

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Tool:

Title of proposal	Draft Transport Policies Review: Home to School and College Travel Policy 2025 – 2028 and Draft Post 16 Travel Policy Statement 2025 – 2026. Updated post consultation.
Name of division/service	Social Care and Education
Name of lead officer completing this assessment	Maria Coulson, Lead Commissioner, Children’s Services
Date EIA assessment commenced	28.06.2024. Updated post consultation 23.01.2025. Further update 07.02.2025
Date EIA assessment completed (<i>prior to decision being taken as the EIA may still be reviewed following a decision to monitor any changes</i>)	
Decision maker	Cllr Elaine Pantling, Assistant City Mayor, Education

EIA sign off on completion:	Signature	Date
Lead officer		
Equalities officer (has been consulted)		
Divisional director		

Please ensure the following:

- a) That the document is **understandable to a reader who has not read any other documents** and explains (on its own) how the Public Sector Equality Duty is met. This does not need to be lengthy but must be complete and based in evidence.
- b) That available support information and data is identified and where it can be found. Also be clear about highlighting gaps in existing data or evidence that you hold, and how you have sought to address these knowledge gaps.
- c) That the equality impacts are capable of aggregation with those of other EIAs to identify the cumulative impact of all service changes made by the council on different groups of people.
- d) That the equality impact assessment is started at an early stage in the decision-making process, so that it can be used to inform the consultation, engagement and the decision. It should not be a tick-box exercise. Equality impact assessment is an iterative process that should be revisited throughout the decision-making process. It can be used to assess several different options.
- e) Decision makers must be aware of their duty to pay 'due regard' to the Public Sector Equality Duty (see below) and 'due regard' must be paid before and at the time a decision is taken. Please see the Brown Principles on the equality intranet pages, for information on how to undertake a lawful decision-making process, from an equalities perspective. Please append the draft EIA and the final EIA to papers for decision makers (including leadership team meetings, lead member briefings, scrutiny meetings and executive meetings) and draw out the key points for their consideration. The Equalities Team provide equalities comments on reports.

1. Setting the context

Describe the proposal, the reasons it is being made, and the intended change or outcome. Will the needs of those who are currently using the service continue to be met?

- Leicester City Council provides information children and young people and their parents / carer's on its website surrounding the [support available for Transport to School and College](#).

The proposed changes

- Due to financial constraints in the 2025 / 2026 academic year it is proposed that discretionary post 16 SEND transport support is generally withdrawn. Unless very limited exceptional circumstances exist, this will affect in the region of 450 – 500 young people and their families. Although it could be beneficial for many to travel independently where possible, not all are in a position to do that. The council remain committed to doing everything possible to support young people to achieve their aspirations and policies aim to provide clarity and mitigation wherever possible.
- The law says that councils have to provide different levels of support to children and young people to help them get to school and college. Leicester City Council has three policies to help people understand the support that is available to them:

The policies

1. The Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy

- This explains what services are available to help children and young people get to school.
- It is for all children and young people who must go to school by law (this is called compulsory school age which is approximately between 5 and 16 years old).

2. The Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Home to school and College Travel Policy

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

- Children and young people with a SEND need often rely on additional services to access learning. The law protects them and says that they are entitled to additional support and that can extend up until the age of 25.
- Until now the council has been able to provide discretionary free transport support to young people over 16 with SEND needs, it can no longer afford to do that.
- There are limited 'exceptional circumstances' where the council will continue that support.
- It isn't the first time we have consulted on this, but the council has not implemented the change. In the 2025/2026 academic year under the proposed policy, in many cases young people who choose to stay in education will generally have to have developed some independence skills where they can, rely on parents/carers to get them to further education or in some cases leave education.
- The council understands that this will have an impact for many young people and their families. We want to understand the impact of this change so that decision makers can make a truly informed decision.
- We will use this information to understand what is within our power to do to support young people with SEND to have every opportunity available to them to lead happy and fulfilled lives. We will operate with creativity and determination to continue to develop services for that purpose.

