

City of Hyvinkää school transport guide

Pre-primary education
Basic education

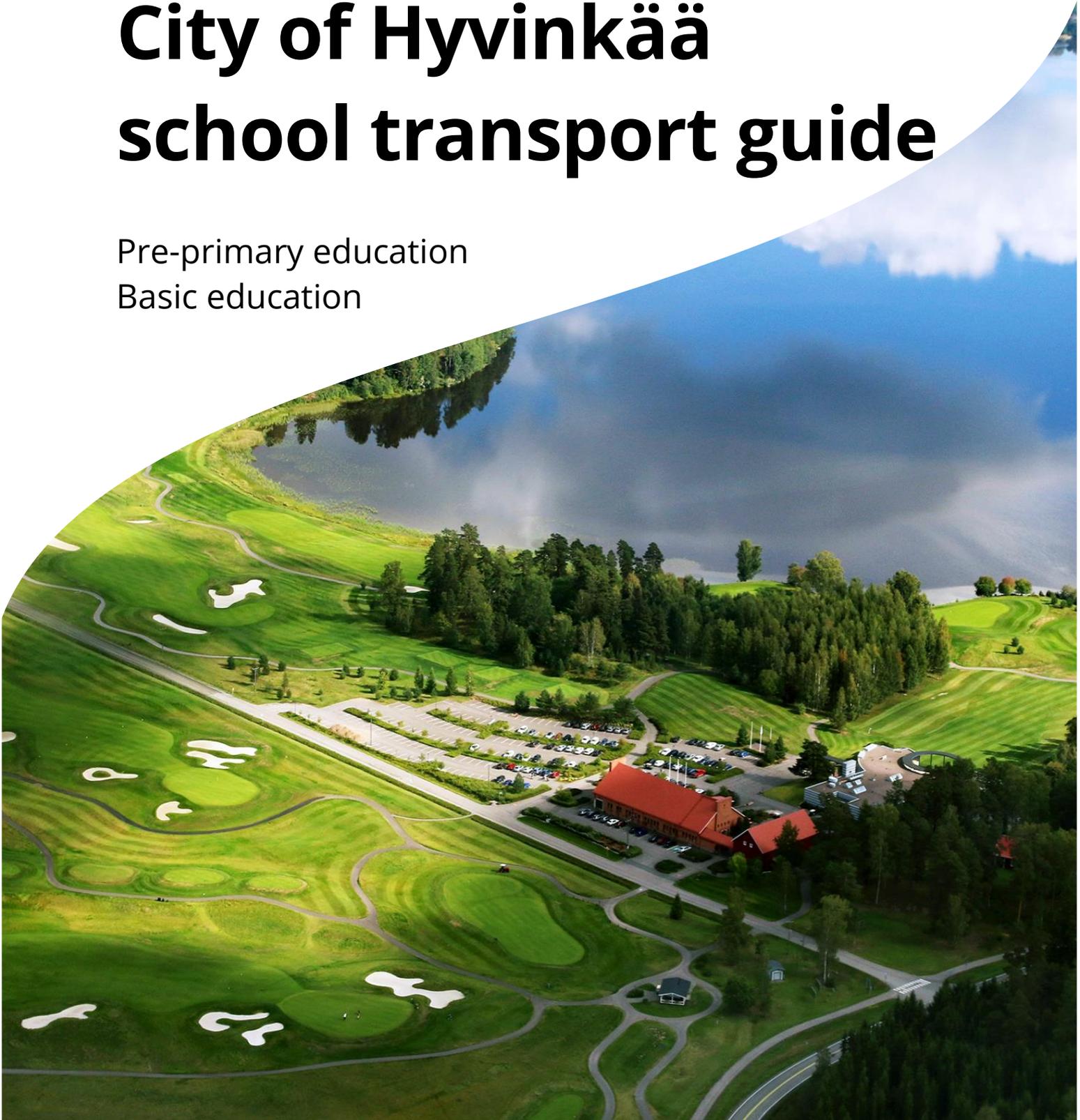


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Pre-primary and basic education school transport

City of Hyvinkää school transport guide

The Basic Education Act lays down conditions under which the city organises school transport for preschool and basic education pupils. Instead of organising transport, the city may compensate the transport costs to the pupil's parent/guardian (so-called transport compensation). The parent/guardians of pupils who are not entitled to receive school transport are obliged to organise the transport of their children in the best way they see fit. Parents of pupils who are entitled to school transport may also organise their child's school transport themselves if they consider the basic level of transport provided by the municipality to be inadequate but in this case, they are responsible for covering the transport costs themselves.

