



School Transport Request for Vacant Seats for Session 2018/19

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 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 between **4 June 2018 and 13 July 2018**. 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.

Please note that it is not possible to grant seats on 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 School Transport Policy is currently under review; therefore, the allocation of any available vacant seats will be done during the schools' summer holidays with letters being issued to parents before the start of the new term to advise as to whether or not a seat will be available.

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

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