TRANSPORT POLICY STATEMENT

Learners aged 16-19 years in further education and training and continuing learners with a learning difficulty and/or disability (LLDD) aged 19 and over

Academic year: 2017/2018

"If you or someone you know needs help to understand or read this document, please contact us":
☎: 01709 822649 ☏: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

Please note that free internet access is available at all our library sites

Name of Local Authority: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Department Responsible: Regeneration & Environment, Corporate Transport Unit, Passenger Services Team, Sandbeck Building, Hellaby Depot, Rotherham S66 8QL
Email: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk
Telephone: 01709 822649
SMS (Text message Service, incoming only): 078600 18829

You can find further details on the internet at www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org or Rotherham SEND Local Offer.
1. **Summary of policy statements and main objectives**

1.1 There is no automatic entitlement to free home to school or college transport once a learner is over 16 years and beyond statutory school age. Responsibility for making appropriate transport arrangements rests with the learner and/or parents/carers.

1.2 Providing assisted transport (e.g. taxis, specially adapted vehicles) will only be given for learners with special educational needs who have had their needs assessed against set criteria including distance, age, mobility and the effect of their complex needs on their ability to travel. This may include:

- Communication and Interaction Difficulties
- Cognition and Learning Difficulties
- Specific Learning Difficulties
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs

1.3 Learners with special educational needs, who have received transport assistance and are moving from statutory education (Y11) to further education, will need to have their transport needs reassessed when they apply for transport provision. This is to ensure that any assistance offered is suitable to meet those needs. Continuing post 16 learners will also have their transport needs reviewed on an annual basis.

1.4 Learners must be permanently resident within the Rotherham Council.

1.5 This policy outlines what transport support is available when starting a full time (over 12 guided learning hours per week) further education course up to the age of 19 and those learners aged 19 and over with a learning difficulty and/or disability.

1.6 This policy covers the statutory duties of the Local Authority under Section 509AA of the Education Act 1996 and subsequent amendments. It only applies to residents of the Rotherham Metropolitan area. Further information can be obtained by visiting www.gov.uk.

2. **Concessionary Fares, Discounts, Subsidies, Passes or Travel Cards available for Post 16 Learners in Colleges, Sixth Forms and at some Training Providers**

The following passes and tickets are the most appropriate for those using public transport to access education and training:

- **16-18 Student Pass**
  This pass is available to all South Yorkshire residents attending full time courses at all Colleges and Sixth Forms, within Rotherham, aged between 16 and less than 18 (on 1st September). It entitles the learner to travel, from the first day of the academic year, for the concessionary fare of 80p per journey on all buses and trams and for half adult fare on trains within South Yorkshire. Application forms and the verification code (UVC) are available from your learning provider or they may also be downloaded from http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com A MyTSY account should be created in advance at https://mytsy.travelsouthyorkshire.com/signup/.

Individual enquires can be made by contacting the Transport Executive Traveline on 01709 515151.
• **Travelmaster18**
  This ticket is available to anyone aged 16, 17 or 18 and allows unlimited travel on all buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire. Your learning provider may be able to assist with funding towards the cost of this ticket. Please contact Traveline on 01709 515151 to make an enquiry.

• **Travelmaster20**
  This ticket is available to anyone aged 19 or 20 and allows unlimited travel on all buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire. Your learning provider may be able to assist with funding towards the cost of this ticket. Please contact Traveline on 01709 515151 to make an enquiry.

• **Student Term Travelmaster**
  This ticket is available to any individual undertaking full time study at a college of further education in South Yorkshire at the discretion of the college. In Rotherham, these are Dearne Valley College, Rotherham College of Arts & Technology and Thomas Rotherham College. This ticket allows unlimited travel on all buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire. Your learning provider must supply you with authorisation to buy this product. Your learning provider may also be able to assist with funding towards the cost of this ticket.

  Further details on all of the above passes and tickets, including operators' tickets are available on the Travel South Yorkshire website www.travelsouthyorkshire.com.

• **Zero Fare Bus Passes**
  These may be available to some learners attending Dearne Valley College, Rotherham College of Arts & Technology and Thomas Rotherham College and are allocated at their discretion. Contact student services at the college for details. Further details are available on the Travel South Yorkshire website www.travelsouthyorkshire.com.

