

Post-16 education transport for young people with SEND

Overview

Like other authorities across the country, the council is facing very significant financial pressures. The council is forecasting a shortfall of £60 million in next year's budget. As a result, the council is having to look at all services that it does not have a duty to provide.

The local authority does not have any statutory duty to provide free post-16 SEND transport, and receives no funding from central government to do so. It is something that needs to be funded through local taxation.

The demand for this service is increasing and the budget in this area is overspent. For the 2023/2024 academic year the cost for discretionary Post 16 SEND transport in Leicester exceeded £4 million. It is early in the 2024/2025 academic year and projections based on current levels of service are unreliable. A new system for taxi procurement was developed which may mean a reduction in some of the costs. However, the budget for 2024/2025 is projected to be over £13m in 2024/2025, with an unbudgeted overspend of over £1.5m.

The council is therefore proposing to make changes to the way Post-16 SEND transport is provided. The proposals include the general withdrawal of support for Post-16 transport for the academic year 2025/26.

There are significant changes proposed in the draft Children and Young People with SEND Home to School and College Travel Policy which would affect post 16 SEND transport provision. The proposals are mirrored in the draft Post-16 Transport Policy Statement. The proposed changes reflect the general proposal to withdraw support for post-16 transport and set out where exceptions will be made to this. In line with the general withdrawal of support, the proposed 'exceptional circumstances' would apply in limited cases, and in those instances, it is proposed that transport assistance would be in the form of a personal transport budget.

The proposed policies for 2025/26 and the current ones are attached below as supporting documents (PDFS). You can also read the current Post-16 policy statement on families.leicester.gov.uk/post-16-transport-policy <<https://families.leicester.gov.uk/post-16-transport-policy>>

We understand the proposed changes are likely to have a significant impact on young people and their families, in that the proposals have the potential to:

- result in increased pressure on parents and carers and have an adverse impact on families' lives.
- affect some young people who have started courses and may now need to find alternate transport arrangements for the 2025/2026 academic year.
- mean that some young people stop attending education or training and possibly become NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). This is proven to affect their future life chances.

It's important that we hear from of all those who would be affected by the proposals. We urge everyone with a view to have their say here.

Questions for you

Which questions would you like to answer?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Questions for young people
- Questions for adults

Introduction

By law parents have a duty to look after their children until they become adults at 18. Councils must also provide support for transport to school for children when they have to attend school, up to the end of Year 11. Young people who choose Post-16 education are generally expected to be capable of making their own transport arrangements as part of preparing for adult life.

Proposed changes to transport support for those in education

Until now, our travel service has been able to provide discretionary free transport support to young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). But due to the high costs involved, and the restraints on our budget, we are proposing to change the way we provide transport services.

Transport having been provided in previous years should not be considered as evidence of eligibility under the proposed policy, and planning should factor this into consideration.

A summary of the proposals

Timing

There is a general withdrawal of Post-16 SEND transport support in the proposed policies for the 2025/2026 academic year.

The proposed policies would be for the start of the 2025/2026 academic year.

This means that parents, carers and young people affected will have limited time to adapt.

This could affect young people's ability, in some cases, to continue in their existing provision.

Eligibility

There remain 'foundation' eligibility requirements, for example, the young person must be from Leicester. A foundation eligibility requirement for those in Post-16 education has been added which states that a young person must have complex SEND needs with a clear definition.

The definition is:

The young person must have a complex SEND need and a placement specified in an Education Health and Care Plan. A complex SEND need for the purposes of this policy is where a young person has:

A diagnosed terminal illness that has severe impact on their current physical and/or mental health and that is likely to significantly reduce their life expectancy, and/or When accompanied, the young person's additional needs or disability places them or others at a severe and serious risk of danger during the journey to and from school, and/or

The student has a mobility difficulty which requires specialised seating or a specialised vehicle such as tail-lift access that is not available to them (including on public transport where that has to be relied upon), and/or

The learner is likely to require medical intervention or personal care during the journey to and from school.

Exceptional circumstances must also apply

A young person who satisfies the foundation eligibility criteria will be eligible for travel assistance **only if** there are also exceptional circumstances.

Whether there are exceptional circumstances in a particular case will be determined by the Strategic Director of Social Care (or another officer exercising delegated authority) in the light of the specific circumstances of that case. In each case, the Council will require appropriate evidence as to any claimed exceptional circumstances.

What are the exceptional circumstances where transport support will be offered?

Each of the following is likely to constitute an exceptional circumstance where we propose that transport support would be available:

The young person missed a significant majority of Year 11 due to ill health, and the Council has agreed that they will repeat that year in full.

