

## Hertfordshire County Council Post-16 Transport to Education and Training Policy

**This Policy applies to all young people aged 16-18 years (attending 6<sup>th</sup> form or colleges of further education), regardless of when they started their course.**

**There is no statutory entitlement to transport post sixteen. Young people and their families should carefully consider the Post 16 transport policies when considering pathways beyond sixteen.**

### Background

This policy was initially introduced in September 2015 following decisions reached by Hertfordshire County Council Cabinet on 13 October 2014. This followed extensive consultation and engagement with stakeholders, including disabled young people and their families between April and July 2014.

The policy has been drafted taking into account the relevant provisions of the Education Act 1996 and with regard to the Post-16 transport to education and training statutory guidance published on 28 January 2019

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## **Structure of the policy**

**Section A** - sets out the county council's core offer and sustainable travel options. This section of the policy applies to all young people other than those from low income families or those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

**Section B** - addresses the position of young people from low income families.

**Section C** - addresses travel support for young persons with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)

**Section D** - addresses complaints, appeals, general matters and definitions.

### **19 to 25 Policy**

Transport for young people between the age of 19 and 25 will be considered in accordance with the 19-25 Transport Policy. Consideration will be given to the needs of the individual student, whether they are attending their nearest suitable provision, their ability to travel independently and any individual transport needs. Any provision agreed would consider the most suitable mode of travel support.

## Section A: Core Offer and Other Sustainable Travel Options

### Hertfordshire SaverCard Scheme 11-18

Hertfordshire SaverCards are available to young people up to the end of the academic year in which they reach their 18th birthday. Hertfordshire SaverCards are issued for one academic year.

Young people may purchase a Hertfordshire SaverCard from the council at a cost of £20 (currently reduced to £15 for online applications) per academic year. This entitles them to purchase single and return tickets at half the adult fare for travel on public bus services throughout Hertfordshire, with the exception of services operated for Transport for London, where other discounts are available. The Hertfordshire SaverCard can also be used to certain destinations outside of the county including:

- Amersham (college and railway station)
- Aylesbury Bus Station
- New Barnet Railway Station
- Chesham Broadway
- Dunstable Square
- Edgware Bus Station
- Enfield Town Centre
- Harlow Bus Station
- Harrow Bus Station
- Luton Town Centre
- Mount Vernon Hospital
- Southgate Tube Station
- Uxbridge Bus Station

The Hertfordshire SaverCard Scheme is available to young people attending full- time education and living in Hertfordshire

- Schools
- Institutions maintained or assisted by the Council
- Further Education institutions
- Establishments (outside the Further and Higher Education sectors) at which the authority secures the provision of education or training where the Skills Funding Agency have funded education

The Hertfordshire SaverCard can be used on public bus services at all times of the day, or any day of the week and over any distance (i.e. more or less than 3 miles). Eligibility for support for young persons from low income families may be available – see Section B.

To apply for a Hertfordshire SaverCard go to [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/savercard](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/savercard)

## **TrainCards**

The Department of Transport announced the launch of a new national Railcard scheme in January 2019, which will benefit 16-17 year olds. This Railcard offer 16-17 year olds a 50% discount on rail travel, and will be available from September this year. More information will be available over the summer months on the website <https://www.railcard.co.uk>

If the National Train Card scheme does not meet your child's needs you may apply for a Hertfordshire TrainCard.

Hertfordshire TrainCards are issued at the start of the academic year, and expire at the end of the summer term. They are available to young persons in Post 16 full time learning and education (e.g. attending school sixth form or college) aged 16-18 and those completing courses started prior to their 19 th birthday.

Young people may purchase a Hertfordshire TrainCard for £20 which will enable them to obtain a discounted season ticket for train travel to and from educational establishments.

A Hertfordshire Train Card will not be issued to any young person who is eligible for the National Railcard scheme.

Financial support for young persons from low income families may be available – see Section B.

