

East Sussex County Council

Post-16 Transport Policy Statement 2021 – 2022

DRAFT

Post-16 Transport Policy Statement - Academic Year 2021 – 2022

Transport policy statement for young people aged 16-18 in further education, continuing learners aged 19 and those young people aged 19 – 24 (inclusive) with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Department Responsible: Children's Services

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Contents

Introduction	Page 4
Aims and objectives	Page 4
Transport and travel support	Page 5
Concessionary tickets for young people 16 – 25 from public transport providers (including council run vehicles)	
Travel support from schools and colleges	
The 16-19 Bursary Fund	
East Sussex hardship fund	
Young parents / Care to Learn	
LA support	Page 9
LA support for young people without special educational needs or a disability	
LA support for Learners with special educational needs or a disability	
Refunds	
Travel training	
Other travel assistance available if application declined	
Apprenticeships	
Applying for LA transport support	Page 13
Appeals	Page 13
College and sixth form contact information	Page 14
Consultation	Page 14

Introduction

Local authorities do not have to provide free or subsidised post 16 travel support but do have a duty to prepare and publish an annual transport policy statement specifying the arrangements for the provision of transport or other support that the authority considers necessary to make to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training.

All young people carrying on their education post 16 must reapply for travel support.

'Sixth form age' refers to those young people who are over 16 years of age but under 19 or continuing learners who started their programme of learning before their 19th birthday (years 12,13,14).

Local authorities also have a duty to encourage, enable and assist young people with learning difficulties / disabilities to participate in education and training, up to the age of 25.

This policy uses the term 'Post 16' to include both learners of sixth form age and those with learning difficulties / disabilities up to the age of 25.

This policy document specifies the support that East Sussex County Council (the council) considers necessary to facilitate the attendance of Post 16 learners receiving education or training.

Education or training refers to learning or training at a school, further education institution, a council maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education, an establishment funded directly by the Education Skills Funding Agency, learning providers delivering accredited programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes and are funded by the council, for example, colleges, charities and private learning providers.

Aims and objectives

East Sussex County Council aims to have a clear policy that families understand, to enable learners to make informed choices about where to study post 16, and to signpost them to other available support as appropriate.

East Sussex County Council has published separate policies outlining the transport assistance the council provides to young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The policies can be found at:-

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/transport/strategy/download/>

These students may not be able to use public transport and/or may have long and expensive journeys to access a suitable course nearest to their home.

The County Council encourages young people to become more independent and offers training to students to help them to travel independently. This training will also help young people to access leisure facilities and provide opportunities for employment.

In addition to the published policies, for ease of reference, the eligibility criteria is set out in section entitled **LA support for Learners with special educational needs or a disability** (see pages 9-13) Please note that learners of sixth form age have a different eligibility criteria to Adult Learners.

Transport and travel support

Concessionary tickets for young people 16 – 25 from public transport providers (including council run vehicles)

Public transport providers in East Sussex each run their own discounted fare schemes for young people. The best choice for you will depend on your age, where you are going and which services you need to use.

Find out about money saving travel schemes and information on public transport services at eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/public

All information correct as at February 2021, but subject to change

- Bus travel concessions

The Freedom Ticket and the 3i-D for under 19 year olds

Under 19s can apply for a 3i-D card which gives proof of ID to buy the Freedom ticket. The Freedom Ticket offers unlimited travel on nearly every bus* in East Sussex for seven days in a row, including weekends. The Freedom ticket is £18 per week (price from 29 August 2021) and is issued on the bus as a paper ticket only.

*Please contact the bus operator before travelling to ensure they issue and accept the Freedom Ticket.

To find out more about other discounts and applying for the ID card visit www.3i-d.co.uk

Brighton & Hove Buses

Students travelling on a Brighton & Hove bus who do not have a 3i-D card can get discounts on one-way and journeys and Saver tickets with a free busID card until the age of 18.