The placement named by the local authority is a considerable distance* from the young person's home; the placement was not named by the Tribunal as a "parental preference"; there is no closer setting that can meet the young person's needs.

Taking into account the availability of public transport, caring or employment responsibilities mean that the young person's parents or carers are unable to provide transport themselves.

*A proposed definition of 'considerable distance' is 75 minutes each way including time to walk to any pickup point.

It's proposed that 'journey time' is calculated using the most effective means of transport available. For example, if it is more efficient to travel by car than by bus then the journey time in a car will be used as the foundation of the calculation or, if it is more effective to travel by train than car then the journey time by train will be used as the foundation for the calculation.

For journey calculation purposes it's proposed that two changes on public transport is considered reasonable (this is the same for younger children).

Situations not classed as exceptional circumstances

It's proposed that none of the following (taken in isolation) is likely to constitute an exceptional circumstance:

Single parent families

Parent(s)/carers who work

Having other children to look after and/or at other schools

Travelling to an independent school out of area

Parents/carers/students unable to drive or not having access to a car

Students in wheelchairs

Over 18s

For those students aged between 19 and 25 it is proposed that the policy is exactly the same as for 16-18 year olds. This is to ensure that older students don't have more support than younger ones and to make the policy clearer.

EHCPs

The requirement to review transport arrangements during Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) reviews is removed unless travel is a learning outcome. This is to reflect the fact that the travel support application process is generally separate from EHCP reviews.

What type of support will it be?

It is proposed for those with SEND in Post-16 education, that where a young person meets the 'foundation' eligibility requirements and a decision has been made that exceptional circumstance applies, the transport assistance offered will be in the form of a Personal Transport Budget.

This is beneficial to some as it provides a degree of flexibility which, in some situations, may alleviate financial hardship, but it could mean that families who have been used to the council paying for taxi journeys may not be able to continue to rely on that mode of transport going forward.

Travel training amendment

There is an amendment to the wording around travel training. Before it said that if travel training was unsuccessful, transport support would continue. It has now been amended to say that transport support will only be offered if the child or young person is eligible under the policy. This has been changed to be clearer because in some instances young people who are over 16 may not be able to travel independently but they may not be eligible for transport support.

Free bus passes

It is proposed that for all ages, where children and young people are eligible and it would meet the need, free travel may be by bus pass, and a parent may be offered a bus pass to accompany their child.

The logic is that this helps get the young person used to the journey with the parent, it is more cost effective and more environmentally friendly.

Multiple addresses

It is proposed that, for all ages in the travel policy there is improved clarity about multiple addresses. The proposed policies explain that:

If a pupil has more than one place that may be considered a home address, parents/carers must nominate a primary address for travel purposes.

Home addresses should be for primary carers and travel to the homes of extended family members will not usually be considered a home address.

The council acknowledges that families need flexible arrangements and will support travel to multiple addresses where it is specifically highlighted and agreed at the point of application. In year arrangements for changes will require a new application.

Where there are multiple home addresses being requested the home address closest to the child or young person's school or college will be considered the primary home address. That primary home address will be used to determine eligibility.

The Council will not generally support applications which mean that travel to multiple addresses will result in increased journey time or cost of provision. Personal Transport Budgets may be the best option to meet need in these situations.

Withdrawing support

In the past the council has not consistently withdrawn support due to challenging behaviours. It is intended that this is adopted going forward as failure to do so enables poor behaviours and is harmful to children, young people and those providing transport.

In some cases the council may investigate whether transport is being correctly provided, this could be mid-year. If a claim is proven to be ineligible transport could be withdrawn with four weeks notice.

If travel is temporarily or permanently withdrawn for behavioural reasons parents would be responsible for getting their children to school and for any costs incurred.

Pick-up points

It is proposed that travel to or from pick-up points may take place rather than a door to door service.

Why have we proposed these 'exceptional circumstances'?

There are cases that we recognise it is appropriate we exercise a discretion to provide support but it is meant to be the exception rather than 'the rule'.

We created the 'exceptional circumstance' criteria in this proposal, hoping to provide clarity to people about the very limited circumstances when young people over 16 with SEND will be eligible for transport assistance from the council.

We have chosen these particular 'exceptional circumstances' to be very narrow deliberately because the ultimate aim of the proposed policies is the withdrawal of SEND transport support for those who are not of compulsory school age.

In summary, the proposed policy is seeking to remove support for most people, but we think there will still be the occasional case where we should provide support, and therefore have created a section of the policy which describes who will be eligible and who will not.

Would you like to look at our proposed travel policies in detail?