3. **Support for Learners with Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP) or Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)**

   **Disabled Person’s Pass**

   A Disabled Person’s Pass may be available to some Rotherham residents following assessment of qualification and allows free travel on buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire and some cross boundary services. Severely disabled people who are unable to travel alone may also qualify for a disability pass, which enables a care giver to travel with them free of charge. More details are available on the Local Authority website www.rotherham.gov.uk and searching for Disabled Person’s Pass. Applications may be made at any library or contact service centre. Further details are also available on the Travel South Yorkshire website www.travelsouthyorkshire.com.

   Those unable to take advantage of the above Disabled Person’s Pass should contact student services at their chosen college or school sixth form.

   All learners with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) or Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) should have their transport needs reassessed when they move from compulsory schooling to post 16 education. This is in accordance with the Post 16 Transport to Education and Training Statutory Guidance for Local authorities: www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-transport-to-education-and-training

3.1 Post 16 learners will be aged between 16 and 18 years at the start of the academic year (i.e. September) and those continuing learners who started their programme of learning before their 19th birthday.
3.2 Post 16 students are expected to take advantage of the concessionary fare schemes so they can access public transport for their daily travel to and from school/college in and around the Rotherham District. The following learners will, however, be considered for transport assistance under this policy:

- Consideration will be given to learners who have communication and interaction difficulties, cognition and learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties, social, emotional and mental health difficulties, sensory and/or physical needs which affect their ability to travel.

- The distance between home and school or college, offering a suitable course, must exceed 5 miles by the shortest available route. This may be disregarded where learners require assisted transport as a result of their learning difficulty and/or disability.

3.3 Young people will be engaged in learning or training at:

- A school (including academies)
- A further education institution
- An Authority maintained or assisted institution providing further education
- An establishment funded directly by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) e.g. independent specialist providers for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

3.4 Learners are encouraged to attend courses within the Rotherham District and, only when it is absolutely clear that such provision cannot be met locally, will consideration be given for students to receive help with travel to attend colleges out of the district. Specific details of the course and reasons for choice will need to be given in order that an assessment can be made, having due regard to the efficient and effective use of resources.

3.5 Where a suitable course is available in the Rotherham District but the learner and/or parents/carers wish to attend a college outside the district, this will be on the clear understanding they will be fully responsible for all travel and related costs. However, where the local college cannot meet the learner’s specific needs (e.g. curriculum or care needs) then the college will be expected to provide written evidence to this effect. This may be requested as supporting evidence when applying for transport assistance.

3.6 The following information will also be required to support the learner's application for assistance:

- Recent medical evidence from a GP, Consultant, specialist service or other qualified person, which is no more than 3 months old.
- Supporting evidence/recommendation from Education, Health and Care Assessment Team.

Please be aware that failure to provide all the evidence may result in a delay in your application being processed or your application being refused.

4. How will learners be assessed for assistance?

4.1 Learners are expected to take advantage of the concessionary travel arrangements available. However, if a learner can demonstrate they have exceptional circumstances as to why other assistance may be required, then the appropriate transport enquiry form should be completed. The transport enquiry form is available online on the internet at www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org or Rotherham SEND Local Offer. The enquiry form can also be found on the Council website. Please search for 'Post 16 Transport' in the
4.2 Completion of the transport enquiry form does not mean learners are eligible for transport assistance. The form is an expression of interest in order that the Council can undertake an assessment.

4.3 The Council will consider the enquiry and make a determination of whether the learner qualifies for transport and what this provision should be. Each case will be assessed individually and will depend upon their particular needs and circumstances. Please see section 1.2 for qualifying categories.

4.4 Where assisted transport has been recommended, this may be provided as any of the following:

i) travel on a shared coach, minibus, taxi or specially adapted vehicle, with other learners, if the learner is unable to travel by public transport due to the distance, their mobility, or effect of their complex special educational needs,

ii) refunded travelling expenses according to the cheapest available public transport route for those learners able to access public transport services,

iii) Mileage expenses in accordance with the Council’s current rate, for learners requiring special arrangements. Mileage expenses will only be paid for the journeys when the learner is in the vehicle.

Parents/carers will be required to make a financial contribution towards the cost of the transport provided. See section 8 for further details.

4.5 Approval for transport assistance will usually be for the academic year only. Each case should be reviewed annually in time for the start of the next academic year (2017/2018) to ensure the arrangements are still appropriate. If there are any changes to individual circumstances prior to this, such as change of address, change in needs as referred to in section 1.2 of this policy, or if the learner is able to walk, cycle or drive to school/college, it is the responsibility of the learner and/or parents/carers to inform the Council to ensure the necessary review is undertaken.