3. The Post-16 Transport Policy Statement

- This explains what services are available to help young people continue in education when they choose to carry on. They have this choice after they finish year 11 (typically age 16).
- At this age the law is different about attending school and also the transport support that the council should provide.
- This policy statement explains to all young people and their families what the different types of support are to help travel to further education.
- It includes the exceptional circumstances where council support is offered for those in further education along with other sources of travel assistance.
- Generally speaking, it is the responsibility of parents / carer's to ensure that children and young people attend school, as such the foundation principle is that the legal obligation for ensuring safe travel to school lies with parents and carers.
- The law acknowledges that there is additional hardship for those families who have a child or young person with SEND and for those who have low incomes. As such it prescribes that local authorities must provide SEND travel support for children and young people of compulsory school age and that rules consider low income.
- Many children in year 7, when they make the adjustment from primary school to high school learn to travel independently. This is a natural progression as they move from childhood and closer to independence in adulthood. The [Leicester City Council Preparing for Adulthood Strategy](#) highlights the aim "to ensure all children and young people with special

educational needs and disabilities succeed in learning, achieve their goals and aspirations and transition successfully into adulthood.”

- Year 9 is a critical milestone for all young people including those with SEND. Planning must take place to support the transition to adulthood and particularly to support the young person and their family through the choices they must make as they reach the end of their compulsory education at the end of year 11, typically where a young person is 16 years old.
- All young people should plan in year 9 but this is especially important for those with SEND. Some children with SEND have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). An EHCP is the plan that parents / carer’s, schools, local authorities and health professionals work together on to ensure that, where young people need more support than is available than ‘reasonable adjustments’ in mainstream settings, those children and young people receive the best available wrap-around support that they require. Wherever possible the aspirations of the child or your person should be central to the support that is put in place.
- At year 9 (typically aged 14) the young person’s EHCP review should specifically address preparing for adulthood. Where it is within the ability of a young person, independent travel is a valuable life skill that can reduce isolation and increase life chances. As such developing these skills is an important part of these reviews.
- In year 9, a specific focus is preparing for adulthood and travel and independence are a significant factor in a young person’s future ability to live the most independent life possible for them.
- Post 16 education commences after year 11. This is the age when a young person can legally leave education. There is no distinction between whether they have SEND or not. Over the next two years there is an expectation that a young person will continue in education or be in employment, otherwise there may be financial support implications for families.
- The law also changes after year 11. There is no legal requirement on local authorities to provide transport at this age for those young people with SEND. For those aged 19-25, local authorities have to provide some support to facilitate education and a discretion as to how and when this is provided. These legal rules make it challenging to prescribe the exact circumstances when support must be provided. However, the council is committed to providing as much clarity as possible and the Post-16 Transport Policy Statement Academic Year 2024 – 2025 is intended to do that.

Background

- The [Children and Young People With Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities \(SEND\) Home to School and College Travel Policy April 2022](#) became Leicester City Council’s overarching policy regarding transport for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) when a decision notice, dated 25 March 2022. was issued. In line with the council’s constitution this became the policy that officers must implement. The formal implementation of this decision commenced on 1 April 2022.

- At this time the decision to discontinue travel support for young people over the age of 16 years was taken as part of this policy. It was publicly consulted upon and agreed that a two-year period for transitional arrangements would be put in place. The two-year transitional period is due to end in March 2024, but the council has agreed to withdraw the travel support at the end of the current academic school year on the 12 July 2024.
- On 22 May 2024 an interim arrangement was communicated via news release which explained that some parents have raised concerns about the consultation process and said they were not made aware of the proposals at the time of the 2021/2022 policies.
- For this reason it was agreed that both the Post-16 Transport Policy Statement and SEND Home to School and College Travel policies should be consulted upon. Permission to consult is being requested and this EIA details considerations in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty that have informed the drafting of the Draft SEND Home to School and College Travel Policy 2025/2026 to 2027/2028 which is the foundation of significant changes in the post 16 support that will be available. This support is detailed in the proposed draft Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2025/2026.
- The proposed draft policies will impact in the region of 450 – 500 young people with SEND and their families. It will disproportionately impact those with little financial resilience. The majority of post 16 young people should expect not to receive SEND transport support from the council in 2025/2026.
- The proposed draft eligibility criteria for post 16 provision will broadly be limited to the following exceptional circumstances:
 - “Each of the following is likely to constitute an exceptional circumstance:
 - 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.