Please select only one item

- Yes, please
- No thanks, just an overview

Our proposed transport policies

We have three policies which tell you how we help with travel to school for children and young people living in Leicester:

1) For children of compulsory school age, 5-16 year-olds

This explains what services are available to help children and young people get to school. This policy is not changing.

[Download the home to school transport policy \(PDF\)](#) <user_uploads/home-to-school-transport-policy.pdf>

2) For young people in Post-16 education and beyond

This proposed policy helps young people planning for Post-16 education and their families understand the different types of transport support available to them. It doesn't just explain the proposed changes to travel support, but also includes other options. For example, concessionary travel tickets from bus companies, bus services operated by colleges, and the 16-19 bursary fund.

It also covers continuing learners aged 19 and those aged 19–24 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It includes the proposed exceptional circumstances where transport support may be offered in the form of a Personal Transport Budget.

[Download the proposed Post-16 transport policy for 2025/26 \(PDF\)](#) <user_uploads/draft-post-16-transport-policy-statement-2025-2026-v0.3.pdf>

3) For children and young people who have a special educational need or disability

This explains what services are available to help children and young people get to school or college if they have a special educational need or disability.

It explains the proposed 'exceptional circumstances' where transport support may be offered in the form of a Personal Transport Budget when a child reaches Post-16 further education age.

[Download the proposed SEND travel policy for 2025/26 \(PDF\)](#) <user_uploads/draft-send-home-to-school-and-college-travel-policy-for-the-academic-years-2025-2026-to-2027-2028-v0.3.pdf>

Why is there a separate post-16 travel policy?

The law about the transport support for young people in post-16 education is different to the law for compulsory school years.

This is because young people can choose to leave education at 16 to go into a job with training or an apprenticeship.

When a young person reaches 18 they are legally an adult. Those with SEND have additional rights to continue to be supported to learn, but they are eligible for adult services at that point.

Because of these important changes, the council has a duty to explain what support is available.

Special travel needs support - what you need to know about our policies

We want young people to learn how to travel independently as much as possible.

Most young people can use public transport with the right support

If a child or young person with SEND is able to use public transport, they will be assessed using the same criteria as all other children, even if they must be accompanied when travelling.

Young people who can't use public transport

There are several factors which are considered for special travel needs support for children of compulsory school age:

The child's age.

The statutory walking distance to the nearest suitable school.

If it's an unsafe walking route (even if accompanied by an adult).

SEND or significant mobility problems.

If travel is stated as essential for EHCP learning outcomes.

Extended rights (for low-income families).

And for post-16 students applying for special travel needs support, the factors include:

Whether the student is attending a full time publicly funded course.

Whether the student has additional needs or a disability that places them or others at a serious risk of danger during the journey to and from school or college.

Whether the student has a mobility difficulty which requires specialised seating or a specialised vehicle, such as tail-lift access.

Whether the student is likely to require medical intervention or personal care during the journey to and from school or college.

The complexity of the journey.

If travel is stated as essential for EHCP learning outcomes.

If you need travel support it will be a Personal Transport Budget payment.

About you

Are you responding as a ...? (Please select one)

Please select only one item

- parent, carer, family member or guardian of a child or young person in education
- responding on behalf of a child, young person or family
- responding on behalf of a group, organisation or professional body
- service staff or professional giving my own views
- none of the above but a resident of Leicester
- none of the above but a resident of another area
- prefer not to say

If responding on behalf of a group, organisation or professional body, please add the organisation's name. (Optional)

Your organisation

Tell us how the change in travel support might effect your community, school or organisation.

Please tell us about your child

The questions are all optional. This is an anonymous survey. The answers you give will only be used to help us understand how the proposed changes to the school travel policies may affect you. You can find out about how we manage personal data on our [website <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/how-we-work/data-protection-and-foia/data-protection/>](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/how-we-work/data-protection-and-foia/data-protection/) .

If you are responding about more than one child in a family, you can refer to the child who will be most affected by the proposals, or you can take the survey again to tell us about each child.

Where does your child live? (Select one answer)

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Leicester city
- Leicestershire
- Another area

Leicestershire and other areas

Our school transport service is for children and young people who live in Leicester. If you live in Leicestershire or Rutland you can find out more about their service on their websites.

[Leicestershire school transport <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/school-transport/>](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/school-transport/) (leics.gov.uk)

[Rutland school transport <https://www.rutland.gov.uk/roads-transport-parking/transport/school-transport/>](https://www.rutland.gov.uk/roads-transport-parking/transport/school-transport/) (rutland.gov.uk)

You might still want to comment on the proposed changes to school travel for children and young people who live in Leicester city.

What do you want to do now?

