

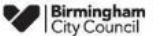
Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Home to School - Children, Young People and Families

Update and discussion



BE BOLD BE BIRMINGHAM



Children's travel – start of term headlines

- Significant progress has been made to mitigate the issues that affected the start of the academic years in 2020 and 2021.
- Comprehensive preparations took place over the summer, and an operations centre was based at Woodcock Street for the first week of term.
- 99.5% of routes ran successfully on the first full day. 99.7% on 08/09 and 99.9% afterwards.

Children's travel – start of term headlines (cont)

- Encouraging feedback was received from stakeholders including the PCF and special school headteachers.
- It has been recognised that communication with families, schools, and providers has significantly improved.
- The press and social media activity were notably down on previous years, and the team received far fewer family inquiries and complaints.

Children's travel transformation.

- An Improvement Programme was launched in March 2021. A Programme board meets on a monthly basis to drive change.
- The programme's workstreams are matched to six themes. These incorporate areas of additional focus on contracts and commercial management, financial efficiencies and policy and compliance.
- A change to the structure of the service has strengthened the management team. Additional work is being undertaken to ensure the service has the right permanent organisational design and culture.
- We are building better ways to communicate. Creating focus groups and feedback loops to co-create with children, parents, carers, and suppliers, ensuring the right mechanisms are in place to communicate more effectively with children, parents, carers, schools, and staff.

Children's travel (cont)

- An Assistant Director has been recruited on a 2-year fixed term contract. Bringing more permanency to the role.
- New processes to strengthen DBS assurance have been agreed. This involves the DBS checking process being undertaken by BCC.
- Complaints are being dealt with efficiently or effectively, are within the timelines of complaints handling data. This function has also recently been moved to the Customer, Communications and Engagement team to ensure alignment with our child centric approach.

Children's travel (cont)

- A new procurement model will look to provide greater consistency in the marketplace and enable new contracts to be reviewed and issued with terms that are suited to market conditions.
- Contracts will offer suppliers stability and consistency whilst also being heavily weighted towards performance.
- A robust mobilisation plan has been delivered successfully, building the foundations for the future transformation activity that will take place with the service.
- We are developing an enhanced, child centric service in a manner that is efficient and economically viable.

Feedback from the start of term

"I just wanted to applaud you all for the hard work that you have put in over the summer to finalise our routes. Today was by far the best September return we have had to date."

Birmingham Special School

"I want to thank you for your support with this. It has been a welcomed change."

Parent (following a complaint)

"I want to pass on my thanks to travel assist and all their colleagues for all the hard work behind the scenes as we have had a good first week from a transport perspective."

Birmingham Special School

"I just wanted to say a big thank you for putting my guide back on my route it's all running smoothly again now. Appreciate it so much"

Parent (following a complaint)

"You are a star. Seriously, I feel you have always been on the ball with your service!!!! Spot On!"

Transport Provider