This guide lists the principles according to which pupils are granted school transport at the expense of the city, describes how various forms of school transport are organised, and gives instructions on how to apply for school transport, how pupils are to conduct themselves during transport and what to do in exceptional situations.

Parents/guardians are always primarily responsible for teaching their children how to operate safely in traffic.

Grounds for granting school transport

Decisions on granting school transport are made in accordance with the Basic Education Act and the decisions in principle taken by the Education Committee.

As a rule, the City of Hyvinkää may grant school transport to pupils whose municipality of residence is Hyvinkää. Exceptions to this rule are pupils placed in Hyvinkää in accordance with the Child Welfare Act, whose municipality of residence may be other than Hyvinkää.

School transport is organised or compensated only for the journey between the pupil's home and school, unless otherwise stated later in this guide. The City of Hyvinkää only grants school transport to and from one address, which is entered in the population register as the pupil's permanent place of residence. For pupils in basic education, transport may also be agreed to be carried out between the pupil's permanent care place (on each school day throughout the school year) and school, instead of between home and school, provided that this does not require any changes to existing transport arrangements (transport routes, route length).

A child or pupil may be transported up to two times per school day. Arrangements arising from the organisation of religious education may constitute an exception to this rule.

School transport in pre-primary education

In accordance with the Basic Education Act, the school transport benefit applies to pupils who live in Hyvinkää and attend free-of-charge pre-primary education in Hyvinkää and whose journey from home to pre-primary education or from early childhood education referred to in the Early Childhood Education Act to pre-primary education and from pre-primary education to home or to early childhood education is longer than three kilometres.

A pupil may also be entitled to school transport benefit if the above-mentioned commute is too difficult, stressful or dangerous in view of the pupil's circumstances (*see Section 1.5 for more information*).

Pre-primary education transport is arranged to the pre-primary education location assigned to the pupil by the municipality, taking into account the need for supplementary early childhood education for pre-primary education. If the parents want their child to receive pre-primary education in a location other than the one closest to their home, the pupil is not entitled to school transport benefit.

Length of commute to school or pre-primary education

The City of Hyvinkää will arrange school transport for the pupil or compensate their school commute expenses to their parent/guardian if:

- a pre-primary education pupil's commute along the shortest viable route exceeds 3 kilometres.
- a 1st–3rd grade pupil's school commute along the shortest viable route exceeds 3 kilometres.
- a 4th–9th grade pupil's school commute along the shortest viable route exceeds 5 kilometres.
- a 10th grade pupil's (who resides in Hyvinkää) school commute along the shortest viable route exceeds 5 kilometres.

The distance is measured from the pupil's home to their pre-primary education location or school along the shortest viable pedestrian route. When measuring the distance, bicycle and pedestrian routes are considered as primary routes. The route's availability during the winter time is also considered.

The distance is measured using the ReittiGIS application used for measuring the city's school commute distances. No exceptions are made to the above-mentioned distance limits (e.g. 4.9 km) but all pupils are treated equally in this respect. The distance limits are the longest possible personal liability commutes, which pupils must be prepared to travel on their own.

Dangerous commute

If the commute or part of the commute is dangerous, the municipality is obliged to arrange school transport for the part of the commute considered dangerous or to compensate the travel costs to the pupil's parent/guardian (*see Section 2 for more details of the transport costs*). The evaluation instructions issued by the Finnish Road Administration regarding safety of school commute shall be used to assess the safety of the route, including the following factors in particular:

- The route includes a busy road that has no pedestrian and bicycle lane.
- The speed limit of the road is 80 km/h or more, and there is a lot of heavy traffic on the road.
- The commute includes a dangerous junction or a crossing that is not controlled by traffic lights.

The KOULULIITU assessment method created by the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Finnish Road Administration and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities for the assessment the safety of school route is applied to evaluate the safety of pupils' school commute. Individual cases can also be assessed separately. If necessary, the city's traffic engineer will be consulted when assessing the safety of the commute.

