



Draft Post-16 Transport Policy Statement 2022/23

Name of Local Authority: Buckinghamshire Council

Department Responsible: Transport Services

Changes to the current Statement are highlighted in yellow throughout this draft Post-16 Transport Policy Statement

1. Introduction

Buckinghamshire Council has a duty to prepare and publish an annual Post-16 Transport Policy Statement by 31 May each year. This statement specifies the arrangements for transport that the Council considers it necessary to make in order to facilitate the attendance of sixth form students receiving education or training. The statement is published in line with the statutory duties under the Education Act 1996, including s.509AA and s.509AB and takes into account the Department for Education statutory guidance – Post-16 transport to education and training, January 2019.

The Council has developed a Needs Analysis which supports and has informed this Post-16 Transport Policy Statement.

Buckinghamshire's Post-16 Transport Policy Statement provides information on travel and transport arrangements that are available to young people who are above statutory school age, which ends on the last Friday in June in the academic year in which they turn 16.

The Council's ambition is that every student in the county achieves their full potential. We are committed to ensuring that those aged 16 and over as explained above (including those with Education, Health and Care Plans up to the age of 25) have access to educational opportunities at school, college or other education settings. Part of this ambition is for as many students as possible to travel independently using a sustainable form of transport.

This Statement applies to any young person who is living in Buckinghamshire. Students who do not live in Buckinghamshire should refer to the Transport Policy and Statement issued by their home Local Authority.

2. Consultation

In preparing the Post-16 Transport Policy Statement the local authority consulted with the following stakeholders:

- any other local authorities it considers appropriate (e.g. cross border transport)
- governing bodies of schools and FE institutions
- the appropriate transport administration body for the area
- persons who will be of sixth form age at the time of the Transport Policy Statement and their parents/carers
- other bodies including education and training providers; higher education institutions, transport companies and authorities operating in the locality; public sector bodies; community groups; voluntary organisations and groups/organisations with an interest in disability issues should also be consulted where appropriate

This statement is consulted on each year prior to publication by 31 May.

3. Travel Assistance

Students are now required to be in education, employment or training until their 18th birthday, which could involve mixing full-time work with study, following an apprenticeship, continuing full time in school or college, or combining part-time training with volunteering. There has not, however, been any change to statutory school age which ends at the end of the academic year in which the student turns 16.

Under the current law, there is no automatic entitlement to free transport from home to school or to another educational setting once a student is 16 and over. However, the Council is required to facilitate the attendance of all those of sixth form age i.e. those students in school years 12- 14 who started their

programme of learning before their 19th birthday. This may involve travel assistance but the Council does not have to provide this assistance free of charge. Responsibility for attendance lies with the student and their parents/carers.

Where a student with SEND starts a new course at aged 19 or older, any transport assistance is Council funded, as they are Adult Learners.

4. Fares, Passes and Travel Cards

4.1 Bus and Rail Operators in Buckinghamshire

Public buses and trains

Please see [our buses and trains webpage](#) for information about public buses and trains in Buckinghamshire.

Most bus and rail transport operators in Buckinghamshire offer special tickets for students. Further details are outlined below.

Please be aware that travel operators set their fares and routes independently of the Council so the details provided below may change at short notice. Before travelling please contact the travel operator direct for up to date route and fare information.

Arriva

[Arriva](#) offer daily, weekly, monthly and annual Student Saver tickets for their bus routes. Students are entitled to a student discount on production of a valid student card i.e. an NUS, ISIC, or College ID card.

Chiltern Railways

[Chiltern Railways](#) offer season tickets for periods of a week, month, over a month or a year.

Holders of monthly or longer season tickets or Travelcard season tickets valid to High Wycombe station can currently use their ticket to travel free on local Arriva buses and Service 8 / X8 within the High Wycombe Town zone at any time of day, 7 days a week.

Holders of monthly or longer season tickets or Travelcard season tickets valid to Aylesbury station or Aylesbury Vale Parkway station can currently use their ticket to travel free on local Arriva, Silver Rider (Route 1), Water Rider Routes (6 and 6A), Green (Route 4) and Service 14 buses within the Aylesbury fare zone at any time of day, 7 days a week.

