

## Buggies vs wheelchairs

**Sherelle Jones recounts her experiences as a bus-using parent.**

On a day-to-day basis you see a lot of mothers using the bus, getting on and off the bus with their buggies.

Do you think the buses have enough space for pushchairs? Have you ever had any problems with the bus? Well, as a young parent I have, and it is not easy!

Often, parents who travel on buses with their pushchairs complain of the lack of thought and consideration from other passengers, but mainly from the bus drivers themselves.

Here is my account of just one of the many things that happened to me on a recent bus journey:

I was on the bus taking my daughter to nursery when half way through my journey a wheelchair user wanted to get on. Not realising she was behind me, the bus driver asked me if I was getting off, to which I replied "No".

The wheelchair user then started arguing with the bus driver and me, as she wanted me to get off the bus so that she could 'park' in the space reserved for buggies and wheelchairs.

I asked her why I should get off the bus when space was there for both my daughters' buggy and the wheelchair.

The bus driver then started to defend me, saying I don't need to get off the bus. The wheelchair user then said she was going to report the driver and took down the number plate, whereby the bus just drove off.

Basically, this incident made me realise a few things about what we, as young parents have to go through on a regular basis and, in particular, the points that:

- Some bus drivers can be helpful and let you on but some can be very ignorant.
- Some buses don't let you on even if there is space because there are people standing there. But that isn't my fault - they should move.
- Buggies have as much right as a wheelchair user.

### About this article

This article was written by Sherelle Jones, a member of Headliners' Project Subway group at [Coram Parents Centre](#).

### 6 comments

Sorry, you're wrong

The bay on a bus is generally accompanied by a sign which says - albeit in very small print - "This space is reserved for a wheelchair user. Buggies may use this space when it is not needed by a wheelchair user". As a wheelchair user myself I've had problems when buggies are moved for me, but then quickly rammed back in, wedging me against the back of the space, meaning that I can't stretch my legs out. This is extremely painful - I need to stretch every few minutes, though I pull my legs back to manoeuvre. Perhaps the wheelchair user who wanted all of the bay to themselves had a similar issue? Either way, if the wheelchair user needs the space that is allocated for them then I'm sorry, the buggy will need to be folded. It's not a buggy bay! On new buses in London, the floor of the bay is now painted blue with a wheelchair symbol, to make this point.

I have nothing against parents, and it must be hard to take children on a bus, but when a parent rants like this then I'm sorry, I don't sympathise.

Flash Bristow from London, 08 February 2011 19:13

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Buggies can be folded up, wheelchairs cannot. If there is enough space for a buggy, fair enough, if not then parents should fold the buggy up.

I use a wheelchair and people put their buggy in front of me, take their child out and sit elsewhere, then when it gets to my stop I can't move because I have a great big push chair right in my way, with no child in it, I ask if someone can get the parents to come over and move it for me, nicely... I get completely ignored.

I have to say not all parents with pushchairs are like this though, some are very nice & helpful :) I just wish there were more of them around lol.

katie (age 19) from london, 30 December 1899 00:00

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There is no contest really -wheelchairs or mobility aids must come first - the sign is on the bus - then buggies ( and some do fold up ) I have seen one person do it -so it must be true but multiple buggies should not be allowed on bus unfolded -for there isn't room

HarryBee from Hampton, 30 December 1899 00:00

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