

# **Transport Service**

## **Passenger Assistants Satisfaction Survey 2003**

**Research study for**  
Pupil Access  
Education & Cultural Services

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## 1 Executive Summary

The Passenger Assistants satisfaction survey was commissioned by the Pupil Access unit for the purpose of finding out the current perceptions and needs of the passenger assistants employed by the unit. This information will be used to feed into the Best Value service improvement plan for the Transport Service.

A questionnaire was sent to 850 passenger assistants who currently work for Lancashire County Council. 425 questionnaires were returned giving an overall response rate of 50%.

The survey tested assistants' satisfaction on a number of key attributes. These include overall satisfaction, communications, contacts made by assistants to others, the work itself and training. It offered assistants the opportunity to suggest improvements they see benefiting the service and their work.

Overall, passenger assistants are satisfied with their role, the pay and conditions, and Lancashire County Council as an employer. There was also satisfaction, although slightly less so, with the transport service being provided to children and the vehicles used.

Teamwork is seen as good overall, but the working relationship could be improved between assistants and their supervisors/managers. Many assistants have contacted other teams within the County Council, taxi or bus firms, or schools in the last 12 months. The most common contacts made are to the transport team in the area education office, and the taxi or bus firms directly.

Passenger assistants agree that a number of factors in their job are good. The factors in their jobs that rate less well are information that is given to the assistants to support them in their day-to-day work, such as being informed about changes to runs. There is an inconclusive result on the behaviour of children that are transported.

The majority of assistants have attended some form of training. The most likely being the Passenger Assistant Basic Training Course, which is rated well by most of those attending. There was a slightly lower rating given to the green advice leaflet.

A quarter of respondents made a comment or suggestion. The top mentions were the need to keep the same driver, to be given more information on the children's needs, more training opportunities and improved communications.

A number of recommendations are made in light of these research findings. The key elements are:

- To improve communications with assistants' in general. This should be a two-way process.
- Improve the information given to assistants about their passengers and the parents.
- Keep the same driver where contracts allow.
- Review and improve the green advice leaflet.
- Review overall training needs and the training given.
- Set-up an out of hours contact facility for assistants.
- Examine further if there is a problem with the behaviour of children whilst in transport and take appropriate action.
- Consider why assistants with longer service give lower ratings for some sections of this survey.
- Examine how recent starters can be supported further to improve their relationships with others earlier on.
- Improve the quality and cleanliness of the transport used, and ensure that better timekeeping is maintained.
- Feedback the results of this research to assistants including areas being considered and action points.

## 2 Introduction

Special Educational Needs (SEN) transport provides return transport from home to school/college for children with special educational needs. Passenger Assistants provide support to SEN children for their journey to and from school.

Over the past three years Best Value reviews have been operating at Lancashire County Council. Best Value aims to examine and challenge the ways in which services are provided to the general public in Lancashire. As part of this process school transport services have been reviewed. The aim was to reflect the views of passenger assistants and feed into the review process.

Research has been carried out previously for other parts of the transport service, but this is the first time that passenger assistant research has been undertaken.

## 3 Research Objectives

The Passenger Assistants' Satisfaction Survey was undertaken to provide another angle to the current Best Value improvements that have been made in home to school transport. This is the first time the research has been conducted with assistants, but common themes and differences can be drawn out when compared to the other best value transport studies.

The main themes of the questionnaire were:

- Overall satisfaction with working as a passenger assistant
- Levels of teamwork with a variety of teams and people
- Contacts made to various teams, firms and bodies
- The work of being a passenger assistant
- Training and development courses and satisfaction with them

A copy of the covering letter can be found in Appendix 2 and a copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix 3.

## 4 Methodology

The Passenger Assistants' Satisfaction Survey comprised a 4-page self-completion postal questionnaire. It was sent to 850 passenger assistants employed by Lancashire County Council. The sample covered all assistants who currently work for the County Council.

The questionnaires were posted on Wednesday 5 November 2003. Fieldwork was undertaken over a period of three weeks, ending on Friday 28 November 2003.

No incentive for respondents to complete the questionnaire was given. In total 425 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 50%.

All data are unweighted and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated.

## 5 Limitations

The survey produced only a small sample of 425 people. This means that the data could not be compared on many different breaks due to the risk of statistical errors. This has meant that comparisons cannot be made between male and female passenger assistants and assistants from non-white ethnic backgrounds because there are too few people in each sub-group.

The table below shows the sample tolerances that apply to the results in this survey. Sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample as well as the percentage results.

Number of respondents	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
50	14%	13%	8%
100	10%	9%	6%
200	7%	6%	4%
400	5%	5%	3%
425	5%	4%	3%

On a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 425 respond with a particular answer, the chance are 95 out of 100 that the answer would be between 45% and 55% (ie +/- 5%), versus a complete coverage of the entire passenger assistant base using the same procedure.

## 6 Main Research Findings

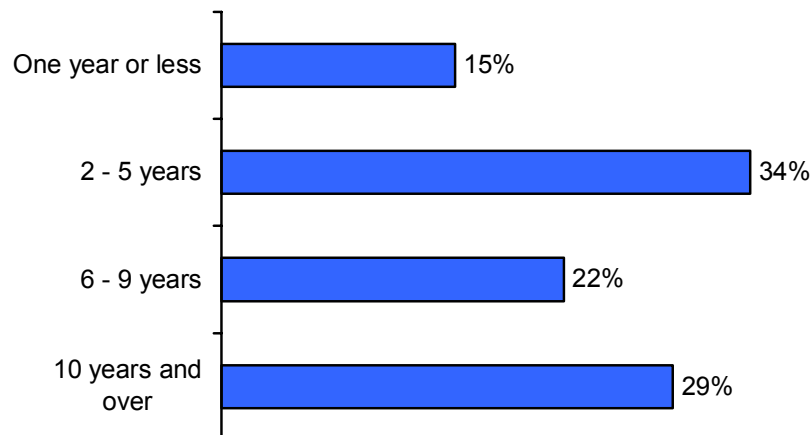
A marked up questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1.

### 6.1 Respondent Profile

The majority of respondents to the Passenger Assistants' Satisfaction Survey were female (96%). The number of respondents considering themselves as white was also very high; 99% of respondents said they were white. This could be due to a lack of response from non-white passenger assistants or it may be representative of the profile of passenger assistants.

There is a good spread across the length of time that respondents have worked as a passenger assistant. The average length of time worked is just over seven years. The chart below indicates that the majority of respondents have worked as an assistant for two years or more, and over half (51%) have worked as a passenger assistant for six years or more.