4.6 Transport is usually only provided at the beginning and end of the school/college day. The Council will not fund additional transport during the day, inter-site transport, work placement transport or induction/enrolment days. Transport assistance will not usually be provided for any learners during the first week (induction) of the new academic year. It is expected that families will make their own transport arrangements until the learner’s timetable has been finalised.

4.7 Where assisted transport is provided, no variation can be made to the journey without the prior consent of the Council.

4.8 Learners who are in receipt of assisted transport and subsequently fail to attend school or college, without a valid reason, may have their transport support suspended or withdrawn. You can find further details on the internet at: www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.

5. Personal budgets

A young person with an EHC Plan (or their parents) may be entitled to request a personal budget to help meet specific costs arising from the young person’s special educational needs.

If a family is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment
(PIP), a personal budget as part of an EHC Plan or any other direct payment provided to help fund travel arrangements for a young person, this will be taken into account when assessing eligibility for assistance with home to school travel for that young person.

6. Apprenticeships/Traineeships

Transport assistance is not provided to learners undertaking work placements, apprenticeships or traineeships. In these circumstances learners are advised to contact their employer or learning provider for advice.

7. Independent Travel Training

As learners become older, they may want to develop their skills of independent travel and for some, this may mean using public transport, walking or cycling to school/college. For others, transport assistance may be required throughout school/college life. Schools/colleges and independent specialist providers are encouraged to provide independent travel training to learners for whom it is appropriate.

8. Charges for Transport Assistance

8.1 Charges apply to all post 16 learners where they require help in travelling to school or college regardless of whether they are living in the parental home or sheltered/residential accommodation.

8.2 Learners and/or parents/carers will be notified of the charges in advance of the travel arrangements and usually invoiced as soon as possible before the start of each term. These charges must be paid immediately so that transport arrangements can be made. Every opportunity will, however, be given for learners and/or parents/carers to pay the charges by smaller, more manageable, payments suitable to the learner and/or parent/carer if requested.

8.3 Where it has been agreed to provide transport assistance to provision within the Rotherham District, learners and/or their parents/carers will be charged on a termly basis (i.e. 3 invoices per year will be sent, usually before the start of each term) based on the current cost of the concessionary student fare of 80p per journey, and school term dates. The approximate costs per school terms 2017/2018 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Number of Weeks</th>
<th>Weekly Cost</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer term 2017 (Apr-Jul)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>£8.00*</td>
<td>£104.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn term 2017 (Sep-Dec)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>£8.00*</td>
<td>£112.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring term 2018 (Jan-Mar)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>£16.00*</td>
<td>£104.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Charges are based on one return bus journey per day at £1.60

*This can be subject to change. Charges will depend on school/college actual term dates, actual number of days per week students attend school/college and the cost of the concessionary bus fare.

8.4 Where it has been agreed to provide transport assistance to provision outside the Rotherham District, learners and/or parents/carers will be charged with 3 invoices per year usually before the start of each term based on the current cost of the concessionary student fare of 80p per journey, and school term dates. The approximate costs per school terms 2017/2018 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Number of Weeks</th>
<th>Weekly Cost</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer term 2017 (Apr-Jul)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>£16.00*</td>
<td>£208.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn term 2017 (Sep-Dec)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>£16.00*</td>
<td>£224.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring term 2018 (Jan-Mar)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>£16.00*</td>
<td>£208.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Charges are based on four bus journeys (2 return journeys) per day at £3.20**

*This can be subject to change. Charges will depend on school/college actual term dates, actual number of days per week students attend school/college and the cost of the concessionary bus fare.
8.5 Refunds of transport costs cannot be made for occasional day’s absence. If, however, the learner is absent for a full week (e.g. due to illness/holiday) then refunds will be considered upon receipt of confirmation of attendance details from the school/college.

8.6 Where the learner and/or parents/carers during the course of the academic year fail to make payments or make a reasonable contribution towards their assisted transport, engage with the Council’s Sundry Accounts Team to secure a manageable payment plan, or submit an appeal, then the learner may have their assisted transport withdrawn. This action will only be taken as a last resort after all other options have been explored.