Hertfordshire SaverCards and Hertfordshire TrainCards can be renewed each year, as long as the applicant remains eligible.

## **Spare Seats Scheme**

Education 'E' Routes are the vehicles which the Council provides for children who have a statutory entitlement to free home to school transport, where it is best value to use this mode of transport. If there are any spare seats available on these routes, they are available for purchase by pupils of statutory school age who do not have an entitlement to school transport. Spare seats will be allocated on a termly basis; however a seat may be withdrawn at any time (two weeks' notice will be given) if it is required by a pupil with a statutory entitlement to transport. Places are offered according to published criteria available at <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport>

If spare seats remain after demand from pupils of statutory school age has been met young people aged 16-18 may purchase a spare seat to travel on an 'E' Route.

Parents/carers should not assume that spare seats will be available for purchase and should make their own travel plans in consultation with the sixthform/college provider.

Charges are in accordance with those published and are set annually based on full cost recovery. For more information contact Admissions and Transport on; 0300 123 4043 or via [email to: transfer.admissions@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:transfer.admissions@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Parental contributions from September 2020 are as follows:

Miles	Number of College Days	Annual Cost (£)	Cost Per Term 2020/21 (£)	1 <sup>st</sup> Instalment (£)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Instalment (£)
<b>0 - 2.99</b>	2	354	118	59	59
	3	528	176	88	88
	4	708	236	118	118
	5	882	294	147	147
<b>3 - 4.99</b>	2	468	156	78	78
	3	708	236	118	118
	4	942	314	157	157
	5	1176	392	196	196
<b>5 - 6.99</b>	2	540	180	90	90
	3	810	270	135	135
	4	1080	360	180	180
	5	1350	450	225	225
<b>7 miles and over</b>	2	618	206	103	103
	3	930	310	155	155
	4	1242	414	207	207
	5	1554	518	259	259

For more details about the “Spare Seats” scheme for Education ‘E’ Routes and how to apply please go to [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport)

### Buy seats from other bus operators

Young people may also purchase seats on vehicles run by individual schools, colleges or by third party commercial operators on the school or college’s behalf. For information on available routes please check individual school/college websites. Alternatively, a list of school routes is published at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport)

For information about public bus routes go to [www.intalink.org.uk](http://www.intalink.org.uk)

## **Other Sustainable Travel Opportunities**

The Council is keen to ensure that as many young people as possible plan their travel arrangements so they can access their school, college or training provider by using sustainable ways of travel.

We offer the following:

1. An online journey planner – this helps families and young people plan their travel to places of learning, <https://www.intalink.org.uk/plan-your-journey/>
2. The promotion of an Active Travel Strategy – this complements the Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMOTs) published by the Council in relation to access to schools and colleges in Hertfordshire, [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/smots](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/smots)
3. Capacity building support, to help others, be they schools, colleges or communities to consider running their own home to school/college transport arrangements please email: [schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Further Education Residential Support Scheme**

Young people can apply for support if they need to attend a course that is not available within reasonable daily travelling distance and if similar courses are not available nearer the young person's home. Further information can be found at; [www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning)

## **Section B: Travel Support for Young persons from Low Income Families**

Travel Support<sup>1</sup> will be provided for young people when all of the following criteria are met:

1. The family is on low income<sup>2</sup>  
AND
2. The course attended is the nearest suitable to the permanent home address  
AND
3. It is over 3 miles and less than 10 miles from the permanent address, measured along the nearest available route  
AND
4. No other funds are available to fund the transport (for example from the Bursary Fund).

Where the nearest suitable provision is more than ten miles, travel support will be assessed on an individual basis.

Young people from low income families who do not meet the above criteria, may apply for a free Hertfordshire SaverCard and/or free Hertfordshire TrainCard and use it in the way described within Section A. Young people are encouraged to gain help towards their discounted fares from the Bursary Fund, held by their learning provider. The council will not normally provide additional funding to support fares.

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<sup>1</sup>See the definition of “travel support” in Section E.