None of the following is (taken in isolation) 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 having access to a car.
 - Students in wheelchairs.”
- If support is provided for post 16 learners it will be in the form of a personal transport budget. This might not cover the cost of taxi provision even where there are exceptional circumstances found.
 - In an effort to improve clarity surrounding operational practice there have also been updates to provisions surrounding behaviour and provisions that affect children and young people with multiple home addresses. These changes affect all ages and do not represent a reduction in service but a clarification of the policy. The council hasn't always enforced these parts before but will do in 2025 / 2026.
 - Additionally, the policy has also been amended to say that in some instances parents will be provided with a bus pass (or expected to walk return journeys when that is reasonable) to accompany their child to school. This helps young people get used to the journey but may not be as convenient as a taxi journey paid for by the council. For all ages the council will consider the most appropriate and cost-effective transport available as it has a duty to ensure efficiency.

Post consultation update (dated 23.01.2025)

- Following analysis of the consultation responses an additional option has been developed for consideration (to be decided upon at Lead Member briefing on 4 February 2025).
- If option 3 was decided upon, the additional service support would constitute further mitigating action as personal transport budgets would be provided to eligible children and young people and council funded and arranged transport in 'exceptional circumstances'.

Post consultation update (dated 06.02.2025)

Under the Equality Act 2010 (including the local authority and schools), have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

SEND children and young people and young adults are likely to face challenges when integrating into some aspects of social life and whilst independence can be beneficial, without support it may also be detrimental to their growth. Suitable school transport is often crucial for children who have additional needs, it is a key part of enabling them to attend school regularly and benefit from their educational experience. Local authorities must comply with the public sector equality duty. They must consider the potential effect of their transport policy on disabled people, both disabled children and disabled parents.

The report seeks a decision regarding which version of the Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Home to School and College Travel Policy 2025/2026 to 2027/2028 - and Post 16 Travel Policy Statement 2025/2026 should be adopted. These proposed policies include the effect of a withdrawal of post 16 SEND Transport provision from the start of the 2025/2026 academic year unless there are very limited 'exceptional circumstances'. Families will have the right to appeal, and cases would be considered on an individual basis.

The report considers the following:

Option 1: do nothing/retain the current service

Under this option there will be no equality implications as the service will continue as at present.

To ensure that equality implications of the following options have been taken into account, an EIA has been carried out and has been updated to include findings from the consultation, students with Special Educational Needs, particularly those with an EHCP are likely to be adversely affected by the proposal.

Option 2: Change the service as per the consulted upon draft proposed procedures, including the general withdrawal of Post 16 SEND transport support unless limited 'exceptional circumstances' exist.

This option broadly removes post 16 SEND transport unless there were very limited 'exceptional circumstances', this will impact on children and young people with SEND, most relevant would be the protected characteristics of age and disability.

Option 3: As Option 2 but with extended 'exceptional circumstances' to families with multiple children with SEND at different schools

Feedback from the consultation has led to an additional option 3 being developed. The consultation was on a proposed policy which broadly removed post 16 SEND transport unless there were very limited 'exceptional circumstances'. The newly developed option still reduces support significantly but provides some increased support in certain circumstances. It is not possible to entirely mitigate the impact of this proposal for all young people, most relevant would be the protected characteristics of age and disability.

2. Equality implications/obligations

Which aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) are likely be relevant to the proposal? In this question, consider both the current service and the proposed changes.

a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- How does the proposal/service ensure that there is no barrier or disproportionate impact for anyone with a particular protected characteristic?
- Is this a relevant consideration? What issues could arise?
- The policy seeks to ensure clarity surrounding what is available to all learners, regardless of their protected characteristic. Work has been completed to identify the various user groups that access the provision in order to understand the full range of needs.
- Particular attention has been paid to the SEND group as it is acknowledged that there is an additional need to ensure their safety in line with expectations for all young people.
- Families have the right to appeal and cases will be considered on an individual basis.

b. Advance equality of opportunity between different groups

- How does the proposal/service ensure that its intended outcomes promote equality of opportunity for people?
- Identify inequalities faced by those with specific protected characteristic(s).