**Chart 1 - Length of time worked for the County Council as a passenger assistant**



Base: All respondents (414)

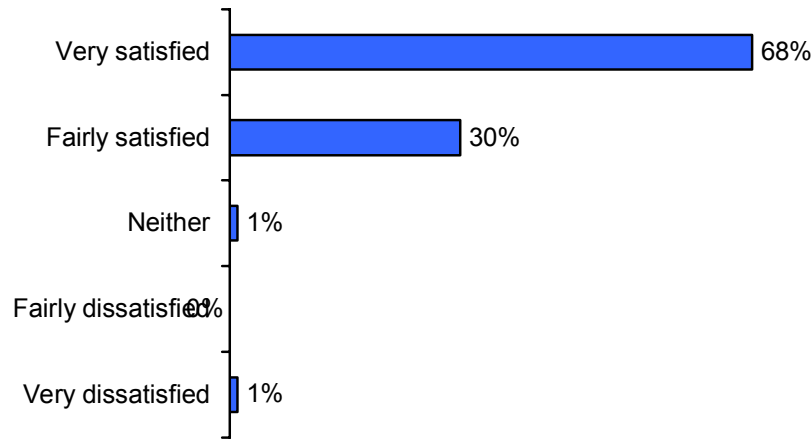
### 6.2 Passenger Assistants' Overall Satisfaction

Respondents were asked overall how satisfied they were with five aspects of their role as a passenger assistant. This gives respondents' top of the mind perceptions about their work situation.

The first satisfaction aspect asked overall if respondents were satisfied with their job. Over two thirds of respondents were very satisfied with their job. A

further 30% said they were fairly satisfied. This means 98% of assistants were satisfied overall.

**Chart 2 - Overall satisfaction with the job**

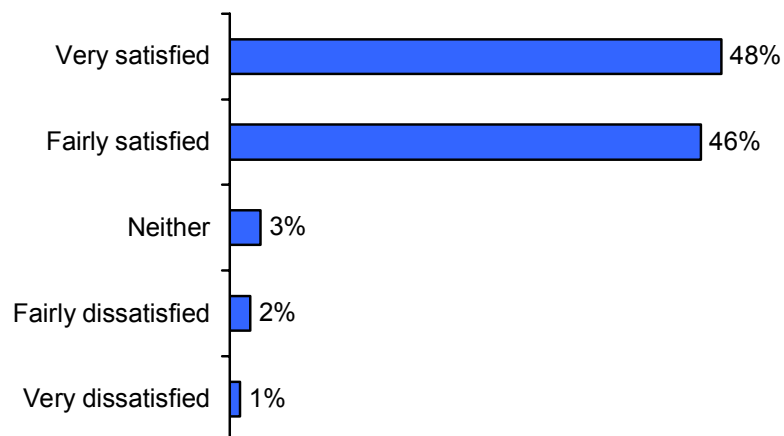


Base: All respondents (423)

Those respondents who have worked as an assistant for five years or less are slightly more likely to be very satisfied with their job. The group that were least likely to be very satisfied were those who had been an assistant for between six and nine years.

The second aspect on which respondents rated their overall satisfaction was their pay and conditions. This again has a high total satisfaction at 94%. But there is an almost even split between those saying they are very satisfied and those saying they are fairly satisfied. Hence there is a slightly lower satisfaction overall with this aspect.

**Chart 3 - Overall satisfaction with the pay and conditions**



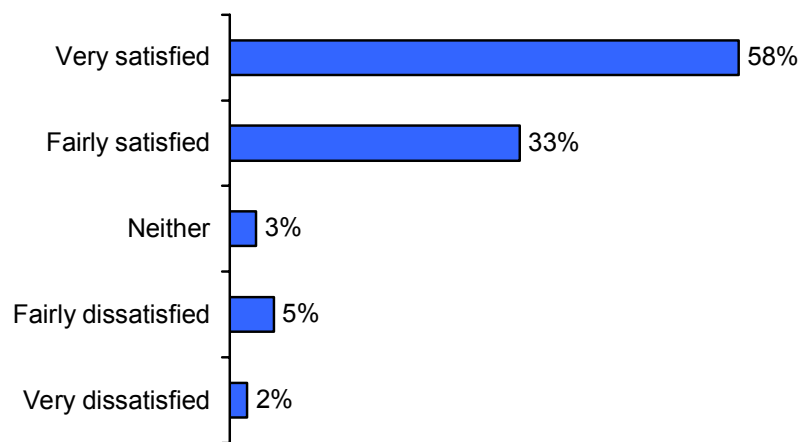
Base: All respondents (420)



Again, it is the assistants who have worked in the position for five years or less that are most likely to be very satisfied, and those who have worked for six years or more who are least likely to be very satisfied.

Respondents were then asked to rate their overall satisfaction on their perceptions of the transport service being provided to the children. 58% of assistants were very satisfied with the transport service being provided to the children. A further third were satisfied. 7% of respondents were dissatisfied with the transport service provided to the children.

**Chart 4 - Overall satisfaction with the transport service being provided to the children**

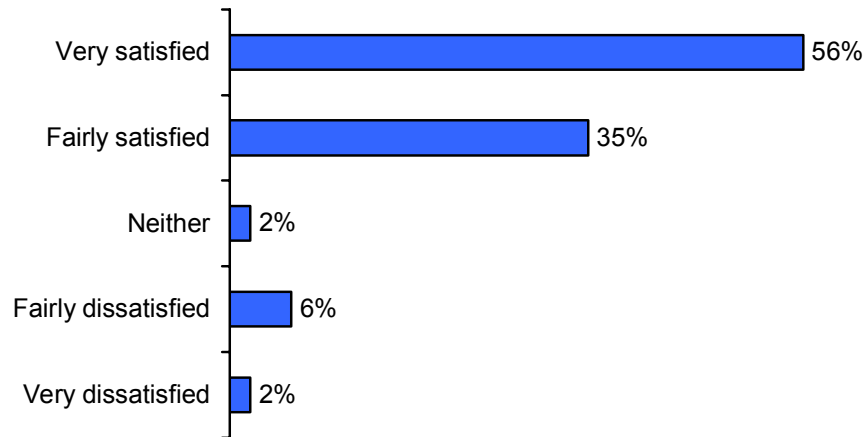


Base: All respondents (419)

There were no significant differences in the ratings when compared to the length of time that respondents had worked as a passenger assistant.

Passenger assistants were next asked to rate their satisfaction with the vehicles being used to transport. Over half (56%) were very satisfied with the vehicles used to transport the children. Another third (35%) indicated they were fairly satisfied with the vehicles. 8% of respondents said they were dissatisfied to some extent with the vehicles used to transport the children.

**Chart 5 - Overall satisfaction with the vehicle used to transport**

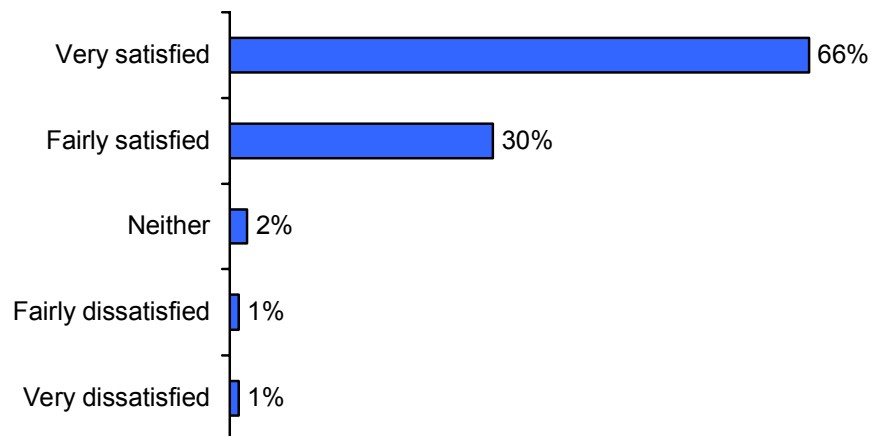


Base: All respondents (423)

There were no significant differences in the answers given by passenger assistants when compared to their length of service.