<sup>2</sup>See the definition of “low income” in Section E.

## **Section C: Travel Support for young persons with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)**

### **Introduction**

The county council will assess the travel needs of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan).

The county council has the discretion to determine whether to provide travel support to facilitate young people's participation in education and training.

When travel support is provided, transport is normally only provided at the start and end of the school/college day.

Only in exceptional circumstances connected to an individual's learning difficulties and/or disabilities and where no alternative mode of travel is available, will taxi travel be considered.

### **Independent Travel Training**

The county council is committed to promoting and supporting the delivery of Independent Travel Training (ITT), working with its partners to enable more young people with an EHCP to achieve independent travel. This is achieved through a structured process of training, monitoring and assessment, in preparation for, and during their transition into Post 16 education and training.

Travel Training is available in each of the four colleges in Hertfordshire. More information can be found at; [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport).

In order for a student to participate in the Travel training programme, they must meet all of the following criteria. They must;

- Have a current EHCP
- Currently be in receipt of transport from Hertfordshire County Council
- Be a Hertfordshire resident

**or**

- The student has already completed the Travel Training programme but is required to learn a new route to enhance their education/employment opportunities/ changed campus or college course.

As part of planning the travel arrangements for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, we will co-ordinate any travel support offered with the provision and delivery of Travel Training.

Travel Training is a planned and structured programme which is agreed with the young person, their school/college and family. Usually when travel training is offered it will be on the basis that an assessment of readiness will have been undertaken by those working closely with the young person and their family, for example their existing school, or college. If Travel Training is unreasonably refused by the young person or their family three times

and there has been no change in circumstances/need or ability to participate in the programme, transport support will be withdrawn.

When a young person with an EHC Plan is able to travel independently (and where applicable has received independent travel training) taking into account their individual needs, they will be considered within the general aspects of this policy statement. We will co-ordinate information about the young person's ability to travel independently with parents and the young person, travel trainers, schools and colleges, when we are assessing any request for provision of travel support.

In these circumstances, the young person may be able to apply for a disabled concessionary bus pass for free travel at all times when boarding a bus in Hertfordshire (generally only at off peak times elsewhere in England). If they are unable to travel by bus without the assistance of another person, they can apply for a bus pass allowing a companion to travel with them free of charge within Hertfordshire.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/transport-for-older-people-and-disabled-people/bus-passes-for-disabled-people.aspx>

They may also apply for a Hertfordshire SaverCard and/or National/Hertfordshire Train Card to travel to their place of learning. Those who qualify under low income criteria may apply for a free Hertfordshire SaverCard and/or Train card.

## **Assessment**

When determining whether travel support should be provided and the type of transport support, the Council will have regard to, among other things:

- the needs of those young people who, without travel support, would be unable to attend an education or training establishment;
- the Council's duties to ensure that enough suitable education and training is provided to meet the reasonable needs of 16-18 year olds who live in Hertfordshire;
- distance and journey time from the young person's home to establishments of education and training, the cost of transport and alternative means of transport. Reasonable maximum one way travel is usually considered to be up to 10 miles with a maximum travel time usually considered to be 75 minutes. Where the nearest suitable provision is more than 10 miles, this will be assessed on an individual basis;
- the nature of the route or alternative routes which the young person could reasonably be expected to take;
- the reasons why a young person wishes to attend one establishment rather than another;
- statements in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) about transport to the education provision;
- supporting evidence from professionals involved with the young person and their family;
- if there is a nearer education provision which is suitable and can provide the same or similar qualification(s) or course;
- the best use of the county council's resources;

- the nature of the young person's special educational needs, disability and/or learning difficulty. This includes the physical ability of the young person to walk, accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult to the learning provision or a pick up point;
- whether the young person has received travel training, is able to travel independently and his/her ability to access public transport or transport operated by others;
- information contained in the assessment made under the Children & Families Act 2014 together with any other relevant information supplied;
- the Council's legal obligations and, in particular, those imposed by the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998;

### **Financial Contributions**

The Council will usually require a contribution of up to £1554 per annum towards the cost of providing travel support dependent upon distance travelled. The scale of contributions is as outlined on Page 5.