- Is this a relevant consideration? What issues could arise?
- The policy provides clarity surrounding what support is, and is not, available to learners who are in post-16 education. It is the point where the available options for those young people are conveyed and parents / carer's can evaluate the options available to them to support their young person's education and choices.
- The legal requirement to consider exceptional circumstances is contained within this policy. Leicester City Council has embedded systems in place to ensure that each young person's situation is evaluated at a senior level with cross-team support to ensure effective communication.
- A key reason for implementing the overarching 2022 travel policy was to ensure that the council can continue to provide statutory services within available budgets. The draft proposed policies does not alter any principles in this regard as there is not funding available to revisit eligibility.
- Despite changes in financial projections and cost implications there remains an ongoing challenge re cost control and how the general fund can afford this service. Option 3 has been developed and does still demonstrate cost control opportunities, but it remains the case that the council faces severe financial pressure surrounding this service.

c. Foster good relations between different groups

- Does the service contribute to good relations or to broader community cohesion objectives?
- How does it achieve this aim?
- Is this a relevant consideration? What issues could arise?
- As the council planned ahead in 2021 to be able to continue to deliver services within the available budgets there has been close work with a group that represents parents called the Parent Carer Forum. Additionally, at this time officers worked with a group of young people that support the council to understand the views of young people (named the Big Mouth Forum).
- It was acknowledged at the time, that the withdrawal of post-16 SEND transport support meant that a cultural shift in approach was needed and over the past two years the council has worked with those who represent learners, parents and carers to determine how best to prepare for adulthood.

- However, this cultural shift means that in many cases families will need to provide support where the council has previously been in a position to do so. Some families may not have a great deal of resilience to do this in the current economic climate. This associated Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2025/2026 explains the different options, including financial support through college bursaries for travel and other funds, that might be available to them.
- By providing information surrounding eligibility, in principle this policy will empower more young people to travel independently wherever possible and support families to plan ahead.
- To try and make consultation questions as clear as policy the Director of SEND and Education and Lead Commissioner have met with a group of parents of young people impacted by the proposed changes. They have kindly given their time to help shape the consultation questions.
- The Lead Commissioner has attended the Big Mouth Forum to hear the views of young people with SEND who represent their peers surrounding the issue of transport.

3. Who is affected?

Outline who could be affected, and how they could be affected by the proposal/service change. Include people who currently use the service and those who could benefit from, but do not currently access the service.

- Current and new learners, including Children and Young People with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Children Looked After (CLA), Children in Need (CIN).
- Families of those children
- However, although the changes to eligibility are lawful it is acknowledged that for some young people with SEND, their options will reduce given that the council can no longer continue funding at current levels.
- It is not possible to entirely mitigate the impact of the proposals for all young people if there is a decision to change the current policy.

- There is a risk that young people in post 16 education and above may not continue in education, employment or training and become NEET.

4. Information used to inform the equality impact assessment

What **data, research, or trend analysis** have you used?

Describe how you have got your information and what it tells you

Are there any gaps or limitations in the information you currently hold, and how you have sought to address this? E.g. proxy data, national trends, equality monitoring etc.

- Overview of current service user groups (e.g. how many come through the SEND route, the LAC/CIN route)
- Research with other LA's to understand their SEND Transport arrangements.
- Research with post – 16 providers to understand the available support from them to learners.
- Research into the level and quality of independent travel training
- Lead Commissioner attendance at Big Mouth Forum to hear the views of young people with SEND who represent their peers.
- Engagement with some parents of young people who are affected by the changes to support the drafting of the consultation questions
- A consultation was carried out – please see section 5 below.

Intended work includes:

- A project looking at the way in which SEND transport is currently provided and with the specific purpose of identifying opportunities for service improvement and efficiency. This will factor in journey time for young people, the impact of taxi's arriving separately outside schools, vehicle emissions and financial efficiency.
- Continued engagement with a range of professionals to ensure that exceptional circumstances are communicated to the council so that arrangements can be put in place where necessary.

