



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Spare Seat – Terms & Conditions

Transport Fees

For pupils allocated to a Bedford Borough Council route commissioned by the school transport service, the transport fee is subject to annual review through the fees and charges review process. The full annual fee for the 2026/27 academic year is £1,188.00.

Your child may be eligible for a reduction in the cost of a spare seat if you are in receipt of Universal Credit (with annual earned income of no more than £7,400 after tax and not including any benefits you get). The cost for those eligible for the discount is £240.00 for the 2026/27 academic year. If you live outside of the Bedford Borough area you will not qualify for any discount.

The relevant section on the application form must be completed to enable us to check eligibility for the reduction in the fee.

Things to note

- Spare seats on our bus services are very limited and cannot be guaranteed. You should not rely on the Spare Seats Scheme as the only way to transport your child to school.
- Additional vehicle stops will not be added to existing school routes to service non-eligible children. Spare Seats pass holders will be expected to make their way to and from the existing designated stops.
- When allocating spaces on a route, priority is given to the entitled children first and only when the numbers have been finalised can we issue passes for the spare seats available. Passes will, therefore, normally be issued AFTER the start of the academic year. Parent(s)/carer(s) will need to make their own arrangements prior to the pass being issued. In the case of a pass not being issued until after the start of term, you will not be entitled to a reimbursement of any costs that may have been incurred.
- Bedford Borough Council reserves the right to decline any application or withdraw travel where a student's behaviour is deemed to put themselves or other passengers at risk. All students must adhere to the code of good conduct when travelling on school routes. The code of conduct can be found [here](#).
- If your child is issued with a pass, we are still entitled to withdraw it. This may happen if the seat is needed for a child entitled to free transport or if the bus service changes part way through the term. If the pass is withdrawn, you will be informed as soon as possible and given a refund on a pro-rata basis

Payments

- If the application is approved, we will write to advise the cost and payment information.
- Applicants will be sent an invoice for the full annual fee for the academic year and payment options will be detailed on the invoice.
- Applicants can make the full payment or contact the Debtors Team to request a monthly payment plan

- A Direct Debit (DD) can be set up. A hard copy DD, signed by the person responsible for paying, will be needed.
- If starting transport at any time after the start of the academic year, the fee will be calculated over the remaining months to July.
- If there are queries relating to the invoice or customer's account, the Debtors Team can be contacted on 01234 718071

Cancelling Transport

If transport is no longer needed, applicants must formally cancel the arrangements in writing or applicants will remain liable for costs.

Cancellation notices must be sent by email to mainstream.transport@bedford.gov.uk

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Please be advised, where a bus pass has been issued, applicants remain liable for transport costs until the bus pass has also been returned.

Please do not cancel payment arrangements until we have confirmed that the customer account is up to date.

If you are unsure of how much remains on the account, please contact the Debtors Team to enquire on 01234 718071. Where applicable, a pro-rata credit or refund (by the month) will be provided.

Payment defaults

Should the applicant default on a payment, Bedford Borough Council reserves the right to immediately withdraw any Transport Provision.

Bedford Borough Council will take legal steps to recover any monies owed to it, due to unpaid fees.

If parent(s)/carer(s) or applicants are having difficulties making payments, please contact the Debtors Team as soon as possible on (01234) 718071. They can discuss options to implement a payment plan to help better manage outstanding payments.