Please select only one item

- Leave the survey
- Continue taking the survey

More about your child

Does your child have a special educational need or disability? (Select one answer)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Do they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)? (Select one answer)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Does your child go to school or college at the moment?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

What they do

Are they ...? (Select one)

Please select only one item

- at work in a job or apprenticeship
- on a training course or placement
- unemployed, but looking for work
- not able to go to school/college/work due to their disability
- not going to school, college or work for another reason
- Prefer not to say

Travel to school or college

Are they...? (Select one)

Please select only one item

- at primary school
- Year 7, 8, 9 or 10
- Year 11
- Year 12 or 13 (Post-16 education)
- older than Year 13 and in full time Further Education or Higher Education

How does your child travel to school or college at the moment?
(Select the option for the thing they do most often)

Please select only one item

- Walk
- Bicycle or scooter
- Wheel using equipment designed for disability (such as wheelchair, adapted bike)
- Use a public bus or train
- Go on a school bus
- Go in a minibus
- Go in a taxi with other passengers
- Go in a taxi with no other passengers
- Myself, someone in the family or a friend drives them there
- They drive themselves

If they go on transport, do you usually have to take them to the bus stop or a pick-up point?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

Do you get support from the council to pay for your child's transport to school or college at the moment? (Select one option)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Not sure/don't know
- Prefer not to say

The type of support

Which type of support do you have? (Select all that apply)

Please select all that apply

- A disabled persons bus or train pass
- The council arranges transport by taxi/minibus
- A Personal Transport Budget payment
- Not sure/don't know
- Other support

If Other support, please tell us about this

About your child's travel next year

Is your child's travel to school or college going to change next academic year (2025/26)?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Not sure yet/don't know
- Doesn't apply - they are leaving school/college
- Prefer not to say

Travel next year

What might change? (Select all that apply)

Please select all that apply

- I might make other arrangements
- The transport may not be available for free
- They will have a bus pass and go by bus
- They will walk, wheel or cycle
- They will move to a different school or college
- Don't know yet
- Other things might change

If you wish to, you can tell us about other things that might change

How do you feel about your child's travel potentially changing? (Select one)

Please select only one item

- Good - it will be an easy transition
- Ok, I don't mind
- Not sure
- I am a bit worried or anxious
- Bad – it will be difficult for me

If the proposed policies were adopted what would be the impact on you? (Select any that apply)

Please select all that apply

- It will affect my work
- My child won't be able to continue in education or training
- There will be too much pressure on me
- I have other children that will be affected
- No impact on me
- Don't know
- Other (please give details below)

Tell us about other impacts on you

What do you think the equalities impact of this will be on your child?
(How fair will it be to them?)

Add an answer about the equalities impact if you wish

Tell us more...

These are the last questions about your child's school or college travel.

If you want to tell us something else about your child's **CURRENT** transport to school or college, please add it in the box.

If you want to tell us something else about getting your child to school or college **IN THE FUTURE**, please add it in the box.

Travelling independently

Does your child travel to places on their own?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Needs to be with someone else
- Not ready yet
- Prefer not to say

Who has helped your child learn about travelling on their own? (Select all that apply)

Please select all that apply

- Me or another adult
- Friends, brothers or sisters
- School
- They've found out for themselves
- They haven't had help to learn this yet
- Not sure/don't know
- Not applicable for my child
- Other

If Other, please tell us about it

Transport and your child's ambitions

Thinking ahead to your child's future if the policies are adopted, please answer yes or no to the following statements, or skip any you prefer not to answer.

They will be confident to travel to places like college or a workplace on their own.

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

They will only choose college or work near home.

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

When they want to go somewhere, I'll have to think carefully about how much it costs.

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

The cost of transport won't stop them doing things they want to do.

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

I am anxious or worried about how I will afford to get them to places.

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

Your general comments

Do you think that the proposed policies are a good idea?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Are the policies clear?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

What should we do differently?

Add a comment if you wish

Should anything else be considered as an exceptional circumstance?

See proposed exceptional circumstances

- The young person missed a significant majority of Year 11 due to ill health, and the Council has agreed that they will repeat that year in full.
- The placement named by the local authority is a considerable distance from the young person's home; the placement was not named by the Tribunal as a "parental preference"; there is no closer setting that can meet the young person's needs.
- Taking into account the availability of public transport, caring or employment responsibilities mean that the young person's parents or carers are unable to provide transport themselves.

Add your suggestion here

Independent Travel Training

Many young people with SEND can be taught to travel independently using public travel, and we encourage parents and carers to work with us to support young people to do so.

Learning to travel independently offers people more freedom and independence. We are helping young people to become more independent when going to school or college through our Independent Travel Training scheme.

Travel training courses are aimed at staff, parents and carers who want to learn the skills to support a young person or adult to travel independently.