Finally, respondents were asked to rate Lancashire County Council as an employer. Two-thirds of respondents said they were very satisfied with the County Council as an employer and a further third (30%) said they were fairly satisfied. Therefore, 96% of passenger assistants are satisfied with LCC as an employer.

**Chart 6 - Overall satisfaction with Lancashire County Council as an employer**

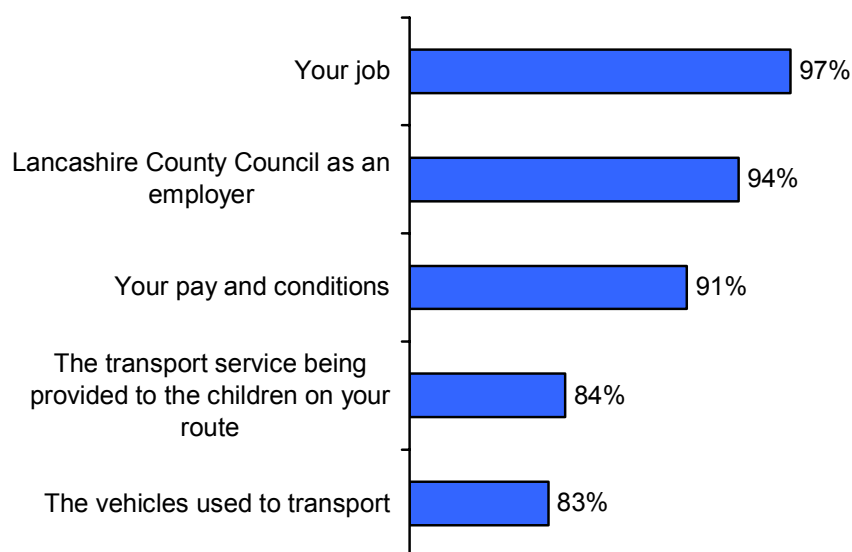


Base: All respondents (425)

Those assistants who have worked in their position for one year or less are significantly more likely to be very satisfied with the County Council as an employer. Assistants who have worked for between six and nine years are least likely to be very satisfied.

The final chart in this section summarises the above information into net satisfaction for each satisfaction element asked (ie the difference between total satisfaction and total dissatisfaction). The comparison shows that passenger assistants in general are satisfied with their job, Lancashire County Council as an employer and their pay and conditions. They are least likely to be satisfied with the transport service being provided to the children and the vehicles being used to transport.

**Chart 7 - Overall satisfaction (net satisfaction)**



Base: All respondents (425)

The chart indicates that assistants are happy with their employment, but are less satisfied with the service given to the children. The lower levels of satisfaction with the service to children does not alter across assistants' length of employment.

### 6.3 Teamwork

The next section of the questionnaire asked for passenger assistant views of the teamwork and working relationships with colleagues, children, parents and schools. Respondents rated each of the nine statements on a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The table below outlines total agreement to statements (ie ratings of strongly agree and tend to agree) against total disagreement to the statements (ie ratings of strongly disagree or tend to disagree). The table also shows the net agreement figure (ie the difference between total agreement and total disagreement).

The table shows a broad difference in the level of agreement to the teamwork statements. Passenger assistants are clear on what is expected of them to provide the service. They also appear to have good working relationships with passengers, schools, colleagues and parents. It is the working relationship with parents that passenger assistants are least likely to agree is a good relationship.

The statements that have the least agreement are centred around assistants' relationship with their manager/supervisor and their ability to influence changes within the transport service.

	<b>Total agreement</b>	<b>Total disagreement</b>	<b>Net agreement</b>
I understand the standards that I am expected to provide	100%	0%	+100
I have a good working relationship with passengers	99%	0%	+99
I have a good working relationship with staff in schools	95%	1%	+94
I have a good working relationship with my colleagues	94%	1%	+93
I have a good working relationship with education office staff	93%	1%	+92
I have a good working relationship with parents	93%	2%	+91
My supervisor/ managers listen to me	89%	3%	+86
I am able to give my opinion to my supervisor/manager	87%	3%	+84
I can influence changes within the transport service	46%	25%	+21

The relationships that assistants have with various parties are shown as positive. Looking at the results in more detail reveals that staff who have been in post for longer are more likely to agree they have good working relationships. This may be because of the time taken to build relationships.

The table highlights a possible difficulty in communication between assistants and their line manager, either for assistants to give their opinion to their line manager, and for line managers to actively listen to their staff. This is underlined by the fact that less than half (46%) of respondents feel they can influence changes in the service in any way.

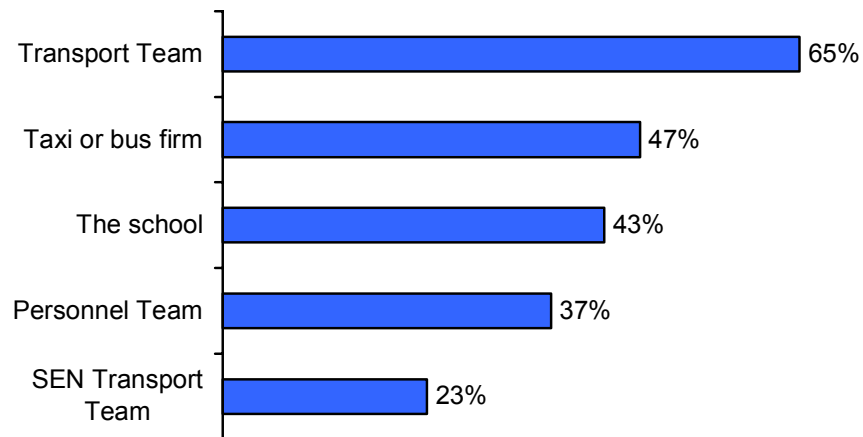
The groups that are most positive about the communications with line management are assistants who have been in position for five years or less. The staff who are least positive have been assistants for six years or more.

## 6.4 Communications

Leading on from the previous section, communication in general was explored with passenger assistants. They were asked if, in the last 12 months, they had contacted specific teams in the County Council, the taxi or bus firm, or the school, and the reason for contact.

Chart 8 shows a summary of the contacts made. Overall, 83% of assistants had made contact with one or more teams in the last 12 months. Most contact had been with the transport team, contacted by two-thirds (65%) of respondents, followed by the taxi or bus firm and the school. Respondents were least likely to contact the personnel team and SEN transport team.

