

Post-16 Transport Policy for the 2025/26 Academic Year

Name of LEA: Hampshire

Department Responsible: Children's Services

Hampshire County Council Post-16 Transport Policy for the 2025/26 academic year: for students in further education aged 16-19, continuing students and young people aged 19-24 with learning disabilities.

1. Commitment

Hampshire County Council (the County Council) and its post-16 providers are committed to ensuring transport is available to enable students to access education and training as set out in this Policy. Support is provided either by the County Council or post-16 providers. This Policy applies for the 2025/2026 academic year only and sets out the support available.

There is no automatic entitlement to free school or college transport once a student is over 16. The County Council has considered its resources and the travel to college opportunities for students. Students can attend a college of choice and, if needed, apply to their college's student support for assistance.

The cost and mechanical process of transporting young people with special educational needs is greater and more complex. The County Council recognises that families may need a transport service to ensure that 16+ students with SEND can access a place that is suitable for their needs and so do offer, under discretionary powers, a transport service that requires an annual parental contribution.

2. General Transport Available

There are a number of public transport service providers in Hampshire. Colleges and schools in Hampshire have their own transport arrangements but the situation does vary. Students should check with their educational setting about the transport arrangements and ticketing prices that can apply to both bus and train travel.

College and School Details

Information provided by post-16 providers regarding transport services can be found in the [College and School Details](#) section of this Policy (section 12).

Other Transport Support

Post-16 education providers and other agencies provide support with transport in certain cases, such as:

- Cycle schemes
- [Care to Learn](#)
- [Wheels to Work](#)

3. Qualification for support from the County Council for students attending colleges and schools with sixth forms (including academies)

The County Council will assist with travel expenses for post-16 students with special educational needs or a disability. A parental contribution towards the cost of this transport will be required. This contribution will be uplifted annually by the March Consumer Price Index (CPI). For the purposes of the example below, a rate of 2.2% (based on the 12 months to August 2024), has been used to indicate the potential impact on the contributions:

Distance to travel	2024/25 Annual charge	2024/25 Termly charge	Example 2025/26 Annual charge	Example 2025/26 Termly charge
Up to 5 miles	£808.25	£269.42	£826.03	£275.34
5.01 to 7.5 miles	£1,119.43	£373.15	£1,144.06	£381.35
7.51 to 10 miles	£1,568.01	£522.67	£1,602.51	£534.17
Over 10 miles	£1,791.62	£597.21	£1,831.04	£610.35

A transport application will normally only be considered if the student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or if the student has a disability which means they require transport arrangements to be provided. The student or parent needs to apply for transport and provide evidence that without County Council transport assistance, the student would be unable to attend the educational placement.

A student will not normally be granted discretionary transport **solely** because their parents' work commitments or caring responsibilities mean they are unable to transport the student to the educational placement. Reasons such as the parent's working pattern or the fact they have children attending more than one school or educational placement, will not normally be considered sufficient reasons for a parent being unable transport a student.

Evidence that will be considered would include, but not be limited to, an employer letter regarding working arrangements or a letter from a medical practitioner.

When assessing an application for transport assistance, the County Council will refer to the criteria provided in [Appendix 1](#).

4. Post-16 training providers and apprenticeships

The same qualifications as set out in paragraph 3 apply for students attending post-16 training providers. Students in apprenticeships with employed status do not qualify for any assistance with travel costs.

5. Qualification for support from colleges and schools with sixth forms including academies

In addition to the support available from the County Council, post-16 providers may also provide financial support towards transport costs for certain students such as young parents, those from low-income families, and/or those at risk of being Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs). This is determined by the provider and is often based on how they have locally determined to use 'hardship' funds.

Section 12 of this Policy provides details of transport services offered by post-16 providers: [College and School Details](#).

6. Assistance with transport for students over the age of 19 with learning difficulties or disabilities

Students over the age of 19 may qualify for transport assistance if they are subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan. It will then be provided either up until the age of 24 or until the student completes the course, whichever is the earliest. A new application will need to be made each year to access the service.

The student or their parents will need to apply for transport and evidence that the County Council must provide transport to facilitate attendance and evidence that without transport assistance, the student will be unable to attend the educational placement.

When assessing an application for transport assistance, the County Council will refer to the criteria provided in [Appendix 1](#).