5. Consultation

What **consultation** have you undertaken about the proposal with people who use the service or people affected, people who may potentially use the service and other stakeholders? What did they say about:

- What is important to them regarding the current service?
 - How does (or could) the service meet their needs? How will they be affected by the proposal? What potential impacts did they identify because of their protected characteristic(s)?
 - Did they identify any potential barriers they may face in accessing services/other opportunities that meet their needs?
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- Although developing independence skills is a valuable life skill a significant reason for the policy change is the fact that the service is discretionary and the council does not have the budget to continue providing it.
 - Based on feedback and analysis to date it is apparent that impact is not necessarily always due to the protected characteristic itself but the knock-on consequences to parents / carers. This emphasises the need to ensure a continued and consistent focus on preparing for adulthood and in particular, independence surrounding travel arrangements at an early stage (year 9 onwards at the latest) wherever possible.
 - The above, known considerations were part of the rationale for the two-year lead in period for the 2022 policy and the extended notice period from March 2024 until the start of the 2024 / 2025 academic year.
 - Some parents have raised concerns about the consultation process and said they were not made aware of the proposals at the time of the 2021/2022 policies.
 - A full, public 8 week consultation on Citizen Space was undertaken between 7 November 2024 and 2 January 2025 as authorised by the Strategic Director of Social Care and Education.

- There were 348 responses to the consultation. The proposed policy was not agreed with significantly. 81% of children and young people did not think the proposed policies were a good idea. 88% of adults did not think the proposed policies were a good idea.
- Additionally, there was a consensus of strongly held views from respondents.
- Summary: The main call from CYP is to continue providing accessible transportation services for students with special needs, to ensure they can access education and maintain their safety, independence, and social connections.
- Summary: Overall, parents / carers are calling for a more flexible, individualised approach to transport support, ensuring that children with SEND have equal opportunities for education, safety, and social development. They argue that the proposed changes could lead to further financial strain on families and increased costs for public services in the long run.
- Those out of Leicester City also conveyed similar sentiments and so the summary is representative.
- An associated communications plan has been completed and is appended to the decision report.
- If option 3 was decided upon, the additional service support would constitute further mitigating action as personal transport budgets would be provided to eligible children and young people and council funded and arranged transport in 'exceptional circumstances'.

6. Potential Equality Impact

Based on your understanding of the service area, any specific evidence you may have on people who use the service and those who could potentially use the service and the findings of any consultation you have undertaken, use the table below to explain which individuals or community groups are likely to be affected by the proposal because of their protected characteristic(s). Describe what the impact is likely to be, how significant that impact is for individual or group well-being, and what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove negative impacts. This could include indirect impacts, as well as direct impacts.

Looking at potential impacts from a different perspective, this section also asks you to consider whether any other particular groups, especially vulnerable groups, are likely to be affected by the proposal. List the relevant groups that may be affected, along with the likely impact, potential risks and mitigating actions that would reduce or remove any negative impacts. These groups do not have to be defined by their protected characteristic(s).

Protected characteristics

Impact of proposal:

Describe the likely impact of the proposal on people because of their protected characteristic and how they may be affected. Why is this protected characteristic relevant to the proposal? How does the protected characteristic determine/shape the potential impact of the proposal? This may also include **positive impacts** which support the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Risk of disproportionate negative impact:

How likely is it that people with this protected characteristic will be disproportionately negatively affected? How great will that impact be on their well-being? What will determine who will be negatively affected?

Mitigating actions:

For disproportionate negative impacts on protected characteristic/s, what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove the impact? You may also wish to include actions which support the positive aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. All actions identified here should also be included in the action plan at the end of this EIA.

a. Age

Indicate which age group/s is/ are most affected, either specify general age group - children, young people working age people or older people or specific age bands

What is the impact of the proposal on age?

This policy affects young people with SEND after year 11 (typically post 16 up to age 25) and those in years 9 and 10 in preparation for changes.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on age?

Appropriate support for children to develop through education is required.

Inherently younger people have less experience of independent living and therefore if there is inadequate travel skill development and / or parental support the confidence and progression of young people is likely to be impeded.

What are the mitigating actions?

The work developed and published as part of the preparing for adulthood strategy and the 'exceptional circumstances' notification part of the policy.

The 'exceptional circumstances' element as part of Strategic Director discretion is the way in which the policy ensures that there is a 'safety net' for cases where there is a need and there is a legal requirement to do so.