Carousel Buses

[Carousel Buses](#) offer daily, weekly, monthly and other time period zone tickets. There are a number of special discounts for Buckinghamshire College Group students.

Redline Buses, Red Rose Travel and Red Eagle

[Redline Buses](#), [Red Rose Travel](#) and [Red Eagle](#) offer daily, weekly, 4 weekly and other time period zone tickets. They also offer a range of termly and annual student passes.

16-25 Railcard and 16-17 Saver

[16-25 Railcards](#) give people aged between 16 and 25 one-third off most off-peak rail fares. It should be noted that for all journeys made between 4.30am and 10.00am Monday to Friday a minimum fare of £12 is payable.

The [16-17 Saver](#) gives 16 and 17 year olds 50% off most rail fares every day of the year with no time restrictions and no minimum fare. There are some tickets and routes where the 16-17 Saver cannot be used.

Yoti CitizenCard

Buckinghamshire residents aged 16 and 17 can get discounted bus travel with a [Yoti CitizenCard](#). This proof of age card allows you to travel on most buses within Buckinghamshire for a reduced single fare.

The Yoti CitizenCard is a Proof of Age card and is available free of charge via Buckinghamshire schools and colleges, or for a reduced cost of [£5 from CitizenCard \(normal cost £15\)](#).

The card is only valid for journeys after 9am on weekdays and all day at weekends and bank holidays. It should be noted that this option would not be suitable for journeys to schools or educational settings as the card is not valid for use until after the school day starts.

Other transport providers

Other transport providers may offer discount schemes. Please [contact them](#) direct for details.

School day public bus timetables

For details on school day public bus timetables please visit [our bus timetables webpage](#).

4.2 Travel Schemes offered by colleges

The following colleges operate their own travel schemes. Please contact the colleges directly for further information.

- [Buckinghamshire College Group](#) (campuses at Aylesbury, Wycombe & Amersham)
- [Berkshire College of Agriculture](#) (BCA)
- [Henley College](#)

Other colleges may be able to assist with transport costs. For further information please contact the Student Services department of the college.

4.3 Spare Seats Scheme for Post-16 Students

The Council contracts with companies to provide bus transport for students who are eligible for Council funded transport. Spare seats on these vehicles may be sold where there are seats remaining after the allocation of seats to qualifying students have been made.

Spare seats on Council provided transport are extremely limited. All purchased seats will be subject to the seat being withdrawn with 5 working days' notice if it is required for a pupil who is eligible.

On routes where spare seats are available and where applications are received by the advertised deadline, spare seats will be prioritised and allocated in the following priority order:

1. Renewal applications
2. Looked After Children or former Looked After Children who have been adopted
3. Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
4. Children of Armed Forces personnel - in line with our duty as part of the Buckinghamshire Armed Forces Covenant
5. Siblings of students allocated a place in priority 1 and siblings of eligible students travelling on the same route.
6. All others - on a first come first served basis from date of application

Detailed terms and conditions on the Spare Seats Scheme are [published on our website](#).

The travel pass provided for this transport is the responsibility of the pupil. If lost or damaged, replacements will be provided but this will carry an administration charge.

If your travel pass provided by the Council is lost or stolen, you or your parent/carer will need to contact us online to [request a replacement](#) quoting a valid student reference number, name, address and date of birth.

5. Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities aged 16-19

5.1 Criteria for travel assistance for students with Special

Educational Needs and Disabilities

To qualify for travel assistance from the Council, the following criteria will be considered. Transport needs will be assessed as part of the Education, Health and Care Plan annual review process.

Transport assistance is based on travel from the home address, as defined in the Home to School Transport Policy, to the educational placement(s) named in Section I of the Education, Health & Care Plan.

- The student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) with a named school/s or educational setting/s.
- The student is unable to travel on public transport due to their Special Educational Needs, disability or mobility difficulty;
- The programme of learning is full-time (i.e. at least 540 plus guided learning (planned and funded) hours per year;
- The student lives more than 3 miles walking distance from the school or educational setting as measured by the Council, or they are unable to walk the distance because of their Special Educational Needs, disability or mobility difficulty

6. Travel assistance available for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities aged 16-19

Students who have been assessed and are eligible for travel assistance will be allocated transport or travel assistance appropriate to their assessed needs. This may be specialised if they require equipment to enable them to be transported.

