

Tanfield School

Concessionary Seat

Go North East 836 service

Guide for Parents 2018–19



This guide provides information about Tanfield School and Durham County Council's Concessionary Seat scheme. It is intended for parents / carers who already know that their child is NOT entitled to free travel to school or assistance with travelling expenses.

Please read the guidance notes in full as they may have changed from previous versions.

1. *What is a Concessionary Seat?*

Go North East operate a bus service from Burnopfield to Tanfield School, service 836. Tanfield School has made a special arrangement with Go North East to buy special tickets for this bus at a discounted rate. Tanfield School will apply a further discount to the cost that you have to pay for a seat. Durham County Council will invoice you for the cost of the seat, which you may pay for in monthly instalments.

2. *Where are Concessionary Seats available?*

Concessionary Seats are available on the service 836 which operates from Burnopfield to the school.

Crookgate Bank Top	0814
Crookgate Pack Horse	0816
Burnopfield Post Office	0817
Leazes Church	0819
Leazes Albion Inn	0821
Tantobie Road Ends	0827
Tanfield School	0830

An alternative Concessionary Seat scheme is operating on the school bus which serves the Flint Hill, Dipton, Harelaw, Catchgate, Annfield Plain, New Kyo and Oxhill areas. Please ask at the school for details.

3. *How much does a Concessionary Seat cost?*

Years 7-10

The charge for pupils in Years 7-10 is **£209.00**, which equals £1.10 per day. Tanfield School is covering the remaining cost of the travel.

Year 11

Year 11 pupils will pay **£187.00** as their school year is typically 20 days shorter than for other year groups.

If you apply after the start of the school year, the cost of the seat will be calculated at a rate of £1.10 per day for the number of days remaining in the school year.

You may make your payments in monthly instalments.

4. How do I apply for a seat?

Simply complete the application form and send it to Transport Services, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UQ as soon as possible.

You can also apply for Concessionary Seats online at www.durham.gov.uk/concessionaryseats.

You can apply at any time but to be certain of being considered for a seat and receiving a pass for the start of the school year from September 2018, we will need to receive your application by 4th June 2018.

You will need to apply for a Concessionary Seat at the start of each school year.

5. What should I do if I have more than one child travelling?

If you want to apply for Concessionary Seats for more than one child, you will need to fill in an application form for each child. Each application will be treated separately. Each child will require a 'Key' smartcard.

6. What happens after I have applied?

If you apply by 4th June 2018, Durham County Council will write back to you to confirm a seat has been allocated, and send you an invoice in July 2018 for the cost of the seat.

Applications received after 4th June 2018 will be processed as quickly as possible, but may take up to three weeks from your application.

We will then share your information with Go North East so they can order a bus ticket.

7. How will I receive my ticket?

Instead of Durham County Council sending you a printed bus pass, your ticket will be automatically loaded onto your 'Key' smartcard. Simply touch your smartcard on the card reader when you board the bus and it will show a green light to confirm that your ticket is valid for travel.

If you do not already have a 'Key' Smartcard, you will need to apply for one separately, from Go North East. You can register for a card online at www.simplygo.com/thekey. Upload your photograph and your smartcard will be posted to you the same day. You can also apply by calling Go North East on 0845 60 60 260 between 7am and 10pm each day or in person at one of Go North East's travel centres in Chester-le-Street, Metrocentre and Washington.

(Your 'Key' smartcard also gives you savings for travel on all Go North East bus services in your area. You can travel for 90p on any Go North East bus outside of school times, including weekends and school holidays).

If you require further information on registering for a 'Key' smartcard, please call Go North East Customer Services on 0845 60 60 260.

8. How do I pay for a seat?

When you apply for a seat, you must state the name of the adult who will pay for any seat that we allocate. If your application is successful, this person will receive an invoice from us for the total cost of the seat for the school year. The invoice will include a monthly payment plan.

You should pay the first instalment payment against your invoice immediately. Once we receive it, we will issue a full bus pass for the term.

Your monthly payment plan will show the date you need to make your payment by. This is the latest date to make each payment, and you may wish to arrange your payment in advance of this date.

There are several ways to make your payments, including by telephone, cheque, online, at your local Paypoint, by Direct Debit or by standing order. Details will be given on the back of your invoice.

If you have paid for a seat by Direct Debit in the last year, this arrangement will continue and you will not need to set up a new Direct Debit mandate. If you have not, you will be sent a Direct Debit mandate form when your invoice is raised.

You may pay in advance of the monthly instalments if you wish: e.g. in termly or annual amounts.