The Preparing for Adulthood Strategy is of critical importance to ensure that in the years coming up to post 16 further education, young people are equipped with independence skills and confidence to ensure that the transition to adulthood is as supported as possible.

- If option 3 was decided upon, the additional service support would constitute further mitigating action as personal transport budgets would be provided to eligible children and young people and council funded and arranged transport in 'exceptional circumstances'.

b. Disability

If specific impairments are affected by the proposal, specify which these are. Our standard categories are on our equality monitoring form – physical impairment, sensory impairment, mental health condition, learning disability, long standing illness or health condition.

What is the impact of the proposal on disability?

- Young people with SEND are affected by this policy. It is felt that detailing the nature of specific disabilities that do or do not meet exceptional circumstances could in and of itself be overly simplistic and discriminatory.
- Where there is any room for error with an application a panel of subject matter experts convene to feed into a holistic analysis and support effective decision making.
- In the region of 450 – 500 young people are likely to be impacted by the policy. This is likely to result in an increased need for them to travel independently or for parents / carers to make arrangements to support them.
- The consultation responses support the above assertions

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on disability?

- There is a risk that young people with SEND will not be able to continue in post 16 further education if learners, parents / carers and educational establishments do not work with the council to plan practically for post 16 further education.
- There is a risk that the council not being in a position to continue to provide support at previous levels could impede the options and progress of young people with SEND.

What are the mitigating actions?

- A review of SEND placement sufficiency is underway to provide greater educational choice for learner's, parents and carers is available within Leicester City.

- The Preparing for Adulthood Strategy has been developed and implemented to ensure an adequate focus is placed upon independence skills.
- A Post 16 SEND Education Strategy is being developed to support the right education being available at the right time for the learner.
- 'Exceptional circumstances' are investigated thoroughly on every occasion that they are raised to ensure that a detailed and holistic approach is adopted. Detailed work developing the definition of exceptional circumstances has taken place to provide improved clarity.
- Travel training has been offered to educational institutions and other adult stakeholders to equip them to teach young people. A communication plan to support engagement with key stakeholders has been developed.
- If option 3 was decided upon, the additional service support would constitute further mitigating action as personal transport budgets would be provided to eligible children and young people and council funded and arranged transport in 'exceptional circumstances'.

c. Gender reassignment

Indicate whether the proposal has potential impact on trans men or trans women, and if so, which group is affected.

What is the impact of the proposal on gender reassignment?

- None identified

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on gender reassignment?

- None anticipated

What are the mitigating actions?

- Not applicable as no negative impacts are anticipated.

d. Marriage and civil partnership

What is the impact of the proposal on marriage and civil partnership?

- None identified

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on marriage and civil partnership?

- None anticipated

What are the mitigating actions?

- Not applicable as no negative impacts are anticipated.

e. Pregnancy and maternity

What is the impact of the proposal on pregnancy and maternity?

- None identified

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on pregnancy and maternity?

- None anticipated

What are the mitigating actions?

- Not applicable as no negative impacts are anticipated.

f. Race

What is the impact of the proposal on race?

- None identified

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on race?

- None anticipated

What are the mitigating actions?

- Not applicable as no negative impacts are anticipated.

g. Religion or belief

If specific religious or faith groups are affected by the proposal, our equalities monitoring form sets out categories reflective of the city's population. Given the diversity of the city there is always scope to include any group that is not listed.

What is the impact of the proposal on religion or belief?

- None identified

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on religion or belief?

- None anticipated

What are the mitigating actions?

- Not applicable as no negative impacts are anticipated.

h. Sex

Indicate whether this has potential impact on either males or females

What is the impact of the proposal on sex?

- None identified

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on sex?

- None anticipated

What are the mitigating actions?

- Not applicable as no negative impacts are anticipated.

i. Sexual orientation

What is the impact of the proposal on sexual orientation?

- None identified

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on sexual orientation?

- None anticipated

What are the mitigating actions?

- Not applicable as no negative impacts are anticipated.

7. Summary of protected characteristics

a. Summarise why the protected characteristics you have commented on, are relevant to the proposal?

