



Home to School Transport Survey: A Summary of the Key Findings...

November 2022

Background Information...

Survey created in response to what we were hearing from parent carers

Survey Monkey link shared with parent carers

Survey undertaken October 2022 - November 2022

290 Responses

Key Findings...

Of the 290 responses **71.72%** had experienced challenges with home to school transport this term.

39.55% reported financial difficulties due to the transport issues.

14.22% requested transport but were told they would have travel allowance instead.

Some families received a travel allowance for 2 journeys a day others received it for 4.

37.21% of those who were unable to attend on the first day of term due to transport were still unable to attend at the time of completing the survey.

Adverse impacts on the mental health, anxiety and wellbeing of **86.82%** of families affected by these transport issues.

There were huge inconsistencies around 'late applications' Many families applied past the deadline due to not having a finalised EHCP or named school.

Reports of very poor and inconsistent communication at every stage of the process.

25.23% responded saying that although transport had been agreed, the arrangements had not been put in place for the start of term.

IMPACT

One of the key areas the survey highlighted was the impact that these transport issues had, on not only the child or young person but, their parent carers and the family as a whole.

This has had a huge impact on families:

- **Finances**
- **Mental health**
- **Relationships**
- **Loss of education**
- **Unable to work**

Quotes from parent carers...

I was called 1 week before the start of term and told that we would not be getting transport and a bursary would be given to us instead. They said it was because I applied late - I only applied late because we didn't have a school named in the plan. I am distraught that my child will not be able to attend his first day at his new school. His anxiety is through the roof.

The deadline on the letter that I received about applying was the 16th May not the 31st March!

I have just had a call to say that under the new policy they are no longer offering solo transport and as there are no other children nearby to travel in a taxi with my daughter, they will offer us a bursary instead of 2 journeys a day. They said I can appeal if I disagree - it is 1 week before school goes back - I can't take her because her school is a 50 minute drive away and I have to get her siblings to school at the same time. My daughter is autistic and doesn't cope at all well with change, I honestly don't know what to do!

Families told us that they were having to use food banks due to the cost of driving their children to and back from school as there were delays on transport payments and they were struggling to pay for the fuel.

My child is unable to attend school until transport is organised. I do not drive as I have a neurological condition and Surrey expect me to transport them to and from school but will only pay for 2 journeys a day! I am a single parent and simply cannot afford to pay for him to get to school on that small amount. This means I cannot work so will lose my earnings as well. How is this allowed to happen I just don't know what to do!

I applied for transport on time but I heard nothing about the transport arrangements. My child is now so anxious as they don't know who is taking them to school that they won't leave their bedroom. I phoned Surrey this morning at 9.10 am and am currently still on hold, it's now 10.45 am...

I had no idea that I had to reapply! Why did they not tell us this when we received the updated plan?

Our Hopes for the Future of the Home to School Transport Service...

Family Voice Surrey have made 12 recommendations which can be seen in the full presentation and report previously circulated.

To summarise these into the outcomes which we hope will be implemented to improve the future experience for families:

- Clarity on Independent Travel Allowance (ITA) ensuring the policy is in line with statutory guidance.
- Families paid for 4 journeys a day not 2.
- To have clarity on the post 16 policy & to have PFA in mind with young people to give them opportunities to develop their independence.
- To have clear guidance on maximum journey times and how these will be adhered to whenever possible.
- To have an improved and consistent communication plan for families.
- To have the service appropriately resourced to meet demand.
- To develop a more joined up service with the transport, SEND & admissions team.
- To have a robust plan of how the service will change to ensure CYP are not left without transport for the start of term, and that families will not be impacted negatively in terms of their mental wellbeing and finances.

Questions?