Families of students who are eligible for travel assistance have a choice on how this is arranged. Families can either apply for a Personal Transport Budget which allows them to arrange transport for the student themselves, or they can request transport arranged by the Council for an annual fee of £927.

6.1 Personal Transport Budgets

A Personal Transport Budget allows families to have the freedom and flexibility to make their own travel arrangements rather than travelling on transport organised by the Council. A Personal Transport Budget can be awarded at the discretion of the Council and is a sum of money to support the pupil to travel from home to their school or educational setting. A Personal Transport Budget is not a short-term alternative while a transport application is being processed.

A Personal Transport Budget could be used in many ways, including:

- to pay for fuel and/or running costs on a family vehicle that is used to transport a student to school/educational setting;
- paying for a shared taxi with other students;
- paying for another person to take a sibling to school to free a parent/carer up to transport the student with SEND;
- buying travel passes for other children in the family so that they can travel to and from school, allowing the parent/carer to transport the student with SEND;
- paying for a travel pass for the student with SEND;
- paying for childcare for another child to allow a parent/carer to take the student with SEND to school/educational setting;
- working with the school to join up transport options with other parents (e.g. car share), encouraging a sense of community.

All eligible students requesting a Personal Transport Budget would be awarded one unless the cost to the Council exceeded the cost of arranging the transport, or if suitable arrangements cannot be made.

A Personal Transport Budget is paid on the assumption that students are over 16 years old, and they attend a full-time programme of learning that is at least 540 guided learning (planned and funded) hours per year. If a student receives a Personal Transport Budget part way through the school year, or attends education on a part-time basis, the total payment would be on a pro rata basis to account for the reduced amount of time that a parent/carer would be responsible for transport arrangements.

Conditions of use for Personal Transport Budgets

If a parent/carer uses the Personal Transport Budget to employ someone (e.g. for childcare), then they will be responsible for complying with relevant rules regarding Tax and National Insurance, Employment Law, Insurance, Health and Safety or any other relevant rules or legislation in force at that time. In addition, they would be responsible for any checks carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) on anyone that is employed.

Similarly, if a parent/carer uses the Personal Transport Budget to enter into contracts with organisations e.g. after school clubs, or individuals, the parent/carer would be responsible for complying with the terms and conditions of those contracts. This may include payment arrangements or notice of cancellation.

Personal Transport Budgets cannot be used in the following circumstances:

- to buy or utilise space on transport services from the Council
- for any purpose that does not enable the student to travel to/from the school/educational setting
- for any activity that is illegal, unlawful or unsafe
- for other purposes that may bring the Council into disrepute

To apply for a Personal Transport Budget the student will need to:

- live within the area where Buckinghamshire is the local council
- have an Education, Health and Care Plan
- attend the school/s or education setting/s outlined in the Education, Health and Care Plan
- comply with the eligibility criteria described in section 5

All children with an Education, Health and Care plan in the same family would be considered when agreeing the amount awarded via a Personal Transport Budget.

A Personal Transport Budget may be withdrawn in some circumstances, including if:

- a student's attendance falls below 90% (this aligns with the government definition of "Persistent Absence" in school-age children which is an absence rate of 90% and below). It is recognised that attendance for some students may be affected by their medical needs
- a student regularly arrives late at school in the mornings or in an unfit state to learn
- There is a change to national legislation and/or the Council's policies

Agreeing the amount of Personal Transport Budgets

The following factors will be taken into consideration alongside discussion with the family, to determine the appropriate personal budget amount:

- the special educational needs and disabilities of the student
- the travel distance
- how the student might travel to school
- the time the journey takes
- whether the student is able to travel alone or if they need to be accompanied
- the age of the student
- whether any specialist equipment might be required

The minimum amount that would be awarded with a Personal Transport Budget is 45p per mile. The cost of two return journeys per day of attendance at school or setting (i.e. all four legs of the journeys) would be included in the Personal Transport Budget amount. As every family's circumstances are different we are unable to determine an approximate upper limit. ~~In many cases it may exceed the amount a family would pay if the Council were organising the transport on their behalf.~~

There might be circumstances where a Personal Transport Budget is not appropriate. This could include where the Council can arrange transport at a lower cost. This will be assessed as part of the application process. The Council will make the final decision based on all the available information.