9. What if I fall behind with my payments?

If your payments fall behind the schedule, your ticket will be suspended with Go North East. You will not be able to use your school ticket for travel until your payments are brought back up to date.

You will receive payment reminders for each outstanding monthly instalment. If you continue to have an outstanding debt for a period of travel, then you may ultimately be referred to our debt collection process.

Debts for transport may be offset between school years, and payments for one year must be completed before bus passes for the next year will be issued (in addition to the appropriate payments for the next year).

We may offset overpayments for concessionary Seats against any other debts you may have with Durham County Council.

10. Who will you contact?

All correspondence regarding payment for the Concessionary Seat will be sent to the adult named on the application form. If you are not the main Parent / Carer of the pupil, you will be responsible for ensuring that the main Parent / Carer of the pupil is aware of any correspondence we send (for instance, if payments fall behind and a bus pass cannot be issued, we will write to the adult named on the invoice only). If a seat is cancelled due to payment issues, we will write to the named adult.

Bus passes and letters regarding allocation of seats will be sent to the pupil's principal home address. Any correspondence regarding general transport issues or behaviour will also be sent to the pupil's principal home address.

11. Will I get a Concessionary Seat in time for the start of the school term?

If you apply before 4th June 2018, you will receive an invoice in July for you to make your first instalment payment. Please bear in mind it may take several days for your payment to reach us. Your ticket will be applied to your 'Key' smartcard when you apply, for travel from September 2018.

If you apply after 4th June 2018, your ticket will be applied to your 'Key' smartcard within two weeks.

12. Can a Concessionary Seat be withdrawn?

Your seat will normally be guaranteed if your payments are kept up to date.

Travel is subject to Durham County Council's Behavioural policy. Any seat may be withdrawn if a pupil does not behave appropriately on the vehicle.

If a seat is withdrawn, you must make your own arrangements for getting your child to school.

13. Will I get a refund if I no longer want my Concessionary Seat?

If you decide that you no longer want your Concessionary Seat, you should let Durham County Council know. We will arrange to cancel your school ticket, and a full refund of any unused portion will be given back to you. The refund will be calculated at a rate of £1.10 per day. If you have not paid the full amount for the period when the bus pass was in use, you may have an outstanding balance to pay. You must inform Durham County Council if you are no longer using the bus for any reason.

14. What happens if my circumstances change or I move address?

You must get in touch with us if your circumstances change or your move address.

If the pupil still wishes to travel on the same bus, we will need to cancel your existing invoice and send a new invoice for the balance still owed to your new address. This invoice will contain a revised payment schedule. You will need to use the new invoice reference for your payments.

If the pupil wishes to travel on a different bus, we will process this as if it were a new application. If a seat is available, we will cancel your existing invoice and send a new one to your new address. This invoice will contain a revised payment schedule. You will need to use the new invoice reference for your payments. Your old ticket will be cancelled with Go North East.

15. My child only travels on the bus on certain days. Will I get a reduction?

The tickets that we buy from Go North East are annual ones, and we are unable to make a reduction in the cost for a part-time traveller.

16. The bus did not operate one day due to bad weather or other circumstances. Will I get a refund?

The tickets that we buy from Go North East are annual ones, and we will not normally make adjustments for one-off or unforeseen failures to operate.

17. My child will be absent from school for a period. Will I get a discount?

The tickets that we buy from Go North East are annual ones, and we will not usually make adjustments for one-off absences. However, we may be able to stop your ticket and re-start it at a later date if the absence is a continuing one and there is reasonable evidence to support it (for instance, medical information). We will assess this on a case-by-case basis.

You should inform us on 03000 264444 (option 3) of any special circumstances as soon as possible. Any discount will be calculated on the daily rate of the scheme multiplied by the number of days of absence.

18. What will happen if my child forgets their bus pass?

If a pupil attempts to board the school bus without showing their bus pass, they will usually be allowed to if there are seats available on the bus.

Go North East will inform Tanfield School and Durham County Council, and will contact you to remind you that passes need to be shown.

Repeated failures to present a valid bus pass will result in removal of the Concessionary seat.

19. What should I do if I lose my bus pass?

You should contact Go North East for a replacement 'Key' smartcard, on their Customer Services number 0845 60 60 260. There will be a charge of £5.00 for a replacement card. The new card will be loaded with your existing transport ticket.

20. How do I find out about alternative local bus services?

If no school buses are available, a fare-paying local bus service may be available instead. You can check with Traveline (www.traveline.info or telephone 0871 200 22 33) for details of local bus services your child could use to make the journey. Often, a weekly or termly pass bought from the bus operator will provide best value.