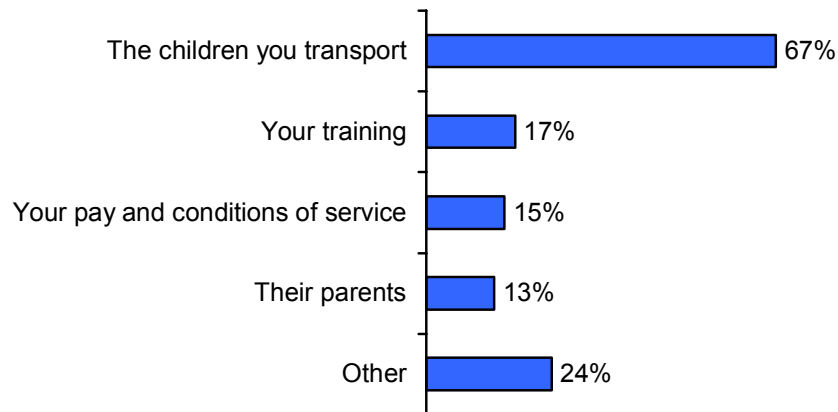
**Chart 8 -      *Contacts made in the last 12 months***



Base: All respondents (423)

Looking at each of these in turn. Firstly of those contacting the transport team in the area education office the reasons for contact are shown in chart 9. The main reason for contacting the transport team is about the children that are transported. Two-thirds of respondents making contact have done so for this reason. A quarter of respondents who contacted the transport team did so for a reason other than those listed. These included late arrival of vehicles and making arrangements for such things as holidays or sickness.

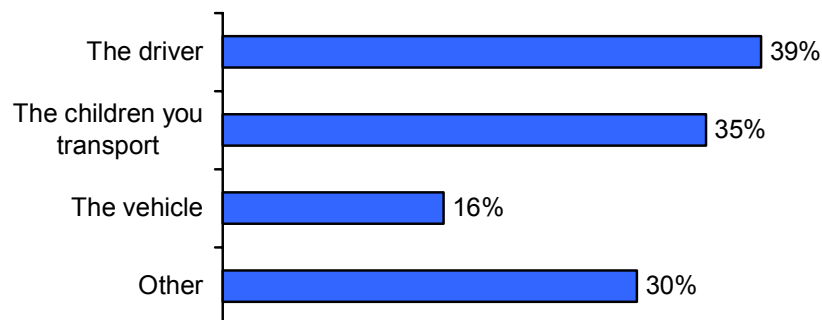
**Chart 9 - Reason for contacting the transport team in the area education office in the last 12 months**



Base: All contacting the transport team in the area education office in the last 12 months (272)

Contacting the taxi or bus firm was the second most common contact made by passenger assistants. The reasons given are shown in chart 10. Two in five assistants (39%) had contacted the taxi or bus firm because of the driver. A third (35%) of respondents had made contact about the children they transport. A third (30%) had contacted the taxi or bus firm for another reason; these were mainly about the late arrival of the transport.

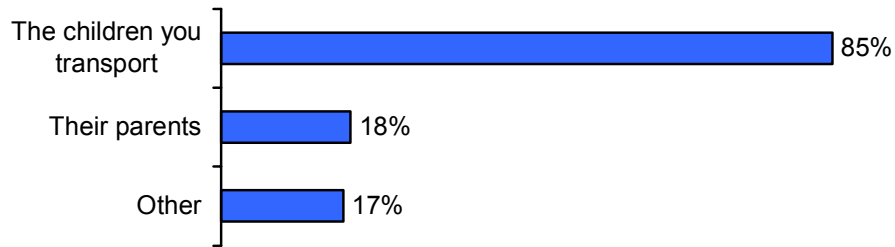
**Chart 10 - Reason for contacting taxi or bus firm in the last 12 months**



Base: All contacting taxi or bus firm in the last 12 months (197)

Respondents contacting the school in the last 12 months were asked to indicate their reasons. These are shown in chart 11. The main reason for contacting the school was because of the children they transport. A significant percentage (18%) of respondents contacting the school had done so because of the parents of the children they transport.

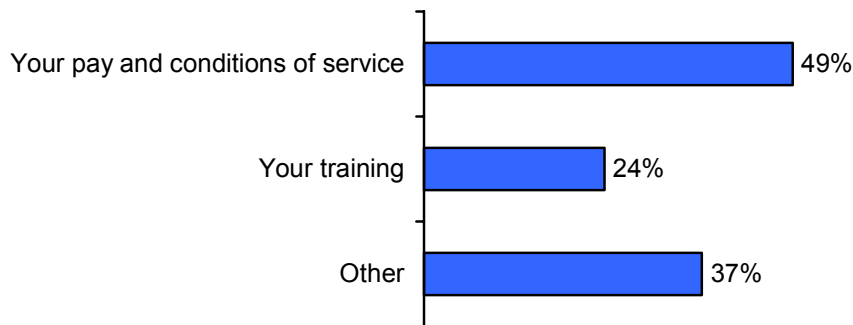
**Chart 11 - Reason for contacting the school in the last 12 months**



Base: All contacting the school in the last 12 months (177)

The next communications question asked the reasons for contacting the personnel team in the area education office. These are shown in chart 12. Half of assistants (49%) contacting the personnel team did so to discuss their pay or conditions of service and a quarter made contact to discuss their training. 37% of contacts were for a reason other than those listed. These included holiday arrangements and sickness notification.

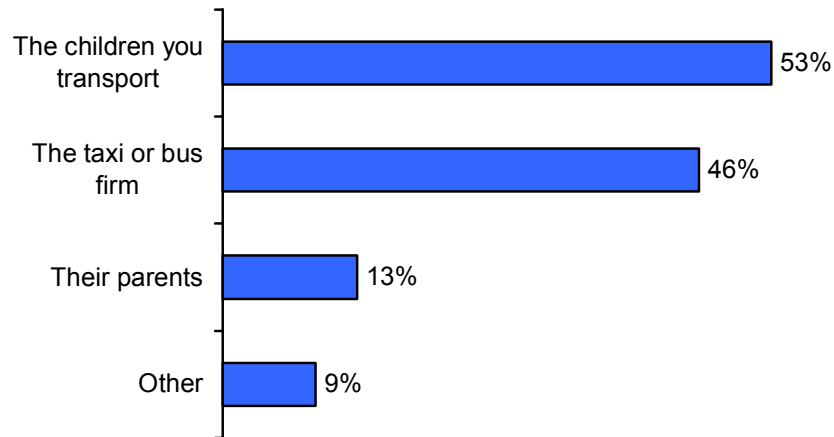
**Chart 12 - Reason for contacting the personnel team in the area education office in the last 12 months**



Base: All contacting the personnel team in the area education office in the last 12 months (148)

Those respondents contacting the SEN Transport Team in the last 12 months were asked for their reason for contact. These were the least likely team to be contacted. The reasons for contact are shown in chart 13. Half of those (53%) contacting the SEN transport team did so because of the children they transport and almost half (46%) of those contacting were because of the taxi or bus firm.

**Chart 13 - Reason for contacting SEN transport team in the last 12 months**



Base: All contacting SEN transport team in the last 12 months (95)



## 6.5 The Passenger Assistants' Job

Passenger assistants were asked their agreement to a number of statements about doing their job. The table below summarises the results giving total agreement to statements (ie ratings of strongly agree and tend to agree) against total disagreement to the statements (ie ratings of strongly disagree or tend to disagree). The chart also shows the net agreement figure (ie the difference between total agreement and total disagreement). The bottom two comments in the table are negative and so a disagreement with the statement should be expected.