More detailed information can be found on our [Personal Transport Budgets webpage](#).

6.2 Mileage Allowance for SEND

Personal Transport Budgets replace mileage allowances. However there may be exceptional circumstances where a mileage allowance could be offered on a temporary basis.

6.3 Council organised transport for an annual fee

Transport can be arranged by the Council for an annual fee of £927 for students with SEND aged 16-19 who are eligible for transport assistance, irrespective of the distance from home to school or educational setting. The charge would be on a pro-rata basis where required to reflect the number of days a student attends a school/educational setting.

In all cases a minimum charge will be applied, equivalent to 1 day per week for all students wishing to have transport organised, including those in 38 or 52 week placements. The minimum amount any family will be charged for each Council organised transport place is £185, unless they qualify for the reduced fee, as detailed in section 6.4.

The annual fee structure will be reviewed each year.

Payment will be based on the number of days that the student will be attending their education setting at the beginning of the academic year. These cannot be swapped or reduced once the transport has been arranged; however, it may be possible to arrange transportation for extra days for an additional cost.

Payments need to be made within 28 days of the Council confirming the transport fees that apply. ~~being confirmed in writing.~~ Any non-payment will result in the withdrawal of transport. ~~at the end of the first half term.~~ In these instances, parents/carers will be notified in writing of the date that transport will end. Transport will not be reinstated until any outstanding charges are paid.

More detailed information can be found on our [step by step guide to post-16 SEND transport](#) webpage.

6.4 Help with travel costs

Where the Council has arranged transport, families can apply for a reduced annual fee of £618 if they are able to demonstrate financial hardship. The reduced charge would be on a pro-rata basis where required to reflect the number of days a student attends a school/educational setting.

To qualify for the reduced charge, the following would be required:

- evidence of Income Support / Universal Credit
- evidence that your household income is less than £21,000 gross (i.e. before any deductions)

The process for applying for the reduced annual fee is described on our [help with travel costs](#) webpage.

Families may wish to apply for financial support through the bursary schemes that are managed by schools and other educational settings. Where this is the case, any bursary awards granted by the school would be paid directly to the family.

There are two types of bursaries which students are able to apply to for financial assistance. One of these is discretionary. These are described below.

The 16-19 Vulnerable Bursary Fund

A key priority of the Government is to close the gap in attainment between those from different economic backgrounds, and to ensure every young person participates in and benefits from a place in 16-19 education and/or training.

Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups are available up to £1,200 a year for the most vulnerable groups. This includes:

- young people in care

- care leavers
- young people claiming Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or supporting themselves and dependents
- young people receiving the following payments in their own right
- disability Living Allowance OR Personal Independence Payment

As well as:

- employment and Support Allowance OR Universal Credit

The bursary is paid if young people meeting the above eligibility criteria are in financial need. Applications are facilitated through the school or other educational setting which the student attends. Enquiries should be directed to the school or college.

Further information on the eligibility criteria for this bursary can be found on [GOV.UK: 16 to 19 bursary fund guide 2021 to 22 academic year](#).

Discretionary bursaries

Discretionary funding may also be available to support students in accessing education and training. This funding is managed locally and schools and other educational settings are able to award this funding to any student who is facing genuine financial barriers to participation. Schools/educational settings set their own eligibility criteria and decide on how much is paid. They set their own conditions for students to meet in order to receive a discretionary bursary. This might include standards of behaviour or attendance.

To find out if you are eligible for a discretionary bursary please contact your school or other educational setting.

Severe financial hardship

To support exceptional circumstances where families experience severe financial hardship, the Council has discretion through ~~an appeal~~ a panel review process to consider:

- delaying the payment period for the reduced annual fee
- reducing the annual fee further
- waiving the charge completely

To be eligible for consideration, the parent/carer must demonstrate that:

- they have applied for the reduced annual fee of £618 in their original application for transport and that the reduced annual fee has already been awarded
- they have applied to their child's educational setting for one of the two bursary schemes and have received an outcome decision
- the reduced annual fee is not affordable because they would not be able to meet their essential living needs by paying the charge

To apply, the parent/carer must provide details of the financial circumstances of the household which evidence the above criteria as well as evidence of application to bursary schemes.