7. Independent Travel Training

Independent Travel Training may be offered to eligible students with parental consent. Readiness to complete Independent Travel Training would be outlined in the EHCP or agreed by the County Council following a discussion with the school or college and parents. Once an eligible student has successfully completed Independent Travel Training, their travel arrangements will be reviewed.

Note: Travel arrangements offered to an eligible student may change after their training has been completed to reflect their improved ability to travel to school independently.

8. Students attending providers outside Hampshire

The County Council may provide assistance with transport to support students attending providers outside of the county, but students need to qualify for support against the criteria outlined in [Appendix 1](#). The provider attended may also be able to provide some support (see section 5).

9. Students attending providers in Hampshire but living outside the county

Students attending providers in Hampshire but living outside the county should apply to their home Local Authority for assistance. However, providers themselves may provide assistance and are not bound by county boundaries.

10. Applying for assistance with transport

Students wishing to apply for help with transport can do so by accessing the County Council's website where further details are available: [How to apply for transport assistance for post-16 provision | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

Students may also wish to apply to colleges directly for help. Section 12 provides a list of colleges with links to their webpages which outline the assistance they can provide.

Eligibility for transport assistance is re-assessed annually and a new transport application is required each academic year if assistance is still required. If the student's personal circumstances change within an academic year, their eligibility for transport assistance will need to be re-assessed and a new application will be required.

11. Complaints/Appeals

Hampshire County Council takes all complaints seriously and has a complaints procedure to ensure they are investigated and, where possible, resolved. [Information about the complaints process is available on our website.](#)

People are encouraged to raise their concerns using the appropriate contacts. Where necessary, complaints will be considered at a more senior level to ensure every effort is made to resolve the issue.

Parents wishing to make an appeal regarding a transport entitlement decision or subsequent transport arrangements should contact the Head of School Transport, via [our online enquiry form](#), or in writing to:

Children's Services Department
Hampshire County Council
The Castle
Winchester
Hampshire
SO23 8UG.

The appeals process is provided in Section 5 of [Appendix 1.](#)

12. College and School Details

The links below provide information on travelling to schools or colleges, including any transport assistance the school or college provides.

Hampshire establishments:

- [Andover College](#)
- [Barton Peveril College, Eastleigh](#)
- [Basingstoke College of Technology](#)
- [Brockenhurst College](#)
- [Eastleigh College](#)
- [Fareham College](#)
- [Farnborough College of Technology](#)
- [Itchen College](#)
- [The Sixth Form College, Farnborough](#)
- [HSDC](#)
- [Peter Symonds College](#)
- [Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke](#)
- [Richard Taunton Sixth Form College, Southampton](#)
- [Sparsholt College](#)
- [St Vincent Sixth Form College](#)
- [Totton College](#)

Out of county establishments:

- [Chichester College](#)
- [Guildford College](#)
- [Merrist Wood College](#)
- [Highbury College, Portsmouth](#)
- [Newbury College](#)
- [Portsmouth College](#)
- [Southampton City College](#)

Appendix 1

Criteria applied to determine eligibility to transport to a post-16 provider

The following criteria apply to all students:

Necessity: The County Council will provide transport assistance when it is necessary to facilitate the student's attendance at their educational setting.

Minimum distance: The journey from/to the school/college must be more than three miles, measured by the nearest available walking route.

Eligible but living within walking distance?

Transport may be provided within the walking distance if it is necessary to facilitate attendance. Factors that may be taken into account include:

- The student's ability to walk
- The student's need to be accompanied by an adult.

Which college or school? Travel assistance will be given to the nearest suitable school or college for the student as named in their EHCP.

A student attending their nearest special school or school with a sixth form named in his or her EHCP may qualify, subject to the other criteria detailed in this Appendix.

Pick-up and drop-off points: Where the distance between the nearest pick-up or drop-off point and home or college is less than 1 mile, the County Council will not normally provide transport for that part of the journey. However, transport may be provided for students within these distances where this is recommended following an assessment of their individual needs. The criteria used to determine entitlement within walking distance apply in these circumstances.

Journeys to and from other destinations: Transport is not offered to or from points other than the college and home.

Waiting Time: The expectation is that students will share transport and the drop off and collection arrangements are made in line with the college start and finish times. Transport is not able to take into consideration individual student's timetables and where appropriate, the transport arrangement may include a waiting time at the start and/or end of the day.