A1 language education

Because of their choice of A1 language, a pupil may have to study in a school other than the local school appointed for that pupil. In this case, the pupil is entitled to receive free school transport provided that the other transport conditions are met.

Religious education

The city organises transport to religious education upon application starting from first grade of basic education.

The city will provide transport from the pupil's own school to religious education and back, if the lessons are scheduled to take place in the middle of the school day.

Transport between school and home to religious education is organised according to the general school transport principles (see Sections 'Length of commute' and 'Difficult or stressful commute').

Pupils who attend school in another municipality

School transport **is not organised or reimbursed** for pupils attending school in another municipality, with the exception of cases in which the Education and Cultural Services has decided that the pupil is to attend school in another municipality.

- The City of Hyvinkää provides Swedish-speaking upper secondary school pupils school transport to a Swedish-speaking school in Vantaa or compensates their public transport travel costs.

- Pupils from other municipalities attending school in Hyvinkää are transported only if a transport agreement has been made with their municipality of residence.

School transport for immigrant children

- Immigrant pupils residing in Hyvinkää may be granted school transport or school trip compensation upon application for a maximum of six months during their first year in Finland for commutes exceeding 1.5 km based on lack of linguistic skills and different circumstances.
- The above-mentioned time can be extended for pupils under the age of 10 (1st–3rd graders) based on a statement by their preparatory class teacher or class teacher if the child clearly has not developed the skills needed to commute to school independently. This statement does not oblige the city to provide school transport as such, but will be used as an expert opinion in decision-making.

Transport to and from morning and afternoon activities

Trips to morning and afternoon activities are not included in school transport. For the most part, morning and afternoon activities take place at the school or in the immediate vicinity of the school. If the activity location is not at the school, it is usually within a walking distance from the school.

Exception to the above:

Centralised special support class pupils

- Pupils taking part in morning and afternoon activities provided by their own school will be transported to school in the morning and home from school after the afternoon activities. Pupils are only entitled to be transported once in the morning and once in the afternoon.
- The pupils who take part in afternoon activities outside their own school are transported to the activity location in the afternoon. The parent/guardian is responsible for arranging their transport home from the afternoon activity.

Familiarisation with working life

Schools will notify parent/guardians how transport for the familiarisation with working life period will be provided. A precondition for the transport to be organised is that the distance from pupil's home to their familiarisation with working life location exceeds the distance limits specified in this guide. The transport will be organised within existing timetables. In addition, the parent/guardian is responsible for the transport costs if the pupil's familiarisation with the working life period takes place in another municipality.

Principles for organising transport

Existing public transport is primarily used for providing school transport. Other modes of transport, school buses and school taxis are used to supplement public transport connections or in certain cases, for example, for health reasons. A pupil’s school transport can also consist of several modes of transport (e.g. local bus, school bus and school taxi). If the mode of transport changes during the commute, pre-primary pupils will be escorted from one mode to another.

Due to scheduling reasons, pupils may have to wait for their school transport in the morning and/or in the afternoon. According to legislation, a pupil’s school commute can take up to 2.5 hours a day, including waiting times. However, the school commute of a pupil who at the beginning of the school year has turned 13 or is in special education referred to in Section 17(2) of the Basic Education Act may last up to 3 hours a day, including waiting times. Efforts are made to keep the waiting times reasonable.

The commute may include a section that the pupil travels independently. Pupils gather at agreed pick-up stops, just as pupils travelling by bus gather at bus stops. As a rule, transport will not be organised between a pupil’s home and transport pick-up spot or bus stop if the distance is shorter than the transport limit, i.e. either 3 or 5 kilometres.

The calculation method recommended by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities is used to measure the commute time on foot:

Age in years	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Walking time minutes/kilometre	16	15	14	13	12.5	12	11.8	11.6	11.4	11.2	11	10.8

The parent/guardian of a pupil in pre-primary education is responsible for escorting the child to transport pick-up point in the morning and collecting the child from there in the afternoon.

Transport compensation

A pupil’s parent/guardian may be eligible to apply for compensation for school commute (transport compensation) if the pupil meets the conditions for school transport and the parent/guardian transports the pupil to and from school. Each application will be handled case-specifically.

How to apply for school transport or transport compensation?

A pupil in basic education whose school commute exceeds three kilometres may be granted school transport until the pupil has completed third grade. A pupil whose school commute exceeds five kilometres may be granted school transport until the pupil has completed ninth grade. In addition, pupils attending centralised special support classes may be granted school transport for the duration of their basic education. For other pupils, the decision will always be made for one school year at a time.