The course helps you to prepare young people for travelling independently to access education, employment or leisure.

Travel training improves social skills, self-esteem and confidence.

Read more about Independent Travel Training

There are details about this training on the Family Hub website, with upcoming course dates (online on Teams) and what to expect:

[Independent travel training | LCC Family Hub](https://families.leicester.gov.uk/send-local-offer/search-for-local-offer-services/support-with-send-in-leicester-city/disabled-children-service/independent-travel-training/) <<https://families.leicester.gov.uk/send-local-offer/search-for-local-offer-services/support-with-send-in-leicester-city/disabled-children-service/independent-travel-training/>>

Have you heard about this training?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Have you done the course (3 half days)?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- No, but I've done similar training
- Not sure

If you have a comment or suggestion you would like to make about our Independent Travel Training scheme, please add it here.

Thank you, you have nearly reached the end of the survey.

Nearly finished

Finally, if you have anything else you'd like to tell us, please add it here.

Equalities monitoring

The following questions are all optional, but by answering them you are helping us to know the range of people who are responding to our surveys so we can check we are reaching everyone we need to.

You can read our [privacy policy on our website](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/how-we-work/our-website/privacy/) <<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/how-we-work/our-website/privacy/>> .

Ethnic background:

Please select only one item

- Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British: Indian
- Asian or Asian British: Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British: Any other Asian background
- Black or Black British: African
- Black or Black British: Caribbean
- Black or Black British: Somali
- Black or Black British: Any other Black background
- Chinese
- Chinese: Any other Chinese background
- Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Asian
- Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Black African
- Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Black Caribbean
- Dual/Multiple Heritage: Any other heritage background
- White: British
- White: European
- White: Irish
- White: Any other White background
- Other ethnic group: Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller
- Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

If you said your ethnic group was one of the 'Other' categories, please tell us what this is:

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months. People with HIV, cancer, multiple sclerosis (MS) and severe disfigurement are also covered by the Equality Act.

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

Please select only one item

- Yes
 No
 Prefer not to say

If you have answered **'Yes'** to the above, please state the type of impairment that applies to you. People may experience more than one type of impairment, in which case you may need to tick more than one box. If none of the categories apply, please tick 'Other' and state the type of impairment.

Please select all that apply

- A long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
 A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
 A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
 A social / communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or autism
 A learning difficulty or disability
 Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
 Deaf or have a hearing impairment
 An impairment, health condition or learning difference that is not listed above (specify if you wish)
 Prefer not to say
 Other

If Other, please say

Are you a parent or carer? If yes, please indicate the age(s) of the children / people you care for

Please select all that apply

- 0-4 years
 5-10 years
 11-15 years
 16-17 years
 18+

Introduction for young people

By law parents have a duty to look after children until they become adults at 18. Councils must also provide support for transport to school for children when they have to attend school, up to the end of Year 11. If you choose Post-16 education you are generally expected to be capable of make your own transport arrangements as part of preparing for adult life.

How do you get to school or college this year?

Will it be different as you get older?

Will you need to be more independent?

We want to know how the proposed changes to travel support may affect you. We will listen to what you tell us so that we can help people who have to make a decision about the policy understand what you have said.

The law says that the council has a choice about whether to provide transport support for young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) at the age when they can leave school.

The council has to make sure it can pay for services. At the moment, you may have seen in the news that there is a problem for many councils where what they have to pay out, is more than is coming in. Money coming into the council mainly comes from central government or from everyone in the city who pays council tax. If no extra money comes in from the government to pay for services the council has to choose – does it cut the services the law says that it can, or does it try to increase council tax?

The proposed changes mean that for Post-16 students with SEND needs, we would only continue to offer transport support in exceptional circumstances.

Now you can either read more about the proposed changes to our policies, or you can start to answer questions and read about the changes as you go along.

Overview of all the proposed changes

Timing

There is a general withdrawal of Post-16 SEND transport support in the proposed policies for the 2025/2026 academic year.

The proposed policies would be for the start of the 2025/2026 academic year.

- This means that parents, carers and young people affected will have limited time to adapt.
- This could affect young people's ability, in some cases, to continue in their existing provision.

Eligibility

There remain 'foundation' eligibility requirements, for example, the young person must be from Leicester. A foundation eligibility requirement for those in Post-16 education has been added which states that a young person must have complex SEND needs with a clear definition.

