



School Transport Request for Vacant Seats for Session 2016/17

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.

Shetland Islands Council, at its meeting on 18 February 2015, took the decision that Halls of Residence fees and transport fees should be waived from June 2015 for pupils **from the start of Secondary 4**. Therefore, any children who attend a school other than their catchment area school from Secondary 4 will now be entitled to free school transport as opposed to parents and carers being responsible for their transport to school, or having to request access to a vacant seat.

The Authority is now asking for any parents and carers who wish to make a request for a vacant seat for their child(ren), below Secondary 4 stage, to come forward with that request by **Friday 10 June 2016**. All requests must be made in writing, either by email to vacantseatrequests@shetland.gov.uk, or by letter which should be sent to:

Transport Planning Service
Shetland Islands Council
6 North Ness Business Park
Lerwick
Shetland
ZE1 0LZ

A revised School Transport Policy was agreed by Shetland Islands Council on 24 February 2016, which set 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;
- Amongst those attending an alternative school by parental choice, to those who live furthest away.

Work will begin on the allocation of those vacant seats on Monday 13 June 2016, with letters being sent out to parents and carers from Wednesday 22 June 2016, to advise as to whether or not a seat will be available.

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

Mrs Shona Thompson
Executive Manager – Schools
Children’s Services Department
Hayfield House
Lerwick
ZE1 0QD

Shona.thompson@shetland.gov.uk
01595 743965