	<b>Total agreement</b>	<b>Total disagreement</b>	<b>Net agreement</b>
I can get on and off the vehicle easily	94%	2%	+92
The driver is friendly	94%	3%	+91
The driver is helpful	93%	4%	+89
The taxi or bus firm is easy to contact	92%	4%	+88
The vehicle used is suitable for the job	93%	6%	+87
The drivers appearance is neat & tidy	90%	4%	+86
I feel safe during the journey	91%	6%	+85
The vehicle is comfortable	89%	7%	+82
The journey runs on time	87%	10%	+77
The vehicle is clean	85%	9%	+76
I am informed about changes to my transport run (eg addition of a child)	84%	11%	+73
I am given enough notice about changes to my transport run	79%	12%	+67
I am informed in advance of the children's specific needs	61%	31%	+30
I am informed in advance of any potential difficulty with parents	43%	35%	+8
The children's behaviour in transit is often a concern to me	34%	54%	-20
Some of the children I transport could travel independently	17%	71%	-54

The table shows a high degree of agreement with the statements concerning the driver and the vehicle used to transport the children. Although the net agreement is high, consideration should be given to improving these results. This is particularly the case for safety and vehicle comfort.

Lower net agreement is seen for the journey running on time and the cleanliness of the vehicle. The lower net agreement on timekeeping is supported by the number of contacts made to the various teams and the taxi or bus firm about the lateness of transport.

Passenger assistants are less likely to agree they are informed about changes to their transport run, or are not given enough notice of changes to their run. Respondents were even less likely to agree that they are informed in advance about the specific needs of the children, or that they are told of potential difficulties with parents. Again, the lower agreement with these statements on information shows that assistants are not communicated with as fully as they expect.

There was disagreement with the final two statements in the table. Assistants disagreed that the children's behaviour is often a concern to them. Because there was not a strong disagreement to this statement, it may indicate that the children's behaviour is perceived as a problem by some.

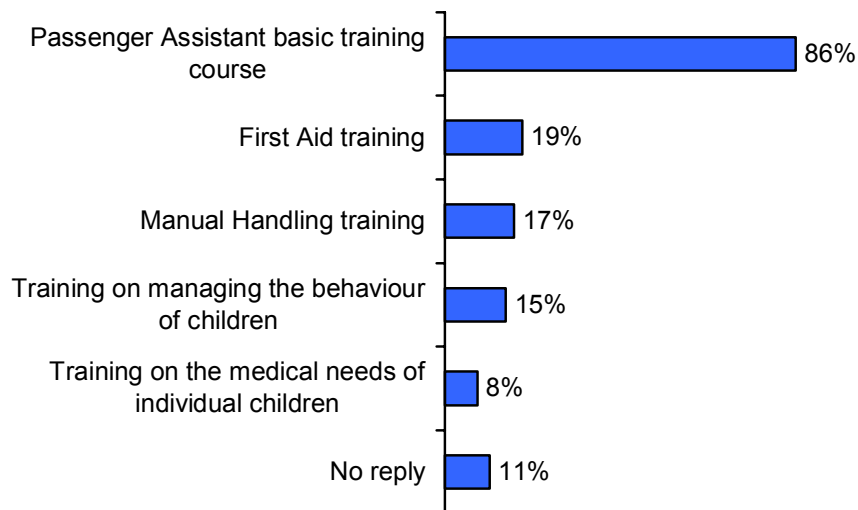
There was a greater disagreement that some of the children transported could travel independently. This indicates, from the assistants' point of view, the children transported rightly deserve their assistants, although one in six agree the children could travel independently.

## 6.6 Training and Development

Respondents were asked what training, if any, they had received whilst a passenger assistant. Chart 14 shows that the majority of assistants (86%) have attended the basic training course. One in five have attended first aid training. Fewer have attended manual handling training, courses on managing children's behaviour and children's medical needs training.

One in nine (11%) of assistants made no reply to this question indicating they have not attended any of the courses listed.

**Chart 14 - Training received whilst a Passenger Assistant**

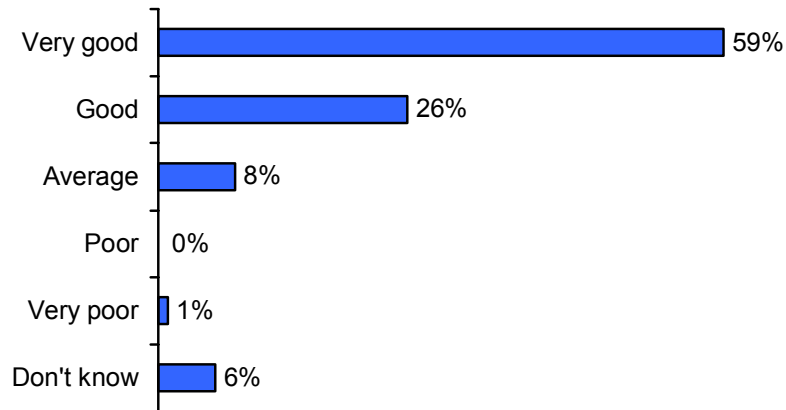


Base: All respondents (425)

Passenger assistants then rated the passenger assistant basic training course and the green advice leaflets issued by the area education office.

Three in five assistants (59%) thought the Passenger Assistant Basic Training Course was very good. A further quarter (26%) of assistants rated the course as good and only 8% thought it was average.

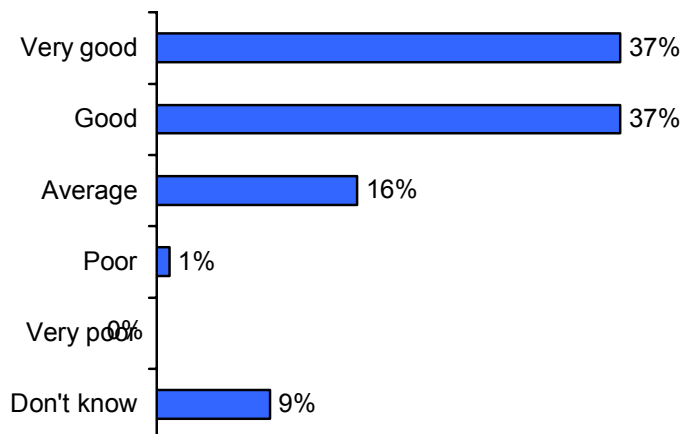
**Chart 15 - Rating of the passenger assistant basic training course**



Base: All respondents (393)

Assistants were divided in their rating of the green advice leaflet issued by the area education office. On balance passenger assistants were positive about the leaflet, but were divided in their ratings: 37% rating the leaflet as very good and 37% rating the leaflet as good.

**Chart 16 - Rating of the green advice leaflet issued by the area education office**



Base: All respondents (360)

Passenger assistants who had been in post for less time were more likely to rate the leaflet as very good, whereas more long-serving assistants were more likely to rate the leaflet as good.