To find out more and to apply for a busID card, go to [Brighton & Hove buses – busID](#)

Stagecoach

With suitable ID, like the 3i-D card, students can get unlimited travel in their local travel zone for just £3 a day with a local dayrider U19 (under 19) ticket, or pay £2.90 when purchased using the Stagecoach Bus App. Students can also travel on all Stagecoach buses in East Sussex and Kent with a South East dayrider U19 for just £5 a day or £4.80 with the App - that's up to 33% cheaper than the adult versions. [Find out more about the app](#)

Travelling for the whole school year on Stagecoach buses? A Stagecoach studentrider ticket might be better option. The studentrider ticket is now available to all 3i-D card holders. It is also available to students in school, college or university, regardless of age with valid ID. It gives unlimited travel on all Stagecoach buses from September through to July the following year. There is a choice of the local studentrider £468 for a specific area or the South East studentrider £780 which is valid on all Stagecoach in East Sussex and Kent. [Find out more from Stagecoach](#)

- Train travel concessions

Discounts for 16 and 17 year olds

16 and 17 year olds with the 16-17 Saver will be eligible for 50% off standard Anytime, Off-Peak, Advance and Season tickets.

The 16-17 Saver is available to buy for £30 online at www.16-17saver.co.uk

The 16-17 Saver is valid for one year or up until the holder's 18th birthday, whichever comes first. However, season tickets bought with a 16-17 Saver discount before it expires, can be used for up to 4 months after the expiry date.

Unizone rail ticket (college and university students)

The Unizone ticket gives unlimited discounted travel for those who study in or around Brighton or Worthing. To qualify for a Unizone ticket, a student will need a 16-25 Railcard and valid ID confirming attendance in further or higher education.

Find out more on at www.southernrailway.com/tickets/discounts-and-railcards/unizone

- Coaches serving school sixth forms

Students attending schools with sixth forms, where hired vehicles are available, can purchase a travel permit for a vacant seat. The cost from September 2021 is £157 per term (based on a six term year). Full details of [buying a seat on school transport](#) can be found online.

Travel support from schools and colleges

Some schools and colleges provide their own transport for students. Details can be found below and is correct at the time of publication. However it may be subject to change by the provider themselves without prior notification to East Sussex County Council. Students are advised to contact their school/college directly regarding any possible changes.

- Heathfield Community College – runs two services in conjunction with local bus companies. Payments for these services are made termly across the academic year. Students in receipt of the 16-19 Bursary can have help with transport costs. The services are partially subsidised by the College for all students.

Find out more at http://www.heathfieldcc.co.uk/?page_id=3157 or by contacting the College directly.

- Beacon Academy & Gildredge House – do not currently make any exclusive transport arrangements for Post 16 learners.

If your school/college is not listed above, please contact them directly for up-to-date information regarding any transport and/or support they may be able to offer, particularly if the school or college is outside of East Sussex.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help young people overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. A vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups below:

- in care
- care leavers
- in receipt of Income Support, or Universal Credit in place of Income Support, in their own right
- in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit and Disability Living or Personal Independence Payments in their own right
- discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment

2. Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment. To be eligible for the discretionary bursary young people must:

- be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2021 or
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2021 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2021 and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')
- be studying a programme that is subject to inspection by a public body which assures quality (such as Ofsted), the provision must also be funded by either a Government funding agency or the local authority.

Schools and colleges are responsible for managing both types of bursary. Young people who want to apply for support from the bursary fund should contact their chosen school or college to make an application.

Further information can be found at www.gov.uk search for post 16 bursaries.

Hardship Fund

The following colleges have been allocated extra council funds to assist the most disadvantaged learners to access their course. These funds can be issued **in addition to** Bursary Funds. Learners should make enquiries to Student Services at their college.

- East Sussex College Group – Eastbourne, Hastings and Lewes
- Plumpton College
- Bexhill 6th Form College
- DV8 Bexhill

Young parents / Care to Learn

If you are a young parent under 20, Care to Learn can help pay for your childcare and related travel costs, up to £160 per child per week, while you're learning.

Care to Learn can help with the cost of:

- childcare, including deposit and registration fees
- a childcare 'taster' session (up to 5 days)
- keeping your childcare place over the summer holidays
- taking your child to the childcare provider

Types of child care

The childcare provider must be Ofsted registered and can be a:

- childminder
- day nursery
- pre-school playgroup
- out of school club

If your child needs specialist childcare, the provider must also be on the Care Quality Commission's register for specialist provision.