The definition is:

The young person must have a complex SEND need and a placement specified in an Education Health and Care Plan. A complex SEND need for the purposes of this policy is where a young person has:

- A diagnosed terminal illness that has severe impact on their current physical and/or mental health and that is likely to significantly reduce their life expectancy, and/or
- When accompanied, the young person's additional needs or disability places them or others at a severe and serious risk of danger during the journey to and from school, and/or
- The student has a mobility difficulty which requires specialised seating or a specialised vehicle such as tail-lift access that is not available to them (including on public transport where that has to be relied upon), and/or
- The learner is likely to require medical intervention or personal care during the journey to and from school.

Exceptional circumstances must also apply

A young person who satisfies the foundation eligibility criteria will be eligible for travel assistance *only* if there are also exceptional circumstances.

Whether there are exceptional circumstances in a particular case will be determined by the Strategic Director of Social Care (or another officer exercising delegated authority) in the light of the specific circumstances of that case. In each case, the Council will require appropriate evidence as to any claimed exceptional circumstances.

What are the exceptional circumstances where transport support will be offered?

Each of the following is likely to constitute an exceptional circumstance where we propose that transport support would be available:

- The young person missed a significant majority of Year 11 due to ill health, and the Council has agreed that they will repeat that year in full.
- The placement named by the local authority is a considerable distance* from the young person's home; the placement was not named by the Tribunal as a "parental preference"; there is no closer setting that can meet the young person's needs, and taking into account the availability of public transport, caring or employment responsibilities mean that the young person's parents or carers are unable to provide transport themselves.

*A proposed definition of 'considerable distance' is 75 minutes each way including time to walk to any pick-up point.

It's proposed that 'journey time' is calculated using the most effective means of transport available. For example, if it is more efficient to travel by car than by bus then the journey time in a car will be used as the foundation of the calculation or, if it is more effective to travel by train than car then the journey time by train will be used as the foundation for the calculation.

For journey calculation purposes it's proposed that two changes on public transport is considered reasonable (this is the same for younger children).

Situations not classed as exceptional circumstances

It's proposed that none of the following (taken in isolation) is likely to constitute an exceptional circumstance:

- Single parent families
- Parent(s)/carers who work
- Having other children to look after and/or at other schools
- Travelling to an independent school out of area
- Parents/carers/students unable to drive or not having access to a car
- Students in wheelchairs

Over 18s

For those students aged between 19 and 25 it is proposed that the policy is exactly the same as for 16-18 year olds. This is to ensure that older students don't have more support than younger ones and to make the policy clearer.

EHCPs

The requirement to review transport arrangements during Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) reviews is removed unless travel is a learning outcome. This is to reflect the fact that the travel support application process is generally separate from EHCP reviews.

What type of support will it be?

It is proposed for those with SEND in Post-16 education, that where a young person meets the 'foundation' eligibility requirements and a decision has been made that exceptional circumstance applies, the transport assistance offered will be in the form of a Personal Transport Budget.

This is beneficial to some as it provides a degree of flexibility which, in some situations, may alleviate financial hardship, but it could mean that families who have been used to the council paying for taxi journeys may not be able to continue to rely on that mode of transport going forward.

Travel training amendment

There is an amendment to the wording around travel training. Before it said that if travel training was unsuccessful, transport support would continue. It has now been amended to say that transport support will only be offered if the child or young person is eligible under the policy. This has been changed to be clearer

because in some instances young people who are over 16 may not be able to travel independently but they may not be eligible for transport support.

Free bus passes

It is proposed that for all ages, where children and young people are eligible and it would meet the need, free travel may be by bus pass, and a parent may be offered a bus pass to accompany their child.

The logic is that this helps get the young person used to the journey with the parent, it is more cost effective and more environmentally friendly.

Multiple addresses

It is proposed that, for all ages in the travel policy there is improved clarity about multiple addresses. The proposed policies explain that:

If a pupil has more than one place that may be considered a home address, parents/carers must nominate a primary address for travel purposes.

Home addresses should be for primary carers and travel to the homes of extended family members will not usually be considered a home address.

The council acknowledges that families need flexible arrangements and will support travel to multiple addresses where it is specifically highlighted and agreed at the point of application. In year arrangements for changes will require a new application.

Where there are multiple home addresses being requested the home address closest to the child or young person's school or college will be considered the primary home address. That primary home address will be used to determine eligibility.

The Council will not generally support applications which mean that travel to multiple addresses will result in increased journey time or cost of provision. Personal Transport Budgets may be the best option to meet need in these situations.

Withdrawing support

In the past the council has not consistently withdrawn support due to challenging behaviours. It is intended that this is adopted going forward as failure to do so enables poor behaviours and is harmful to children, young people and those providing transport.

In some cases the council may investigate whether transport is being correctly provided, this could be mid-year. If a claim is proven to be ineligible transport could be withdrawn with four weeks notice.