## 6.7 Comments

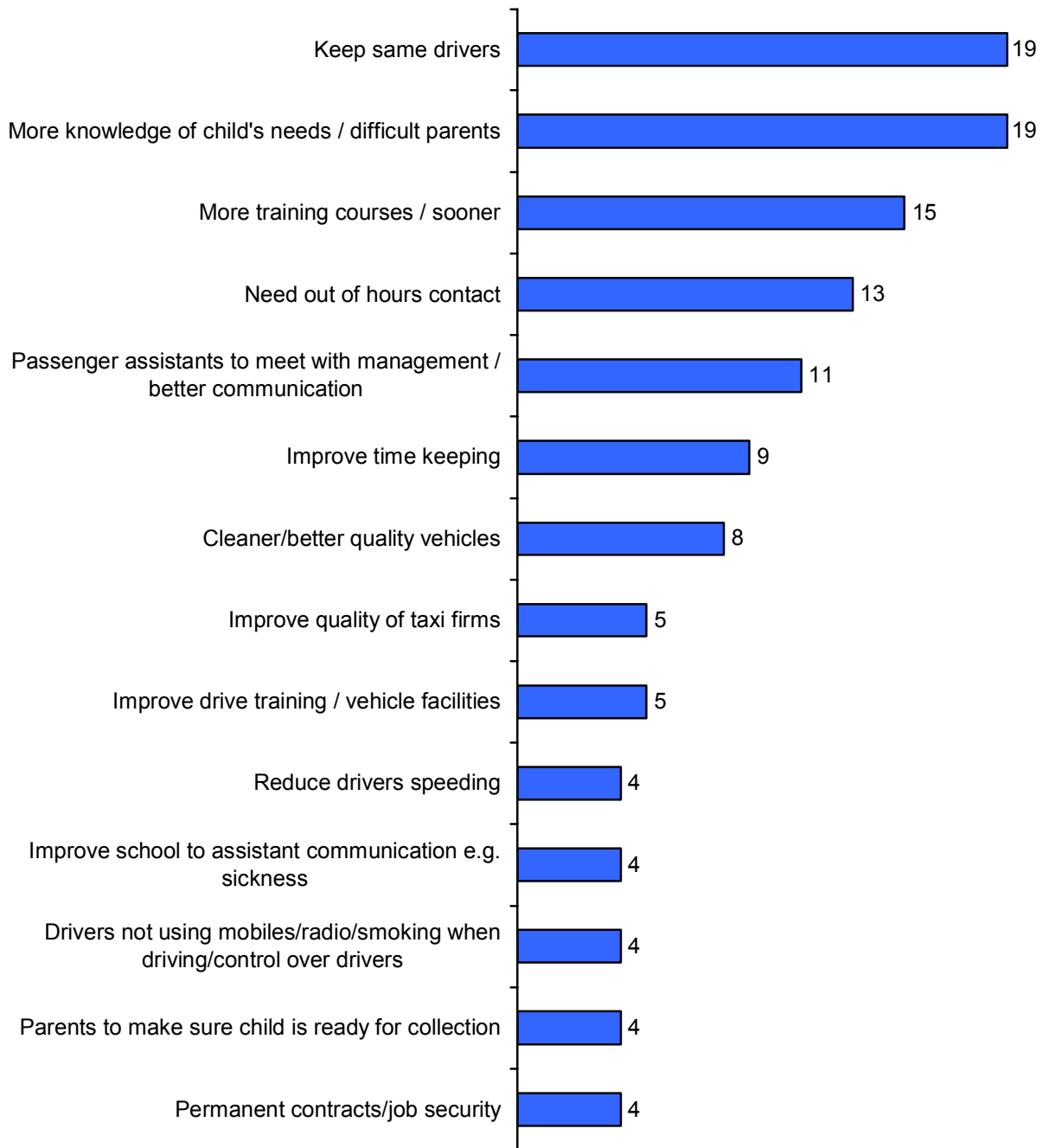
The final section of the questionnaire asked respondents if they had any comments or suggestions for improvement about any area of the passenger assistant service. 27% of respondents gave a response to this question. The results are shown below, the figures being the absolute number of respondents giving that particular suggestion. (Chart 17 over).

The most common suggestions made were the need to keep the same driver, and to be given more information on the child's needs or on potentially difficult parents. Assistants making these comments felt that consistency for the children was paramount. Assistants mentioned there should be more training courses available and they should be given as early as possible after starting their job.

The next most mentioned suggestion was on the need for out of hour's contact. Those making this comment said that 8am is too late to contact the education office as some runs had already started by this time. There were also problems mentioned in getting through around 8am.

Passenger assistants felt they needed to meet with their supervisor or management more often, and for general communications to be improved, as mentioned previously in this report.

**Chart 17 - Comments and suggestions (most common comments)**



Base: All making a comment (116)

## 7 Conclusions

The survey results show that in general passenger assistants are satisfied in their work. They tend to be very satisfied with their job, their pay and conditions and Lancashire County Council as an employer. They tend to be slightly less satisfied with the transport service provided to the children and the vehicle used to transport the children.

Passenger assistants say they understand the standards they are expected to provide and appear to have good working relationships with the people they have to deal with. The elements of teamwork that are rated lower centre around their relationship with supervisors/managers, and in particular communications, and assistants' ability to influence changes in the transport service.

Four in five assistants had made contact with a County Council team, transport firm or school in the last 12 months in relation to their work. Looking at the assistants' job in general there was fairly high agreement with statements about the smooth running of the transport operation. There was less agreement by respondents to statements about information and communication. Assistants also felt, in the main, that the children they transported could not travel independently. There was a less clear cut result around the behaviour of children in transit, which could be a potential problem.

The vast majority of assistants have been on some form of training course. The most common course attended was the basic training course. The majority of respondents who attended the course rated it as good or very good. There was a lower rating of the green advice leaflet, although the majority of respondents rated the leaflet as good.

A quarter of respondents made comments or suggestions to improve the service. The most common themes mentioned were the need to keep the same drives, to be given more information on children's specific needs, more training opportunities and improved communications, including an out-of-office-hours contact facility.

## 8 Recommendations

This, and other research, has shown the SEN home to school transport and the role of the passenger assistants is a highly rated and successful operation. Following this research a number of recommendations are made that aim to improve the service further, for both the children in receipt of the service and the assistants delivering the service.

The recommendations are:

- Improve communications in general. Communications should be examined overall to see what improvements can be made. This should include communications from central teams and area supervisors, and the ability for passenger assistants themselves to communicate back to supervisors and management.
- Improve on-going work-related communication about children's needs, difficult parents etc. This needs to be on an individual basis or with groups of assistants dependent on rotas/contracts.
- Put mechanisms in place for assistants to be able to talk and discuss the service with their supervisor/manager in a more structured way. This should be a two-way process and will help to improve the relationship with management where there is currently room for improvement. It may be that management/supervisors could benefit from additional management skills training to develop these relationships.
- Bear in mind the suggestion that the same driver should be kept whenever possible. Contracts and changes could make this difficult, but the needs of the children should be forefront in the decision-making process.
- Review the content of the green advice leaflet to tweak it as necessary. This could be done in consultation with a small number of assistants who could help develop the content.
- Review training, including the content of the current courses, when they are delivered in relation to length of service and any other courses that could be included to supplement assistants' skills base, and therefore effectiveness.
- Set up an out-of-hours contact facility. This would improve the service to children in the event of sickness/unforeseen circumstances.