The financial contribution is based on 20% of the average cost of transport, regardless of the complexity of the transport required to match the individual transport needs of the young person and can be paid annually, termly or half termly. This contribution is towards the cost of providing travel and supports the county council's aim to fund this part of the school/college transport strategy at the right level.

The contribution will usually be waived if the family meets the "low income" definition and provides evidence that a claim for financial support from the Bursary Fund was unsuccessful or insufficient to cover the cost of transport. Schools and colleges will be asked to confirm all Bursary Fund applications and the level of funds allocated towards transport costs.

Requests for financial contribution reimbursements will only be considered in cases where a pupil has been absent from transport for 5 or more consecutive days and the amount to be reimbursed is a minimum of £100.

### **Personal Travel Budget**

A Personal Travel Budget (PTB) in the form of mileage reimbursement may be offered to parents/carers of pupils who are entitled to home to school transport, where this offers best value for money to the county council.

A pupil's home to school/college mileage will be calculated by the county council and the rate paid will be £0.45 per mile, for 4 journeys per day with a 20% deduction.

## Section D: Complaints and appeals, general matters

There is no statutory entitlement to transport post sixteen. Young people and their families should carefully consider the Post 16 transport policies when considering future pathways beyond sixteen.

### Complaints

- 1) If you would like to make a complaint about the service you have received regarding home to school/college transport, information provided through the link below outlines the council's complaints procedure and provides an on-line complaints form - [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/complaints)
- 2) If you believe
  - a. The county council has not applied this policy correctly;
  - OR
  - b. There are compelling reasons to justify making an exception to the policy, you may pursue the two stage appeal process.

### Stage 1: Discretionary Transport Panel

If you feel that your case is as an exception to the Post 16 Transport Policy you can apply for your case to be considered by a Discretionary Transport panel under the following criteria:

- Your child has not been offered home to school/college transport support but you believe your individual circumstances are so exceptional that transport should be provided, OR
- Your child has been offered transport support but you disagree with the mode of transport provided. A Special Needs Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Assessment Panel will consider cases where a parent/carer disagrees with the type of transport provision that has been identified for their son/daughter with SEND.

All other transport related issues will be considered through the county council's normal complaints procedure. Further information is available at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/complaints)

You will be informed in writing of the outcome of your discretionary transport request.

Discretionary transport will only be agreed for a specific period of time, usually for no more than a term. If you want transport arrangements to continue beyond this initial period, you must reapply at least two weeks before the end of the agreement.

Discretionary Transport applications will only be considered once within the same academic year. An application will only be reconsidered on the following grounds:

- If there has been a **significant and exceptional change of circumstances** since the original application was considered by the Discretionary Transport Panel. An example of this could be a newly diagnosed medical condition that was not previously in existence.
- If new evidence is disclosed which was not reasonably available at the time of the original Discretionary Transport Panel hearing. An example of this could be a medical condition that has changed significantly since the original Discretionary Transport Panel.

The Discretionary Transport Panel will only reconsider a rejected case within the same academic year if one or both of these grounds apply.

If the Discretionary Transport Panel accepts an exceptional change of circumstances, the case will be reheard at Stage 1 of the appeal process and the applicant will be notified of the outcome in writing.

### **Stage 2: Senior Officer Review**

If your request for Discretionary transport is unsuccessful, you have the right to ask for case to be reviewed by a senior manager. If you believe your child's transport provision should be reviewed please contact the Transport Team by emailing [schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk) or by calling the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043.

## **Section E: Definitions and Other Matters**

### **Bursary Fund**

The Bursary Fund is direct funding provided by the government to schools and colleges to assist 16-19 year olds on low income or in particular circumstances to continue in education. The fund may be used to assist with transport costs. For more information on the Bursary Fund please go to: [www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund](http://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund)

The fund is made up of two parts:

Bursaries of £1200 a year to the most vulnerable young people and a discretionary fund provided direct to providers (schools, special schools, colleges, academies and training providers).

