



# Let's talk... about SEND transport with Niki Park

Head of Passenger Transport,  
Norfolk County Council

Friday, 21 August 2020

## Attendees

11 parent carers representing at least 14 children and young people (CYP) with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) ranging from 11 to 24 years

9 parent carers parent carers were unable to attend but contributed questions, which were asked during the session and responses fed back afterwards

## What were the main topics in the session?

COVID-19 safety procedures (or lack of them) have increased the stress and anxiety that parent carers, children and young people are having around transport arrangements.

Parent carers experience a lack of information and communication from the Passenger Transport team and arrangements are made too close to the beginning of the educational new year.

This means that many families do not have meet-and-greet sessions with taxi providers and assistants and are unable to be confident about transport arrangements and help their children prepare for the start of school/college.

## Key points

- By mid to late August, many parent carers still had no confirmation about their CYP's transport arrangements.
- Parent carers are concerned about transport being COVID-safe, especially as taxi and bus drivers do not have to wear masks and children are not able to socially distance on buses.
- The Passenger Transport department produced a leaflet for parents, which was sent out to schools. The majority of parent carers had not received this leaflet.
- Parents need to be reassured that additional and sensitive information that they give to the transport department is acted on and clearly documented.

**Parent carers said:**

- “We requested transport for our child in January 2020 but haven’t heard anything for their September start date.”
- “Travelling by taxi is a massive worry for me since COVID-19. There will be five in a taxi for an hour-and-a-half each way and the drivers are not wearing masks.”
- “I’m really shocked to find out that so many children can be on a bus together without social distancing measures being in place.”
- “I rang Transport last week to update my child’s risk assessment but I am not convinced that the person on the end of the phone really understood the types of situation that could now occur with my young person.”
- “We haven’t received forms from NCC to update them on our child.”
- “We haven’t received a meet-and-greet this year.”
- “I am concerned that the driver will not wear a mask.”

**What Family Voice Norfolk will do to make sure parent carers’ views are heard:**

- Post the school transport brochure on the Family Voice Facebook page
- Send a report to the Head of Passenger Transport outlining areas for improvement.