- The quality, cleanliness and timekeeping of the vehicles whilst not a major problem could be improved to benefit the service overall and the satisfaction of staff and, moreover, service users.
- The behaviour of children could be a possible problem, but the results of this research are not conclusive. Further research or consultation should take place with assistants to find out the true result of this topic and if any action is required; for example more people attending the course on managing children's behaviour.
- There are a number of recurring themes in the results for those assistants that have been in post for over five years and/or those in post for between six and nine years. Plans should be developed to improve the satisfaction of these groups with aspects like pay and conditions. More detailed knowledge may reveal changes to the service that have affected staff in post for longer periods of time. This group may need to be targeted first with the improved communications, or may be motivated if they are asked for their input on improving the service and its communications.
- New starters are less likely to agree they have good relationships with various people. It may be that they need additional support, perhaps from more experienced staff, in building these relationships sooner rather than later.
- Feedback the results of this research to assistants. Tell them what you intend to do as a result of the findings, or at a minimum tell them the areas you are considering to improve. This could be seen as an important first step in improving communications.
- Re-conduct this research at a later date to assess the impact of changes made as a result of this study, and highlight any further action to be taken.

## 9 Appendices

### 9.1 Appendix 1: Marked Up Questionnaire

All values are given in percentages

Base: All respondents (425) unless otherwise stated

Q1	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following?				
	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
a) Your job	68%	30%	1%	-	1%
b) Your pay and conditions	48%	46%	3%	2%	1%
c) The transport service being provided to the children on your route	58%	33%	3%	5%	2%
d) The vehicles used to transport	56%	35%	2%	6%	2%
e) Lancashire County Council as an employer	66%	30%	2%	1%	1%

Q2	How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?				
	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
a) I am able to give my opinion to my supervisor/manager	47%	40%	9%	2%	1%
b) My supervisor/managers listen to me	47%	42%	8%	2%	1%
c) I can influence changes within the transport service	15%	31%	30%	20%	5%
d) I understand the standards that I am expected to provide	72%	28%	0%	-	0%
e) I have a good working relationship with my colleagues	65%	29%	4%	1%	0%
f) I have a good working relationship with education office staff	58%	35%	6%	1%	0%
g) I have a good working relationship with staff in schools	64%	31%	4%	1%	0%
h) I have a good working relationship with passengers	74%	25%	0%	-	0%
i) I have a good working relationship with parents	68%	25%	4%	2%	0%

<b>Q3</b>	<b>Have you contacted the Transport Team in the Area Education Office in the last 12 months?</b>	
	Yes	65%
	No	35%
	<b>If yes, was this about...?</b> Base: all contacting the Transport Team in the Area Education Office in the last 12 months (272)	
	The children you transport	67%
	Their parents	13%
	Your pay and conditions of service	15%
	Your training	17%
	Something else PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX	24%

<b>Q4</b>	<b>Have you contacted the Personnel Team at the Area Education Office in the last 12 months?</b>	
	Yes	37%
	No	63%
	<b>If yes, was this about...?</b> Base: all contacting the Personnel Team in the Area Education Office in the last 12 months (148)	
	Your pay and conditions of service	49%
	Your training	24%
	Something else PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX	37%

<b>Q5</b>	<b>Have you contacted the SEN Transport Team in Preston in the last 12 months?</b>	
	Yes	23%
	No	77%
	<b>If yes, was this about...?</b> Base: all contacting the SEN Transport Team in Preston in the last 12 months (95)	
	The children you transport	53%
	Their parents	13%
	The taxi or bus firm	46%
	Something else PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX	9%

<b>Q6</b>	<b>Have you contacted the taxi or bus firm in the last 12 months?</b>	
	Yes	47%
	No	53%
	<b>If yes, was this about...?</b> Base: all contacting the taxi or bus firm in the last 12 months (197)	
	The children you transport	35%
	The driver	39%
	The vehicle	16%
	Something else PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX	30%

Q7	<b>Have you contacted the school in the last 12 months?</b>	
	Yes	43%
	No	57%
	<b>If yes, was this about...?</b> Base: all contacting the school in the last 12 months (177)	
	The children you transport	85%
	Their parents	18%
	Something else PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX	17%

Q8	<b>How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</b>					
		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
	a) The drivers appearance is neat & tidy	49%	41%	5%	3%	1%
	b) The driver is helpful	59%	34%	3%	3%	1%
	c) The driver is friendly	61%	33%	3%	2%	1%
	d) The taxi or bus firm is easy to contact	57%	35%	4%	3%	1%
	e) The vehicle is comfortable	52%	37%	4%	6%	1%
	f) The vehicle is clean	51%	34%	6%	7%	2%
	g) I can get on and off the vehicle easily	60%	34%	3%	2%	0%
	h) I feel safe during the journey	58%	33%	4%	4%	2%
	i) The journey runs on time	49%	38%	4%	8%	2%
	j) The vehicle used is suitable for the job	61%	32%	2%	4%	2%
	k) The children's behaviour in transit is often a concern to me	16%	18%	13%	27%	27%
	l) I am informed in advance of the children's specific needs	29%	32%	8%	17%	14%
	m) I am informed in advance of any potential difficulty with parents	20%	23%	22%	20%	15%
	n) I am informed about changes to my transport run (eg addition of a child)	47%	37%	5%	7%	4%
	o) I am given enough notice about changes to my transport run	38%	41%	9%	8%	4%
	p) Some of the children I transport could travel independently	8%	9%	12%	31%	40%

<b>Q9</b>	<b>Which, if any, of the following training have you received whilst a Passenger Assistant?</b>	
	Passenger Assistant basic training course	86%
	First Aid training	19%
	Manual Handling training	17%
	Training on the medical needs of individual children	8%
	Training on managing the behaviour of children	15%
	No reply	11%

<b>Q10</b>	<b>How do you rate the following? Passenger Assistant basic training course</b> (Base: 393)	
	Very good	59%
	Good	26%
	Average	8%
	Poor	-
	Very poor	1%
	Don't know	6%

<b>Q10</b>	<b>How do you rate the following? Green advice leaflets issued by the Area Education Office</b> (Base: 360)	
	Very good	37%
	Good	37%
	Average	16%
	Poor	1%
	Very poor	0%
	Don't know	9%

<b>Q11</b>	<b>How long have you worked for the County Council as a Passenger Assistant?</b>	
	Less than one year	15%
	1 - 5 years	34%
	6 - 9 years	22%
	10 years and over	29%

<b>Q12</b>	<b>Are you male or female?</b>	
	Male	4%
	Female	96%

<b>Q13</b>	<b>To which of these groups do you consider you belong?</b>	
	White	99%
	Asian or Asian British	1%
	Black or Black British	-
	Chinese	-
	Mixed	-
	Other ethnic group	-

