final year of their primary education will be granted transport assistance to the school they attend provided there is a suitable transport service operating from their new address and that the address is over 2 miles.

Pupils who change address during the 2 year period leading up to GCSE will be granted transport assistance to the school they attend provided there is a suitable transport service operating from their new address and that the address is 3 miles distant.

Would I be eligible for transport from my child minder's address?

Transport is provided from the permanent home address to the school attended. If there is transport available and the Board can assist at no additional cost a place may be granted provided that the child is attending its nearest suitable school and the child minder's home is on the existing bus route.

We are moving to temporary accommodation which is over the statutory distance to my child's school. Am I eligible for assistance?

Each case is considered on an individual basis. Application should be made in writing to the Transport Officer.

What does a 'suitable' school mean?

In the case of a primary school, 'suitability' depends on whether a school is categorised as '**Controlled**', or '**Catholic Maintained**' or '**Other Maintained**', or '**Integrated**' or '**Irish Medium**'. This means, for example, that if your child is admitted to a **Controlled** school outside the statutory walking distance, entitlement to transport will depend on whether or not there are any other schools in the **Controlled** category within two miles of your home which could have admitted your child.

The category of each primary school is included in the school's entry in the Board's booklet '**Booklet for Parents Enrolment to Primary schools**'. An edition of this booklet is published for each District council area, and copies are available from primary schools, Board Offices and public libraries.

The above also relates to Post Primary schools taking regard of the distance criteria

How can I find out whether a school is within statutory walking distance of my home?

The Board's Transport Officers will be willing to advise you whether a school is within statutory walking distance of your home. You can also measure the distance by car but it should be noted that a measurement by car does not always reflect an accurate walking distance.

I don't think that the school close to my home is really suitable because it is co-educational, and I would prefer to send my daughter/son to an all-girls/'boys' school. Can my daughter/son qualify for transport assistance to the nearest all-girls/'boys' school which is 5 miles away?

The co-educational or single sex nature of a school cannot be taken into account by the Board in deciding whether a school is 'suitable' or not. For example, a pupil who is admitted to a single sex school outside statutory walking distance will not qualify for transport assistance if the pupil could have been admitted to a co-educational school within statutory walking distance.

Does transport assistance cover the whole of the journey from home to school?

The Board is not obliged to assist with travel for the whole of a journey, provided that the portion of the journey for which transport is not provided does not exceed 2/3 miles. While the Board tries to make services as convenient as possible for pupils it has a

responsibility to keep transport costs under tight control in order to protect funding for school budgets.

My child is not old enough to be admitted to Year 1 in September, but I hope that she will be admitted to a reception class or a nursery class. Can she qualify for transport assistance?

No, pupils under compulsory school age i.e. under the age of four years and two months prior to 1st September in any given school year, who attend a reception class or a nursery class, are not entitled to transport assistance.

REMEMBER

To be eligible for Transport Assistance to a school outside statutory walking distance, application for admission must first of all be made to all suitable schools which are within statutory walking distance before a preference is expressed for the more distant school.

You are strongly advised to take this into account when nominating your preferences for Primary Schools on your child's Application Form for Admission to Primary School. ADVICE AND FURTHER INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE FOLLOWING OFFICE:

**The Transport Office South Eastern Education and Library Board Grahamsbridge Road
Dundonald Belfast BT16 2HS**

Telephone: 028 90 566200