If the pupil's home address changes during their pre-primary or basic education, the school transport decision is no longer valid. A new school application must be submitted in connection with moving and will be used to determine the pupil's right to receive school transport.

In special cases, such as in school transport granted for health reasons, a doctor's certificate or a similar expert statement must be presented for the period for which school transport is applied for.

School transport is applied for with a separate form. The form is available at <https://www.hyvinkaa.fi/kasvatus-ja-koulutus/perusopetus/koulukuljetukset/>

During transport

In order to ensure that school transport runs as smoothly and safely as possible, all pupils and parent/guardians must be aware of and comply with the following principles:

- The school's ordinances are also valid during school commute.
- Traffic safety is always the priority during school transport. Moving from one place to another inside the vehicle during transport is not allowed and seat belts must be kept fastened at all times.
- The driver is allowed to intervene in disruptive behaviour during transport in a manner required by the situation.
- The parent/guardian must notify the transporter or school transport service if the pupil is ill or does not need school transport for some other reason.
- The transporter should be notified about any health issues, such as allergies, that may be relevant to the pupil's transport.
- Pupils may only bring with them on school transport sports equipment or other extra items that are needed according to their timetable, for example at gym class or the transport of which has been separately agreed upon between the school and the transporter.
- School transport is not required to wait at the stop for a pupil who is late or goes to pick up an item they have forgotten at home. The pupil must be at the agreed stop at the agreed time, not, for example, somewhere nearby.
- Transport is not considered to be late if it arrives at the stop within 10 minutes of the agreed time.
- The transport vehicle may not pass the stop before the agreed time, unless all the pupils boarding from that stop are already on the bus.
- The pupil must give the driver a clear stop signal by raising their hand. In winter time, reflectors add to your child's visibility crucially.

When travelling by bus, the trip is paid for with a bus card that must be intact and issued for the correct trip. If the driver points out that the card is not correct, the pupil must immediately inform the school secretary or the headmaster of a small school of the matter.

Exceptional situations

The city is responsible for all accidents to pupils in pre-primary education, at school or on school commute. This responsibility applies to school hours and the school commute, as well as study trips and other such excursions organised by the school. The city will reimburse all medical costs caused by an accident. Material damages will not be compensated.

In the event of a serious traffic accident involving personal injury, the police are responsible for managing the situation and providing information about it. In the event of an accident of a lesser severity, the school is responsible for informing the pupils' parent/guardians of the incident.

Accidental damage or vandalism

The transporter and the pupil's parent/guardian will agree on compensation for damages. The city will not compensate any damage caused to the transport vehicles by pupils.

School transport delays

Sometimes particularly poor weather conditions or other special reasons may cause the transport vehicle to be unable to travel according to its normal schedule. In such an event, the transporter is obliged to arrange replacement transport. However, pupils need not wait indefinitely for transport at the stop, so it is best that they return home.

Location of the stop

As a rule, the transporter will allocate a stop for each pupil: this may be a bus stop, junction or other location that is safe in terms of traffic. If the parent/guardian and the transporter disagree on the location of the stop, the city will make the final decision.

Extreme freezing temperatures

Separate school transport will not be organised due to extreme freezing temperatures. Pupils entitled to school transport will be transported as usual. It is up to the parent/guardian to decide whether to send their child to school when the weather is usually cold. Doctor's statements issued to asthma patients, for example, make an exception to this rule.

Complaints

Any complaints on the quality of school transport are to be submitted to the Education and Cultural Services by e-mail (koulukuljetukset@hyvinkaa.fi) or sent through the city's customer feedback system. All complaints submitted to the Educational and Cultural Services shall be recorded and discussed with the transporter. In the event of serious infringements, such as traffic violations, the parties concerned must contact the police directly.

Traffic safety

The City of Hyvinkää is continuously working to improve school transport safety. We ask that parent/guardians ensure that all pupils about to begin school, and older pupils too, are taught the best route to school and how to travel this route safely and are also reminded of this at the beginning of each school year. First- and second grade pupils should not be allowed to travel to school by bicycle. Everyone should always wear a helmet whenever they are riding a bicycle. The use of reflectors is absolutely vital during the dark season.