Family circumstances such as receiving benefits or being a single parent household are not sufficient reasons alone for agreeing an application. However, they may be taken into account if there are also other reasons that together represent severe financial hardship.

In making a decision, the Council will consider whether sufficient evidence of severe financial hardship has been demonstrated.

If the financial hardship is likely to be temporary, the Council may be able to delay or extend the period over which the reduced charge will be paid. The Council can consider reducing the charge further to a level that is reasonable to enable the family to meet their essential living needs. Where there is evidence that the financial hardship is likely to be long-lasting and very severe, the Council will consider waiving the charge completely.

The process for applying ~~to appeal~~ **to appeal for a review** due to severe financial hardship is described on our [help with travel costs webpage](#).

~~For further information, please see section 12 on how to appeal a decision.~~

6.5 Circumstances where payments for transport are not required

In some circumstances transport is funded by the Council. These are:

- Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities who are Looked After Children (LAC)
- Students who are in receipt of Continuing Health Care funding that covers their transport
- Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities who have started a new educational course **at 19 since their 19th birthday** - for these students transport to educational placements becomes funded until they **are turn** 25 or leave education or training completely as Adult Learners

Please note: If a student is undertaking a course of learning which is clearly stated to have a number of modules eventually leading to one overarching qualification or certificate on completion of all the modules, then that would be one course. A new module of a continuing course of study is not classed as a "new" course.

7. Independent Travel Training

The Council is building on existing Independent Travel Training (ITT) programmes delivered by schools to support students as they transition to adulthood.

This training helps students develop the skills, confidence and knowledge to use transport safely. It covers topics such as road safety, personal safety, money management, journey planning and coping strategies, including:

- confidence in using buses or trains
- personal safety
- how to use timetables and buy tickets
- road safety, including how to cope with traffic on major roads
- what to do when things go wrong (e.g. the bus is late)

For some students ITT would not be appropriate due to their complex needs, but where students have the potential to benefit from ITT we would support them to take part in training.

8. Further information

8.1 Council arranged transport for students from the same household

For families with more than one student in the household with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, e.g. siblings, who have transport organised by the Council, full payment is required for each student. This is the case regardless of whether they are travelling in the same vehicle or not.

8.2 Non-payment of charges

Payments are required for transport organised by the Council (except for the circumstances outlined in section 6.5). ~~Payments need to be made within 28 days of the Council confirming the transport fees that apply. Payments need to be made within 28 days of transport being confirmed in writing.~~ Any non-payment will result in the withdrawal of transport ~~at the end of the first half term~~. Parents/carers will be notified in writing of the date that transport will end. Transport will not be reinstated until any outstanding charges are paid.

Transport will not be withdrawn while an appeal process is underway.

9. Support for students with SEND aged 19-25

There are additional responsibilities under Section 508F and Section 508G of the Education Act 1996 for the Council to provide transport for some students. These students must meet the following criteria:

- be an adult aged between 19 and 25 years with an EHCP
- live in the Local Authority area
- be attending:
 - a further education setting
 - an education setting maintained or assisted by the local authority and providing further or higher education (or both)
 - an educational setting outside the further and higher education sectors, where the local authority has secured education or training and/or boarding accommodation for that learner
 - the educational setting must be named in the student's Education, Health and Care Plan
 - the educational setting must be more than 3 miles away from the student's home address, unless the student is unable to walk that distance as a result of their SEND, even if accompanied, or the route is unsafe
 - the student is unable due to his or her special educational needs and disabilities to use public transport independently

Students who have been assessed and are eligible for travel assistance will be allocated travel assistance appropriate to their assessed needs. This may be specialised if they require equipment to enable them to be transported.

Where a student with SEND starts a new course at aged 19 or older, any transport assistance is funded by the Council, as they are Adult Learners.

Travel assistance to the educational setting would continue until the end of the academic year in which the student turns 25.

