



## Cherry Oak School

60 Frederick Road  
Selly Oak  
Birmingham  
B29 6PB

**Executive Headteacher: Justine Sims**  
Tel: 0121 464 2037  
Fax: 0121 464 5219  
j.sims@victoria.bham.sch.uk

---

6<sup>th</sup> January 2013

Budget saving proposals 2013-2014

### **Home to School Transport**

#### **Response – Cherry Oak**

**Justine Sims**  
**Executive Head teacher**

At Cherry Oak we meet the individual needs of all of our pupils most of whom have complex cognition and learning needs with over 50% also having a diagnosis of ASD and a significant proportion having challenging behaviours. This means that some of our pupils needs can only be met at Cherry Oak and no other school and a minority travel extended distances for this purpose. As Cherry Oak is their nearest appropriate school to meet their individual needs travel assistance should be supported in these instances.

We actively encourage those pupils who we feel can be brought to school safely by their parents and carers to do so. However, this is a minority of pupils and is assessed on an individual basis.

A significant percentage of pupils at Cherry Oak function at a very low level and have no comprehension of danger or safety. Their parents and carers find it impossible to transport them safely on either public transport or their own transport. A significant proportion of our pupils have to wear Houdini harnesses on transport due to their challenging behaviours. These pupils must have their transport assistance continued or their safety would be at significant risk.

As we are all aware early intervention and support for children with complex needs is essential. As a school we can make life-changing differences to our youngest children's learning, social and wellbeing development by having them in school from an early age. For these children who are not of compulsory school age it is essential that where required transport assistance is provided for them.

Cherry Oak has a very small car park where our transport vehicles drop and pick off pupils. For a minority of pupils their parents and carers are able to safely walk or drive their children to and from school. These children have a sense of danger and are able to follow simple instructions. However this is definitely a minority. For the majority of pupils their

complex low cognition and learning needs compounded with their ASD needs and associated challenging behaviours make it wholly unsafe for them to travel to and from school by any other means than transport assistance with a pupil guide.

Therefore it is imperative that before any proposed changes to a child's transport assistance each child's complexity of needs are comprehensively assessed when making transport assistance assessments. It is vital that these assessments are made with due regard to the child's health and safety including the opinions of both school staff and parents and carers, both of whom have accurate details of the child's needs.

Justine Sims  
Executive Head teacher  
Cherry Oak  
Part of the Federation of Cherry Oak and Victoria Schools