Q14	And finally, are there any other comments you would like to make about any aspect of your work or improvements that should be made to the Passenger Assistant service? Base: all making a suggestion (116)	
	Keep same drivers	19
	More knowledge of child's needs / difficult parents	19
	More training courses / sooner	15
	Need out of hours contact	13
	Passenger assistants to meet with management / better communication	11
	Improve time keeping	9
	Cleaner/better quality vehicles	8
	Improve quality of taxi firms	5
	Improve drive training / vehicle facilities	5
	Speeding	4
	Improve school to assistant communication e.g. sickness	4
	Drivers not using mobiles/radio/smoking when driving/control over drivers	4
	Parents to make sure child is ready for collection	4
	Permanent contracts/job security	4
	Protective clothing issued	2
	Better parking at schools	2
	Keep same passenger assistants	2
	More support with grievances against parents	2
	Better driver training	2
	List of bank/relief assistants	2
	Improve children's behaviour	2
	More help with children at school eg disabled	2
	Mobile phones on vehicles for emergencies	1
	Could pick up more children enroute	1
	Pay should relate to number of children	1
	Be given parents phone numbers	1
	Allow assistants to work after 65	1
	More information on payslips re adjustments	1
	More information pickup & set down arrangements	1
	Unpaid holidays in school time	1
	Expenses forms should be available	1
	LCC to have their own buses	1
	Career plan in place	1

## 9.2 Appendix 2: Covering Letter

01772 531878

01772 531511

peter.wilks@ed.lancscc.gov.uk

Our ref      Passenger Assistants Survey  
Date         5 November 2003

Dear

### **Passenger Assistants Satisfaction Survey**

As an employee of Lancashire County Council you are our most important asset, and we want to hear your views. By completing this survey you will be helping us to improve your working life.

We would be grateful if you would complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the reply paid envelope by 28 November 2003. All information you provide is anonymous and will be treated in the strictest confidence; it will not be used to identify you individually. We will use the information for statistical and research purposes only.

We listen to you, our employees, to help us to improve your working environment and the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about a specific issue concerning your job please use the space on the last page of the questionnaire, and provide your contact details if you would like the opportunity to discuss it further.

If you wish to speak to the Transport Service, please telephone Peter Wilks, Transport Policy Officer, on 01772 531878 or email [peter.wilks@ed.lancscc.gov.uk](mailto:peter.wilks@ed.lancscc.gov.uk). Alternatively if you wish to speak to someone regarding this survey please contact Mike Walker, Research Manager, on 01772 533445 or email [mike.walker@css.lancscc.gov.uk](mailto:mike.walker@css.lancscc.gov.uk).

Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Wilks  
Transport Policy Officer

### 9.3 Appendix 3: Questionnaire

## Passenger Assistants' Satisfaction Questionnaire



Please work your way through the questionnaire answering all appropriate questions.

### OVERALL SATISFACTION

<b>1</b>	<b>Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following?</b> PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT
	Very satisfied (1)      Fairly satisfied (2)      Neither (3)      Fairly dissatisfied (4)      Very dissatisfied (5)
a) Your job	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
b) Your pay and conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
c) The transport service being provided to the children on your route	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
d) The vehicles used to transport	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
e) Lancashire County Council as an employer	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

### TEAMWORK

<b>2</b>	<b>How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</b> PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT
	Strongly agree (1)      Tend to agree (2)      Neither (3)      Tend to disagree (4)      Strongly disagree (5)
a) I am able to give my opinion to my supervisor/manager	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
b) My supervisor/managers listen to me	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
c) I can influence changes within the transport service	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
d) I understand the standards that I am expected to provide	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
e) I have a good working relationship with my colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
f) I have a good working relationship with education office staff	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
g) I have a good working relationship with staff in schools	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
h) I have a good working relationship with passengers	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
i) I have a good working relationship with parents	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>



**COMMUNICATIONS**

**3** Have you contacted the Transport Team in the Area Education Office in the last 12 months?  
 Yes  (1) No  (2)

**If yes, was this about...?** PLEASE TICK AS MANY AS APPLY

The children you transport  (1)  
 Their parents  (2)  
 Your pay and conditions of service  (3)  
 Your training  (4)

Something else  
 PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX

**4** Have you contacted the Personnel Team at the Area Education Office in the last 12 months?  
 Yes  (1) No  (2)

**If yes, was this about...?** PLEASE TICK AS MANY AS APPLY

Your pay and conditions of service  (1)  
 Your training  (2)

Something else  
 PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX

**5** Have you contacted the SEN Transport Team in Preston in the last 12 months?  
 Yes  (1) No  (2)

**If yes, was this about...?** PLEASE TICK AS MANY AS APPLY

The children you transport  (1)  
 Their parents  (2)  
 The taxi or bus firm  (3)

Something else  
 PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX

**6** Have you contacted the taxi or bus firm in the last 12 months?  
 Yes  (1) No  (2)

**If yes, was this about...?** PLEASE TICK AS MANY AS APPLY

The children you transport  (1)  
 The driver  (2)  
 The vehicle  (3)

Something else  
 PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX

**7** Have you contacted the school in the last 12 months?  
 Yes  (1) No  (2)

**If yes, was this about...?** PLEASE TICK AS MANY AS APPLY

The children you transport  (1)  
 Their parents  (2)

Something else  
 PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX

**DOING YOUR JOB**

**8** How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about doing your job? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT

	Strongly agree (1)	Tend to agree (2)	Neither (3)	Tend to disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
a) The drivers appearance is neat and tidy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) The driver is helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) The driver is friendly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) The taxi or bus firm is easy to contact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) The vehicle is comfortable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) The vehicle is clean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) I can get on and off the vehicle easily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) I feel safe during the journey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) The journey runs on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) The vehicle used is suitable for the job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) The children's behaviour in transit is often a concern to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l) I am informed in advance of the children's specific needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m) I am informed in advance of any potential difficulty with parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n) I am informed about changes to my transport run (e.g. the addition of a child)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o) I am given enough notice about changes to my transport run	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p) Some of the children I transport could travel independently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**9** Which, if any, of the following training have you received whilst a Passenger Assistant? PLEASE TICK AS MANY AS APPLY

Passenger Assistant basic training course	<input type="checkbox"/>	(1)
First Aid training	<input type="checkbox"/>	(2)
Manual Handling training	<input type="checkbox"/>	(3)
Training on the medical needs of individual children	<input type="checkbox"/>	(4)
Training on managing the behaviour of children	<input type="checkbox"/>	(5)

**10 How do you rate the following?**  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT

	Very Good (1)	Good (2)	Average (3)	Poor (4)	Very Poor (5)	Don't Know (6)
Passenger Assistant basic training course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Green advice leaflets issued by the Area Education Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**ABOUT YOU**

**11 How long have you worked for the County Council as a Passenger Assistant?**  
PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX

years

**12 Are you male or female?**  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX

Male  (1) Female  (2)

**13 To which of these groups do you consider you belong?**  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX

White  (1)

Asian or Asian British  (2)

Black or Black British  (3)

Chinese  (4)

Mixed  (5)

Other ethnic group  (6)

**... AND FINALLY**

**14 And finally, are there any other comments you would like to make about any aspect of your work or improvements that should be made to the Passenger Assistant service?** PLEASE WRITE IN THE BOX BELOW

If you would like to discuss your comments further please enter your contact number in the space provided below and the Transport Policy Officer will contact you.

Contact Number (optional)

**Please return your completed questionnaire in the reply paid envelope provided by 28 November 2003. Thank you for your time.**