If you want a relative to get Care to Learn for looking after your child they need to be both:

- providing registered childcare for children they're not related to
- living apart from you and your child

Payments

Childcare payments go directly to your childcare provider. Before your childcare provider can be paid:

- your childcare provider needs to confirm your child's attendance
- your school or college needs to confirm that you're attending your course

Payments for travel costs go to your school or college - they'll either pay you or arrange travel for you.

Attendance

Payments will stop if:

- you stop attending your course
- you finish your course
- your child stops attending childcare

Eligibility

You can get Care to Learn if:

- you're a parent under 20 at the start of your course
- you're the main carer for your child
- you live in England
- you're either a British citizen or a national of a European Economic Area country
- your course is publicly funded (check with your school or college)
- your childcare provider is registered with Ofsted or the Care Quality Commission

Type of course

Care to Learn is only available for courses in England that have some public funding.

This includes courses that take place in:

- schools
- school sixth forms
- sixth form colleges
- other colleges and learning providers, including Foundation Learning
- your community at Children's Centres

Young parents are also entitled to apply for an Under 19 Bus Only Ticket or for those aged 19 and over can apply for the 19 – 25 card. For more information please visit

www.gov.uk/care-to-learn/how-to-claim

LA support

LA support for young people without special educational needs or disabilities

The Council regards where a student decides to study as an individual choice but considers it essential that students (and their parents) weigh up the home to college journey when deciding which school/college to attend as the Council does not have a duty to provide transport assistance to post 16 students other than the arrangements contained in this policy.

The Council has considered the needs of those for whom it would not be reasonably practicable to access education or training provision if no arrangements were made and considers that the various concessionary schemes available to students, coupled with financial support for those with genuine money difficulties results in there being sufficient access for all students to attend the school/college of their reasonable choice, irrespective of its location and their home.

Public transport services cannot be tailored to meet individual timetables and students are expected to make suitable adjustments to their travel arrangements to facilitate attendance.

Journey length, rurality and the nature of the route are factors for families to consider and take into account and these issues do not, in themselves, confer an entitlement to transport assistance.

LA support for Learners with special educational needs or a disability

East Sussex County Council recognises that some students with learning difficulties or disabilities may not be able to travel to school or college independently or may not yet be ready to do so.

Criteria for help (16-19 students)

Students with learning difficulties or disabilities, or their parents or carers may apply for travel assistance. Each case will be considered by the council's SEND Travel Panel, and support will usually only be considered further if all the following criteria are fulfilled. We call this the Gateway criteria.

- The student lives in East Sussex;
- The student has a current Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
- The student will be attending the equivalent of a full-time education course (540 hours or more per year) which allows appropriate progression;
- The placement is the nearest suitable college to their home address, unless agreed otherwise by East Sussex County Council, and named in the student's EHCP;
- The student is unable to travel to the placement independently by any mode of transport or on foot.

If a student meets these gateway criteria the Council will take into account a number of factors when determining whether a student is eligible for assistance. This will include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Nature of the journey for the student/family for example, the distance, likely journey time, and complexity of the journey by road, public transport or on foot; whether the journey on foot or public transport could be reasonably made if the student is accompanied.

2. The age of the student which may be relevant to considerations regarding parental/carers involvement.
3. Parent/carer/broader network available to accompany for example, the current commitments of the parent(s)/carer(s) and broader network; whether the student's family or broader network is reasonably able to transport or accompany them given all other factors.
4. Available suitable vehicle and/or disability benefits for example, whether the family has a suitable vehicle, which may include a Motability vehicle; whether the student is receiving PIP with a component intended to support travel; any current social care support.
5. The student's needs relating to travel for example, whether the student has complex needs, and/or requires a second person on transport; if independent travel is a realistic goal, and whether this has been appropriately encouraged by the family.
6. The financial circumstances of the family and potential impact of a declined application.
7. Other relevant factors, for example, the health of the parent/carer and the potential impact on them to provide transport or accompany the student, given all other factors.