If travel is temporarily or permanently withdrawn for behavioural reasons parents would be responsible for getting their children to school and for any costs incurred.

Pick-up points

It is proposed that travel to or from pick-up points may take place rather than a door to door service.

Read the proposed policies (PDF)s

For children and young people who have a special educational need or disability

This explains what services are available to help children and young people get to school or college if they have a special educational need or disability.

It explains the proposed 'exceptional circumstances' where transport support may be offered in the form of a Personal Transport Budget when a child reaches Post-16 further education age.

[Download the proposed SEND transport policy for 2025/26 \(PDF\)](#) <user_uploads/draft-send-home-to-school-and-college-travel-policy-for-the-academic-years-2025-2026-to-2027-2028-v0.3.pdf>

For young people in post-16 education and beyond

This proposed policy helps young people planning for Post-16 education and their families understand the different types of transport support available to them. It doesn't just explain the proposed changes to travel support, but also includes other options. For example, concessionary travel tickets from bus companies, bus services operated by colleges, and the 16-19 bursary fund.

It also covers continuing learners aged 19 and those aged 19–24 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It includes the proposed exceptional circumstances where transport support may be offered in the form of a Personal Transport Budget.

[Download the proposed Post-16 transport policy for 2025/26](#) <user_uploads/draft-post-16-transport-policy-statement-2025-2026-v0.3.pdf>

Why we have proposed 'exceptional circumstances'

There are cases that we recognise it is appropriate we provide support but it is meant to be the exception rather than 'the rule'.

We created the 'exceptional circumstance' criteria which we hope will provide clarity to you about the very limited circumstances that we propose would make young people with SEND in Post-16 education eligible for transport assistance from the council.

We have chosen these particular 'exceptional circumstances' to be very narrow deliberately because the ultimate aim of these draft policies is the withdrawal of SEND transport support for those who are not of compulsory school age.

In summary, the proposed policy is seeking to remove support for most people but we think there will still be the occasional case where we should provide support and therefore have created a section of the policy which describes who will be eligible and who will not.

Questions

Where do you live?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Leicester city
- Leicestershire
- Another area

Leicestershire and other areas

Our school transport service is for children and young people who live in Leicester. If you live in Leicestershire or Rutland you can find out more about their service on their websites.

Leicestershire school transport <<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/school-transport>> (leics.gov.uk)

Rutland school transport <<https://www.rutland.gov.uk/roads-transport-parking/transport/school-transport>> (rutland.gov.uk)

You might still want to comment on the changes to school travel for children and young people who live in Leicester city.

What do you want to do now?

Please select only one item

- Leave the survey
- Continue taking the survey

Special travel needs support and you

What you need to know

We want young people to learn how to travel independently as much as possible.

Some children have special travel needs, so we are telling you about the rules we will use next year (2025/26) to decide if we must provide travel support for you to get to school or college.

Now tell us more about you

The questions are all optional. This is an anonymous survey. The answers you give will only be used to help us understand how our school travel policies affect you. You can find out about how we manage personal data on our [website](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/how-we-work/data-protection-and-foia/data-protection/) <<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/how-we-work/data-protection-and-foia/data-protection/>> .

Do you have a special educational need or disability? (Select one answer)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Do you have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)? (Select one answer)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Do you go to school or college at the moment?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

What you do

Are you ...? (Select one)

Please select only one item

- at work in a job or apprenticeship
- on a training course or placement
- unemployed, but looking for work
- not able to go to school/college/work due to your disability
- not going to school, college or work for another reason
- prefer not to say

Travel to school or college

Most young people can use public transport with the right support.

If you are a child or young person with SEND and you are able to use public transport, next year (2025/26) you will be assessed for travel support **in the same way as other children**, even if you need someone to travel with you to school or college.

More about you

What stage of education are you at? (Select one)

Please select only one item

- primary school
- Year 7, 8, 9 or 10
- Year 11
- Year 12 or 13 (Post-16 education)
- older than Year 13 and in full time Further Education or Higher Education

Young people who **can't** use public transport

Read about the different ways we decide if you need transport to school or college.

If you are school-aged up to Year 11

When deciding whether you need a bus pass, or whether you need another type of transport we will think about:

- Your age.
- The walking distance to your nearest suitable school.
- If it's a safe walking route (alone or with an adult).
- Your SEND needs or if you have significant mobility problems.
- If essential travel is stated on your EHCP for learning outcomes.
- If your family has a low income you may have 'extended rights', which make a difference.