For advice on financial support to access higher education please contact Student Finance England on 0300 100 0607.

9.1 Motability Allowance

Students aged 19-25 with a special educational need or disability may be eligible for a Motability Allowance, depending on the nature of their primary need. For further details please visit the [Motability Allowance website](#).

10. General Guidance

10.1 Transport during the school/college day

Transport will not be provided for journeys made during the school day. Where students attend medical or dental appointments or off-site provision arranged by the school, then the school or parent/carer, as appropriate, must make arrangements and pay for transport.

10.2 Transport timing

Appropriate transport arrangements will be made based on the age and needs of the child. Pick-up and drop-off times cannot be rescheduled to take into account other family commitments. Parents/carers who are unable to be home at the specified pick-up and drop-off times and location will have to make alternative arrangements.

The pick-up/setting down point for SEND students may be a short distance from the home address.

Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child is at the pick-up/setting down point near their home and for accompanying their child to/from this point where required. Full SEND school transport guidelines are [published on our website](#).

11. Students without an Education, Health and Care Plan aged 19-25

Students without an Education, Health and Care Plan aged 19-25 may be able to receive travel assistance to their education or training setting. This will be dependent on the student being assessed as eligible under the Care Act 2014 and education forming part of the assessed need. Any travel assistance considered would be subject to the [Charging Policy for Non-Residential Services](#).

All enquiries with regard to this travel assistance should be made through the [Community Reablement Team](#).

12. How to appeal a decision

The Council has a 2 stage review process for parents/carers who wish to challenge a decision about:

- exceptional circumstances that the parent/carer believes should be considered as to why transport should be provided for their child, if the child is not entitled to Council funded transport in accordance with this Policy
- the decision made by the Council not to award a child Council funded home to school transport
- ~~the reduced annual fee not being affordable because the parent/carer would not be able to meet their essential living needs by paying the charge~~

The appeal process is to challenge the above areas. If you have a concern about how the arrangements are being delivered, you should contact the Client Transport Team in the first instance. If your concern is unable to be resolved you should use the complaints process.

If you are in financial hardship and are concerned about the annual fee, please see section 6.4 on help with travel costs.

Stage 1

Parents/carers have 20 working days to request a review of our decision about home to school transport. Parents should write to us, detailing why the decision should be reviewed, giving details of any personal/family circumstances and including any supporting evidence to be considered.

The decision will be reviewed by a senior officer or via the Transport Exceptions Panel. Within 20 working days of receipt of this letter parents will be advised in writing of the appeal decision.

Stage 2 - review by an Independent Appeal Panel

Parents/carers have 20 working days from the receipt of our Stage 1 written decision notification to make a written request to escalate the matter to Stage 2. Within 40 working days of receipt of the parents/carers request, an Independent Appeal Panel will consider written and verbal representations from both the parent/carer and officers involved in the case and will give a detailed written notification of the outcome within 5 working days of the panel meeting.

The Independent Appeal Panel is made up of trained volunteers who have experience of transport issues. These volunteers are independent of the Council.

Stage 3 - complaint to Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

Parents/carers can complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman only if they consider that:

- there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules
- if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal has been handled

For further information please [contact the Admissions team](#).

13. How to make a complaint

Any pupil, parent or carer wishing to make a complaint relating to Home to School Transport should complete the [school transport 'Contact us' form](#).

Formal complaints should be made through our [Feedback and Complaints Procedure](#).

14. Further Information and Key Contact Details

If you require further information please contact the relevant service as follows:

For eligibility enquiries for students with SEND please contact your named Education, Health and Care Coordinator or the relevant area team:

- [Aylesbury SEND Area Hub](#)
- [Chiltern and South Bucks SEND Area Hub](#)
- [Wycombe SEND Area Hub](#)

For Admissions and School Transport enquiries please use the [Admissions and school transport 'Contact us' form](#).

For more information on school transport please visit [our website](#).

For a replacement travel pass please [request a replacement](#).

To apply for a Personal Transport Budget please use the [school transport 'Contact us' form](#).

Additional Guidance:

[Government guidance on Post-16 Transport](#)

[Further information on additional support for subsidised college transport](#)