The following evidence may be required in addition to an application for travel assistance:

1. Recent evidence from a relevant health and/or educational professional regarding the SEND of the student and how this impacts on the need for travel assistance, their ability to walk or travel on public transport, accompanied or otherwise.
2. Recent evidence from a relevant health professional regarding a parent/carer's health, if this means that they are not able to accompany or transport the student themselves.
3. Evidence from the parent/carer's employer regarding their work commitments, to include working hours, days, times, location of work and distance in miles from home to work and from the placement to work.
4. Written evidence to demonstrate other commitments, although broader caring responsibilities would not normally be considered as a reason why a parent/carer would not be able to transport the student, as the family would be expected to find alternative solutions in most cases.

Annual contribution once help has been agreed

Where assistance is agreed, a contribution towards to the cost of travel is required for students of sixth form age – those over 16 years but under 19 years – or continuing learners who started their programme before their 19th birthday. The charge in 2021/2022 is £684 and payment can be made in 10 instalments. Transport will not be arranged until payment in advance is made. If subsequent payments are late, transport will be suspended or even cancelled.

Low income families will be asked to contribute £342 per academic year. Low income is defined as parents/carers or students in receipt of one of the following:

- Universal Credit – provided your household income is less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits received)

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support received under part six of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (but not also Working Tax Credit unless in receipt of the maximum level) based on an income of £16,190 or less

The annual contribution level is fixed to the same cost of an annual Freedom Ticket (see the section entitled - **Concessionary tickets for young people 16 – 25 from public transport providers**) and is reviewed each year.

Criteria for help (Adult learners)

The gateway criteria set out for the 16-19 students applies. If an adult learner meets the gateway criteria the Council will take into account the following factors when determining whether transport is necessary.

1. Nature of the journey for the adult learner for example, the distance, likely journey time, and complexity of the journey by road, public transport or on foot; whether the journey on foot or public transport could be reasonably made if the adult learner is accompanied.
2. Parent/carer/broader network ability to provide transport support, e.g. accompanying the learner on some journeys; transporting the learner on certain days.
3. Available suitable vehicle and/or disability benefits for example, whether the adult learner has a suitable vehicle, which may include a Motability vehicle.
4. The adult learner's needs relating to travel for example, whether the adult learner has complex needs, and/or requires a second person on transport; if independent travel is a realistic goal.
5. Funding available for transport from the college and any other funds the learner can access; whether the adult learner is receiving PIP with the mobility component as a means securing independent travel.
6. The financial circumstances of the adult learner and potential impact of a declined application.
7. Advice from the college, for example, whether independent travel training is taking part as part of the programme.
8. Other relevant factors.

The following evidence may be required in addition to an application for travel assistance:

1. Recent evidence from a relevant health and/or educational professional regarding the SEND of the adult learner and how this impacts on the need for travel assistance, their ability to walk or travel on public transport, accompanied or otherwise.
2. A copy of the adult learner's care and support plan (if applicable)
3. Where the parent/carer is stated as being the primary carer/advocate for the adult learner, further evidence may be required regarding the support with transport (if any) they are able to provide and when.

In the case of adult learners, if the council agrees transport is necessary it will be provided free of charge.

Type of help given

Young people assessed as requiring assistance will be risk-assessed for their immediate needs and the most cost-effective suitable mode of travel support will be arranged. For students who can access public transport, a journey time of up to 75 minutes each way is considered reasonable according to national guidance for best practice.

Where an applicant is assessed as eligible for SEND travel assistance, the type of travel assistance provided will be the most cost-effective available to the Council at the time, appropriate to the student's needs. This may be one of the following:

- A place on a contracted vehicle
- A Personal Travel Budget (PTB)

Please note that taxis will usually only be provided if necessity is proven and for students with severe disabilities and/or the most complex health needs. This may not be a door-to-door service.

Service limitations

Students will usually only be transported to and from a school or college at their published school start and school finish times. This may therefore require the student to arrive earlier than the start of their first session or wait at the end of their timetabled day until other young people are ready for shared transport.

The Council does not provide travel assistance to work experience placements, medical appointments or other off-site visits; responsibility for this remains with the parents or carers, or school or college as appropriate.

Students wishing to undertake a new course at the same or similar level to a level of qualification already achieved may not necessarily be successful in their application for travel support.

Review of eligibility

1. Any student for whom travel assistance has been agreed by the SEND Travel Panel must apply each academic year. It should not be assumed that the same form of travel assistance will be agreed for a further period.