- This is a policy that outlines arrangements for learners over 16 specifically. The policy results in a withdrawal of service in 2025/2026 for hundreds of families (350-450). Additionally, the law reflects additional hardship for those young people with SEND who travel to education (this is why transport support is a legal requirement during compulsory school age). Mitigating actions have therefore been proposed for these groups.

b. Summarise why the protected characteristics you have not commented on, are not relevant to the proposal?

- They do not have a bearing on the material facts for consideration or mitigations required for young people.

8. Armed Forces Covenant Duty

The Covenant Duty is a legal obligation on certain public bodies to 'have due regard' to the principles of the Covenant and requires decisions about the development and delivery of certain services to be made with conscious consideration of the needs of the Armed Forces community.

When Leicester City Council exercises a relevant function, within the fields of healthcare, education, and housing services it must have due regard to the aims set out below:

a. The unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces

These include danger; geographical mobility; separation; Service law and rights; unfamiliarity with civilian life; hours of work; and stress.

b. The principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces

A disadvantage is when the level of access a member of the Armed Forces Community has to goods and services, or the support they receive, is comparatively lower than that of someone in a similar position who is not a member of the Armed Forces Community, and this difference arises from one (or more) of the unique obligations and sacrifices of Service life.

c. The principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces

Special provision is the taking of actions that go beyond the support provided to reduce or remove disadvantage. Special provision may be justified by the effects of the unique obligations and sacrifices of Service life, especially for those that have sacrificed the most, such as the bereaved and the injured (whether that injury is physical or mental).

Does the service/issue under consideration fall within the scope of a function covered by the Duty (healthcare, education, housing)? Which aims of the Duty are likely be relevant to the proposal? In this question, consider both the current service and the proposed changes. Are members of the Armed Forces specifically disadvantaged or further disadvantaged by the proposal/service? Identify any mitigations including where appropriate possible special provision.

This policy falls within the scope of the armed forces covenant duty. While there is no specific distinction between families and the individual child's needs are central, the inherent scope of the policy provides details of the different types of support available to those owed this duty and the approach that will be taken.

9. Other groups

Other groups

Impact of proposal:

Describe the likely impact of the proposal on children in poverty or any other people who we may consider to be vulnerable, for example people who misuse substances, ex armed forces, people living in poverty, care experienced young people, carers. List any vulnerable groups likely to be affected. Will their needs continue to be met? What issues will affect their take up of services/other opportunities that meet their needs/address inequalities they face?

Risk of disproportionate negative impact:

How likely is it that this group of people will be negatively affected? How great will that impact be on their well-being? What will determine who will be negatively affected?

Mitigating actions:

For negative impacts, what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove this impact for this vulnerable group of people? These should be included in the action plan at the end of this EIA. You may also wish to use this section to identify opportunities for positive impacts.

a. Care Experienced People

This is someone who was looked after by children's services for a period of 13 weeks after the age of 14', but without any limit on age, recognising older people may still be impacted from care experience into later life.

What is the impact of the proposal on Care Experienced People?

- Children who are looked after have often experienced trauma. This can be known to affect SEMH needs and behaviours during travel and school.

What is the risk of negative impact on Care Experienced People?

- The policy affects those in post 16 education and above. It is when the young person legally becomes an adult that statutory social care support is often reduced and young adults in learning may experience hardship where there is not broader family support available.

What are the mitigating actions?

- The review of exceptional circumstances (when highlighted) as part of a holistic analysis of need. Sign posting to financial support where available in the associated Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2025/2026.
- If option 3 was decided upon, the additional service support would constitute further mitigating action as personal transport budgets would be provided to eligible children and young people and council funded and arranged transport in 'exceptional circumstances'.

b. Children in poverty

What is the impact of the proposal on children in poverty?

- Children in poverty are likely to be from families with less financial resilience. This is likely to affect the options to transport their children to school.
- Those in post 16 education who become NEET (not in employment education or training) do not have benefit entitlements.

What is the risk of negative impact on children in poverty?

- Those with legal parental responsibility may not have as many available options to transport their young person.

What are the mitigating actions?

