



School Transport Request for Vacant Seats for Session 2024/25

All Education Authorities are required to offer any vacant seats on school transport to pupils who live on a route, but within the specified walking distance of their school. All such requests are granted on the basis that should any children move into the area who are entitled to school transport, those seats may have to be relinquished.

The Authority is now asking for any parents and carers who wish to make a request for a vacant seat for their child(ren) to come forward with that request between **19 August 2024 and 06 September 2024**. All requests must be made online by completing the 'Vacant Seat Requests' form. The form can be found on the Shetland Island Council's website under the Schools section, link as follows:

https://my.shetland.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?mode=fill&consentMessage=y&form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-bad1b759-fd70-4472-8e8f-ab1964de4536/AF-Stage-515c7bcb-efe0-4731-82d0-88938cef2eaf/definition.json&redirectlink=%2Fen&cancelRedirectLink=%2Fen&consentMessage=yes

No requests will be accepted or considered after 06 September 2024.

The School Transport Policy sets out the process whereby vacant seats will be allocated. In the event that more applications are received than the number of vacant seats on any given route, then priority will be given as follows:

- To those children referred by Social Work or Health professionals;
- To those attending their catchment area school over those attending an alternative school by parental choice;
- Amongst those attending their catchment area school, to those who live furthest away; and
- Amongst those attending an alternative school by parental choice, to those who live furthest away.

Please note that it is not possible to grant seats on Public Service buses which are used to transport school pupils; however non-entitled pupils may travel as members of the public and pay the appropriate fare.

The allocation of any available vacant seats will be done towards the end of September, with letters being issued to parents and carers shortly thereafter advising whether or not their application has been successful and enclosing the necessary bus pass if so. Children will not be allowed to travel on school transport vehicles without a valid pass.

Any parent or carer who is having difficulty accessing the online form should contact the Children's Services Department Reception on 01595 744000 for assistance.

Parents and carers who successfully applied for vacant seats for their children for the previous school session MUST re-apply.