2. In every case, travel assistance will be reviewed following a house move, change in placement or course, or a change in the student's needs (condition, medication or equipment) or any other change in circumstances which may be relevant.

3. Following an incident on school or college transport, it may be necessary to stop provision until a further risk assessment has been carried out to make sure that the student can be transported safely. If this occurs, parents or carers will be responsible for transport and costs until the situation has been resolved.

Refunds

If transport is no longer required, a refund on your contribution may be applicable on a pro-rata basis for each full week of overpayment.

Please email SEN.Transport@eastsussex.gov.uk in the first instance.

Reimbursements for travel costs incurred before application cannot be made.

Travel training

Based on the information given in an application, students will be assessed for suitability for our intensive Independent Travel Training (ITT) programme, which can provide a young person with the skills and confidence for greater independence in their adult life. A young person who is ready for travel training may be offered temporary travel assistance until they have 'graduated' as independent travellers on their journey to school or college.

Find out more online about [independent travel training](#)

Other travel assistance available if application declined

Where it is decided that travel assistance will not be provided by the Council, the adult learner/parent/carer may consider applying for a mileage allowance.

This scheme is available to low income parents/carers who have to travel long distances (over 10 miles) to transport the student/adult learner to the college indicated in their EHCP. The mileage allowance given will be 25p per mile for one return journey per day for the miles beyond the first 10 mile of the journey from home. For example, where the distance from home to college is 15 miles, the allowance given will be calculated as 2 journeys x 5 miles x 25p. Proof of attendance will be sought from the school/college. The following criteria must apply for claims for mileage allowance to be considered:

- The family qualifies as low income using the same criteria for free schools eligibility.
- The student/adult learner is attending the college named in their EHC Plan
- The journey exceeds 10 miles between home and college.

Apprenticeships

Students doing apprenticeships should apply to their employer or learning provider to have reasonable travel expenses met.

Applying for LA transport support

Applicants must use our online form found at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/sendtravel

Those without internet access should contact 01273 481625 to arrange for a form to be sent.

Appeals

In the event the council turns down an application, the student or their parents or adult learner or their advocate/carer can ask for their case to be considered by the Discretionary Transport Appeal Panel. This Panel comprises three elected County Councillors. There is no further right of appeal once the Appeal Panel has made its decision.

Find out more at [School transport appeals](#) Please only submit a Stage 2 appeal.

College and sixth form contact information

<u>Institution</u> <u>(click name to visit website)</u>	<u>Telephone number and email address</u>
<u>Bexhill 6th Form College</u>	01424 214545 enquiries@bexhillcollege.ac.uk
<u>East Sussex College</u> (Eastbourne and Lewes)	Eastbourne: 030 300 39300 Lewes: 030 300 39200 info@sussexdowns.ac.uk
<u>East Sussex College</u> (Hastings)	01424 442222 studentadvisers@sussexcoast.ac.uk
<u>Plumpton College</u>	01273 890454 enquiries@plumpton.ac.uk
<u>DV8 Sussex</u> (Bexhill campus)	01424 213 890 apply@dv8sussex.com
<u>Ark 6th Form East Sussex</u>	01424 448225 d.howell@arkwilliamparker.org
<u>Beacon Academy sixth form</u>	01892 603018 enquiries@beacon-academy.org
<u>Gildredge House sixth form</u>	01323 400650 admissions@gildredgehouse.org.uk
<u>Hailsham CC sixth form</u>	01323 841468 hcc@hccat.net
<u>Heathfield CC sixth form</u>	01435 866066 office@heathfieldcc.co.uk
<u>Seaford Head School sixth form</u>	01323 872723 reception@seafordhead.org
<u>Uckfield College sixth form</u>	01825 764844 office@uckfield.college
<u>Uplands CC sixth form</u>	01892 782135 office@uplandsc.com

Consultation

Each year local authorities are required to consult young people of sixth form age and their parents as well as other stakeholders on the Post 16 Transport Policy statement before it is finalised. Consultation lasts for a minimum of 4 weeks.

Please note that the policy could be changed in the future and the current support available does not amount to a legitimate expectation that it will continue to be offered.