- Express provision within the policy – extended rights eligibility for low income families.
- The review of exceptional circumstances (when highlighted) as part of a holistic analysis of need. Sign posting to financial support where available in the associated Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2025/2026.
- If option 3 was decided upon, the additional service support would constitute further mitigating action as personal transport budgets would be provided to eligible children and young people and council funded and arranged transport in ‘exceptional circumstances’.

c. Other group

What is the impact of the proposal on any other groups?

- All service users accessing this provision are vulnerable in some way. Children who are looked after are another group that is likely to be specifically affected

What is the risk of negative impact on any other groups?

- Children who are looked after have already experienced adversity during childhood and may be experiencing or recovering from trauma. They may require additional parental support to continue in post-16 education.

What are the mitigating actions?

- Partnership working between council teams to ensure arrangements adequately mitigate required needs.
- A robust approach to safety in the consideration of applications.

10. Other sources of potential negative impacts

Are there any other potential negative impacts external to the service that could further disadvantage service users over the next three years that should be considered? For example, these could include:

- Other proposed changes to council services that would affect the same group of service users;
- Government policies or proposed changes to current provision by public agencies (such as new benefit arrangements) that would negatively affect residents;
- external economic impacts such as an economic downturn.

- Possible further economic downturn increasing financial pressures on families and particularly those where young people are in poverty.

- The ability of the council to continue to fund other non-statutory services that may be providing support to this group of young people (due to the current financial situation across all local authorities all non-statutory services are regularly being reviewed).

11. Human rights implications

Are there any human rights implications which need to be considered and addressed (please see the list at the end of the template), if so please outline the implications and how they will be addressed below:

First Protocol Article 2 – the right to education

- Failure to implement policy consistently and clearly will mean that barriers to this right will exist.

Part 1: The convention rights and freedoms

Article 14: Right not to be discriminated against

- Young people with SEND are entitled to access education and the law affords specific protections to ensure that this is the case.
- However, as the law affords an element of discretion to local authorities it is critical that operational processes are robust and consistent to ensure access to transport support services are available where there is a need.

12. Monitoring impact

You will need to ensure that monitoring systems are established to check for impact on the protected characteristics and human rights after the decision has been implemented. Describe the systems which are set up to:

- monitor impact (positive and negative, intended and unintended) for different groups
- monitor barriers for different groups
- enable open feedback and suggestions from different communities
- ensure that the EIA action plan (below) is delivered.

If you want to undertake equality monitoring, please refer to our [equality monitoring guidance and templates](#).

- As part of a project to ensure that SEND transport is delivered as effectively as possible in the City there is a strong focus on looking at the cost and benefit of journeys for children and young people. This is built into operational processes and management information will be reported at Director level regularly.

13. EIA action plan

Please list all the equality objectives, actions and targets that result from this assessment (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These now need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Equality Outcome	Action	Officer Responsible	Completion date
Greater educational choice for students with SEND to continue to be developed within Leicester City.	A review of SEND placement sufficiency	Michael Wilsher – Head of Education Sufficiency and Admissions	April 2026
To ensure that engagement with stakeholders takes place to continue to monitor the impacts of the required changes.	To develop an engagement strategy to ensure this takes place	Caroline Joliffe – Head of SEND Integrated Services	April 2026
Improved independence skills for young people post-16	Continued implementation of the Preparing for Adulthood Strategy including travel training.	Caroline Joliffe – Head of SEND Integrated Services	March 2026
The right SEND transport options are provided to those most in need.	'Exceptional circumstances' are investigated thoroughly on every occasion that they are raised to ensure that a detailed and holistic approach is adopted.	Sophie Maltby – Director of SEND and Education.	Business as usual activity with no end date.

This EIA will be updated pending the outcome of the Lead Member's decision.

Human rights articles:

Part 1: The convention rights and freedoms

Article 2: Right to Life

Article 3: Right not to be tortured or treated in an inhuman or degrading way

Article 4: Right not to be subjected to slavery/forced labour

Article 5: Right to liberty and security

Article 6: Right to a fair trial

Article 7: No punishment without law

Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life

Article 9: Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Article 10: Right to freedom of expression

Article 11: Right to freedom of assembly and association

Article 12: Right to marry

Article 14: Right not to be discriminated against

Part 2: First protocol

Article 1: Protection of property/peaceful enjoyment

Article 2: Right to education

Article 3: Right to free elections