When you are a post-16 student

We will think about:

- Whether you are attending a full time publicly funded course.
- Whether you have additional needs or a disability that places you or others at a serious risk of danger during the journey to and from school or college.
- Whether you have a mobility difficulty which requires specialised seating or a specialised vehicle, such as tail-lift access.
- Whether you are likely to require medical intervention or personal care during the journey to and from school or college.
- The complexity of the journey.
- If essential travel is stated on your EHCP for learning outcomes.

If you need travel support it will be a Personal Transport Budget Payment to your parent/guardian.

If you want to find out more, you can read the [proposed SEND travel policy \(PDF\)](#) <user_uploads/draft-send-home-to-school-and-college-travel-policy-for-the-academic-years-2025-2026-to-2027-2028-v0.3.pdf> .

If you would like to make a comment about how these rules will affect you, or someone you know, please add it in the box.

How you travel to school or college

How do you travel to school or college at the moment? (Select the option for the thing you do most often)

Please select only one item

- Walk
- Bicycle or scooter
- Wheel using equipment designed for disability (such as wheelchair, adapted bike)
- Use a public bus or train
- Go on a school bus
- Go in a minibus
- Go in a taxi with other passengers
- Go in a taxi with no other passengers
- Someone in my family or a friend drives me there
- I drive there myself

If you go on transport, does someone usually take you to a bus stop or pick up point?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

Does your parent/guardian get support from the council to pay for your transport to school or college at the moment? (Select one option)

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Not sure/don't know
- Prefer not to say

The type of support

Which type of support do you have? (Select all that apply)

Please select all that apply

- A disabled persons bus or train pass
- The council arranges my transport by taxi/minibus
- My parent/guardian gets a Personal Travel Budget payment
- Not sure/don't know
- Other support

If Other support, please tell us about this

About your travel next year

If the proposed changes happen, do you think how you'll travel to school or college next year will change as a result (2025/26 academic year)?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Not sure yet/don't know
- Doesn't apply - I'm leaving school/college
- Prefer not to say

Travel next year

What might change? (Select all that apply)

Please select all that apply

- My parent/guardian might make other arrangements
- My transport may not be available for free
- I'll have a bus pass and go by bus
- I'll will walk, wheel or cycle
- I'll move to a different school or college
- Don't know yet
- Other things might change

If you wish to, you can tell us about other things that might change

How do you feel about your journey to school/college potentially changing? (Select one)

Please select only one item

- Good - it will be easy
- Ok, I don't mind
- Not sure
- I am a bit worried or anxious
- Bad – it will be difficult

If the proposed changes to the policies happen, what would be the impact on you? (Select any that apply)

Please select all that apply

- It will affect my education
- I won't be able to continue in education or training
- There will be too much pressure on me
- My family will be affected
- No impact on me
- Other (please give details below)

Tell us about other impacts on you

How fair will the changes be to you?

Add any comments you have about this

Tell us more...

These are the last questions about your school or college travel.

If you want to tell us something else about your **CURRENT** transport to school or college, please add it in the box.

If you want to tell us something else about getting to school or college **IN THE FUTURE**, please add it in the box.

Your general comments

Do you think that the proposed policies are a good idea?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Are the policies clear?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

What should we do differently?

Add a comment if you wish

Should anything else be considered as an exceptional circumstance?

See proposed exceptional circumstances

- The young person missed a significant majority of Year 11 due to ill health, and the Council has agreed that they will repeat that year in full.
- The placement named by the local authority is a considerable distance from the young person's home; the placement was not named by the Tribunal as a "parental preference"; there is no closer setting that can meet the young person's needs.
- Taking into account the availability of public transport, caring or employment responsibilities mean that the young person's parents or carers are unable to provide transport themselves.

Add your suggestion here

Travelling independently

Do you travel to places by yourself?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Need to be with someone else
- Not ready yet
- Prefer not to say

Who has helped you learn about travelling by yourself? (Select all that apply)

Please select all that apply

- Parent or another adult
- Friends, brothers or sisters
- School
- I've found out for myself
- I haven't had help to learn this yet
- Not sure/don't know
- Not applicable for my child
- Other

If Other, please tell us about it

If you've got an idea that could help other young people learn about travelling independently, please tell us about it.

Transport and your ambitions

Thinking ahead to your future, please answer yes or no to the following statements, or skip any you prefer not to answer.

I'll be confident to travel to places like college or a workplace by myself.

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

I will only choose college or work near home.

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

When I want to go somewhere, I'll have to think carefully about how much it costs.

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

The cost of transport won't stop me doing things I want to do.

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

I am anxious or worried about how I will afford to get to places.

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No

Thank you, you have nearly reached the end of the survey.

Some general questions to finish

Will the proposed changes to transport support affect someone you know, or your community? If you want to tell us about this, please add your comment in the box

Finally, if you have anything else you'd like to tell us, please add it here.