9. Financial Hardship

16 to 19 Bursary Fund

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is designed to help support those young people who face the greatest barriers to continuing in education or training post 16. If the learner is aged between 16 and 19 years, and think they might struggle with the costs for full-time education or training, they may be eligible for a bursary. This can be used to support transport costs.

Students in the following groups may receive the maximum bursary of £1,200 a year:
- young people in care
- care leavers
- young people claiming income support in their own name
- disabled young people who receive both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment in their own name.

To receive the maximum bursary the course must last for 30 weeks or more. If the course is shorter than 30 weeks, you may receive less.

Other students facing genuine financial difficulties may be awarded a bursary at the discretion of their school, college or training provider.

Further information can be obtained directly from the learner’s school or college on how to apply for a bursary.

Full details of the bursary scheme are available on the Directgov website at: [www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund](http://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund).

9.1 Families in financial hardship (low income families or learners) can apply to have the transport charges waived. Consideration will be given as to whether or not the learner has applied for, or is in receipt of, an allocation from the 16-19 bursary fund from the learning provider.

9.2 Eligibility for help with transport to school/college is not dependent on means testing, but a means test will be used to determine whether the contribution towards the transport costs should be waived for low income families. The Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 years in Further Education, uses the low income eligibility criteria as set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006, e.g: Free School Meals eligibility in Y11 or being in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit. Written evidence of these benefits will be requested by the Council and where evidence has not been provided (or is not relevant to the period in which transport is being provided) charges will be made.

To make an application for free school meals please contact the Council’s Benefits Section via
To make an application for Working Tax Credit, please contact the Tax Credit Helpline on Tel. 0845 300 3900.

10. Raising the Participation Age

From 2015, all young people up until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18 will be required to participate in education or training. There is no change to the statutory school age which remains at 5 to 16 years.

This change will not extend the entitlement for the provision of free transport assistance beyond Y11, as it does not mean that the learner has to stay at school. They may choose to work full time and study part time, continue full time study at school or college, be involved in part time training whilst volunteering or follow an apprenticeship.

More information about Raising the Participation Age can be obtained from the Department of Education website at:-


This continues to mean that transport will only be allocated to learners who qualify under the criteria as set out in 1.2.

11. 19 – 25 Learners

Learners who are aged 19-25 and have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) should contact their education provider to discuss the possibility of transport assistance.

12. Appeals Process

12.1 Learners and/or parents/carers have the right to appeal against the decision not to award assistance, to withdraw existing support or to appeal to have the post 16 transport charges waived. Please be aware that all decisions are based on the information available to the officers at the time of making the decision. An appeal can be made if it is felt that an error has been made resulting in the wrong decision, or that there are exceptional and/or compelling reasons to depart from this policy.

12.2 Learners and/or parents/carers must send in writing (within 20 working days of the original decision) a request to review the original decision which will be undertaken by a Senior Officer (Stage 1 Review). This should be accompanied by any other relevant evidence and medical reports relevant to the particular needs of the learner. Any medical reports submitted must be no more than 3 months old. The Senior Officer will respond in writing within 20 working days of receipt of the parental request. The response will either uphold or overturn the original outcome of assessment, and will explain the reasoning behind the review decision. Unless the original assessment decision is overturned, the Council will offer the parent/carer the opportunity to escalate their appeal to be heard by an independent panel, (Stage 2 Review).

12.3 Learners and/or parents/carers will be provided with a Notice of Appeal form at this stage, which must be completed and returned within 20 working days of the Stage 1 Review letter. A Notice of Appeal form can be obtained from education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk
Tel. 01709 822649, but this will not be provided unless the preceding appeal route has been followed.

12.4 Following receipt of a completed Notice of Appeal form, it will be considered by an independent panel within 40 working days. You will be notified of the decision within 10 working days, together with details of how to escalate the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman. Learners and/or parents/carers may contact the Local Government Ombudsman if they feel that the Council’s procedures have not been followed. (Stage 3 Review).

12.5 Where invoices have been submitted for payment of transport costs but the learner and/or parents/carers then wish to appeal against the charges, they must do so within 15 working days of the date of the invoice, otherwise the Council will not be able to intervene and recovery of the debt may be passed to a debt collection agency.

12.6 If there is a change in individual circumstances during the academic year, which may affect any entitlement or decision made under this policy, it is the responsibility of the learner and/or parents/carers to inform the Council to ensure the necessary review is undertaken at that stage. You can find further details at: www.rotherhamSENDlocaloffer.org.