Residential Placements: Some students with complex and/or severe needs are placed in a residential out of county special school or college because there is no appropriate provision available locally. Such students will receive transport at the start and end of each term, half term and at other school/college closures. Any additional transport will be the responsibility of parents/carers.

1. The following criteria apply additionally to students aged 16 or 17 in September 2025:

Parental Assistance: The County Council expects that parents and carers take responsibility for facilitating their child's attendance in education where they are able to do so. Families/applicants may apply for transport and explain their circumstances which make support from the County Council with transport necessary to enable their child to attend their place of education or training. All requests for transport will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Charges: If transport is provided by the County Council, a parental contribution may be levied.

No charge will be made when the student's parents are in receipt of any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit

Families in receipt of free school meals (due to low income) are not required to pay the contribution.

Families with a low income, but not in receipt of the above benefits, where the charge would reduce their income to around £16,190, or exceptional circumstances, may apply for a discretionary waiver or reduction in charge.

2. The following criteria apply to students aged 18 when the transport starts in September 2025 or already 18 at the time of application or 19 or over and continuing on a course that they started before their 19th birthday:

Parental assistance: There will be no expectation that a parent will assist with their adult child's transport arrangement, although parents who wish to do so will be welcome to support their adult child's transport arrangement.

Charges: If transport is provided by the County Council, a parental contribution may be levied.

No charge will be made when the student's parents are in receipt of any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit

Families in receipt of free school meals (due to low income) are not required to pay the contribution.

Families with a low income, but not in receipt of the above benefits, where the charge would reduce their income to around £16,190, or exceptional circumstances, may apply for a discretionary waiver or reduction in charge.

3. The following applies to students aged 19 or over and starting a new course:

Charges: If transport is provided, no contribution towards the cost of transport will be levied.

4. School Transport - Review/Appeals Process

Parents who wish to challenge a decision about

- The suitability of the transport arrangements offered to their child
- Their child's eligibility;
- The distance measurement in relation to statutory walking distances; and
- The inherent safety of the route in accordance with the Road Safety GB guidelines

may do so via [our online enquiry form](#) or in writing to:

School Transport,
Elizabeth II Court,
Children's Services Department,
Hampshire County Council,
The Castle,
Winchester,
Hampshire,
SO23 8UG.

Parents should indicate their reasons for challenging the decision using the categories above.

In the first instance, a case will be reviewed by a Senior Officer within the School Transport Service.

In cases against refusal of a transport service, there may be a further appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel made up of one or more Senior Officers outside of the

School Transport Service. Members of the Panel will hold a comprehensive understanding of the School Transport and Post-16 policies and legislative framework and will make decisions on appeals against offers of transport.

Stage one: Review by a Senior Officer

A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the County Council's school transport decision to make a written request asking for a review of the decision.

The written request should detail why the parent believes the decision should be reviewed using the categories above. They should give details of any personal and/or family circumstances the parent believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed.

Within 20 working days of receipt of the parent's written request, a senior officer will review the original decision and send the parent a detailed written notification of the outcome of their review, setting out:

- Whether they have upheld the local authority's original decision
- Why they reached that decision
- How the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. Road Safety GB)
- The factors considered in reaching their decision
- Any other agencies or directorates that were consulted as part of the review

Where they have upheld the original decision, they should also explain how the parent may escalate their appeal to stage two of the process.

Stage two: Review by an independent appeal panel, where it applies.

A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's stage one written decision notification to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two.

Within 40 working days of receipt of the parent's request, an independent appeal panel will consider written and verbal representations from both the parent and officers involved in the case and give a detailed written notification of the outcome (within 5 working days), setting out:

- whether they have upheld the local authority's original decision;
- why they reached that decision;
- how the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. Road Safety GB);
- the factors considered in reaching their decision;
- information about any other directorates and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the review; and
- information about the parent's right to put the matter to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (see below).

The independent appeal panel will be made up of one or more members who will be independent of the original decision making process (but are not required to be independent of the County Council) and suitably experienced (at the discretion of the County Council), to ensure a balance is achieved between meeting the needs of the parents and the County Council, and that road safety requirements are complied with and student is placed at unnecessary risk. Members will be assigned by a senior manager within the County Council's Children's Services directorate.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman There is a right of complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, but only if complainants consider that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal has been handled. If the complainant considers the decision of the independent panel to be flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may also apply for judicial review.