The intention of the discretionary fund is to support young persons who face genuine financial barriers to participation, such as the cost of transport.

The defined vulnerable group includes:

- A young person in or recently left local authority care
- A young person on Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves
- A young person receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in their name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- A young person receiving Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their name and either ESA or Universal Credit

How the Bursary Fund will be taken into account:

Eligibility for support from The Bursary Fund will be taken into account when considering an application for transport support. Prior to applying to the county council for transport support, an application should be made direct to the relevant school or college for Bursary funding to support the cost of travel.

### **Local Offer**

The Hertfordshire Local Offer includes information on transport and can be found at: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer)

### **Low income**

Low income families are defined as those having children entitled to Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit.

To be eligible for free school meals, a child's parents/carers must be receiving one of the following:

- Income Support, dated in the last three months
- Income-based jobseeker's allowance, dated in the last three months
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, dated in the last three months
- Universal Credit, showing your most recent statement from your on-line journal,

dated within the last 28 days, or other recent written confirmation from the DWP as is available to you\*

- Pension Credit (guarantee credit), dated in the last 3 months
- Child Tax Credit with income less than £16,190 and not receiving Working Tax Credit, based on most recent tax credits award notice
- Maximum Working tax Credit, based on most recent tax credits award notice

Your child does not need to be receiving FSM, but they do need to meet the criteria for getting FSM.

Where a young person is living independently away from their family home (including private fostering arrangements), and that young person meets the “low income” definition, circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

\* Since April 1<sup>st</sup> 2018, Universal Credit was only a qualifying benefit for free school meals if you had earnings below £7400 a year (or £617 per month for the last 3 months). Those already getting Free School Meals through Universal Credit by April 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 do not have this earnings rule applied and remain eligible for free school meals for the time being. If this earnings rule does apply, please submit details of recent earnings from your DWP Universal Credit journal.

### **Measuring distances**

Home to school distances for transport purposes are measured using a network of roads and pathways from a young person's home address to the school, college or other relevant establishment. For full details please go to: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport)

For information on routes to school or college, please use the Journey Planner found at <https://www.intalink.org.uk/plan-your-journey/> where you can also find the nearest school or college calculator which provides home to school distances.

### **Nearest suitable course**

This means the nearest educational establishment at which the course or the majority of the course is offered.

In relation to young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the county council, when determining whether to provide transport support, will take into account various matters including whether the course attended is the nearest suitable (see Section C above for full details) .

### **Travel support**

May be provided by a local bus route, an education route, a route run by a school or college, or train travel, taking into account cost effectiveness and ensuring travel support is appropriate for young person's individual circumstances. Alternative modes of travel, for example walking (with a travel assistant/aid) and cycling will also be considered. A Personal Travel Budget (PTB) for mileage reimbursement and provision of a concessionary travel card may also be available in some cases. Where mileage reimbursement is considered it will be for 4 journeys per day at a rate of £0.45p per mile with a 20% financial contribution deducted

### **Young person**

Over compulsory school age, aged 16-18 and those continuing learners who started their programme of learning before their 19th birthday.

## **Other matters**

### **Changing circumstances**

Decisions reached in relation to young people will be reviewed as necessary to ensure that changing needs and circumstances can be identified and met, where applicable.

### **Exceptional circumstances**

This policy sets out the county council's general approach to transport support for young people aged 16-18. However, the county council will consider individual circumstances to determine whether there are exceptional circumstances, justifying consideration outside of the policy through the two stage complaints process outlined above.

### **Behaviour and attendance**

Travel support may be withdrawn if a young person does not adhere to acceptable behaviour standards and/or maintain regular attendance. If damage is caused to the vehicle or other property, the young person or parent/carer will have to pay for repairs and may be prosecuted.