

Hertfordshire County Council

Introduction

This policy statement has been developed according to legislation and the Department for Education (DfE) Post 16 Transport to Education & Training Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, published in February 2014.

This new policy is intended for those aged 16-18*, as described in Paragraph 2 of the above guidance. In paragraph 10 of the guidance it explains “this transport policy statement is intended to inform young people in years 11, 12 and 13 and their parents about what transport arrangements and support are available locally”.

*(and aged up to 19 and beyond 19, if they are continuing on a course started before the age of 19).

This new policy applies to all those in the above age range, and specifically supports those in most need, be they:

Category 1: Those young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or

Category 2: Those from low income families;

and in particular those with no alternative funding source

September 2015:

For young people with or without a learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the new policy will apply to all those starting Year 12 in September 2015, regardless of school or educational setting and also for those, post 16, starting new courses.

The full policy statement provides a Core Offer and signposting to Sustainable Travel Options.

Charges:

Where travel support is agreed for those in category (1) above, the following scale of charges apply:

Miles	Annual Cost 2014/15 (£)	Annual Cost 2015/16 (£)	Cost Per Term 2015/16 (£)	1st instalment 2015/16 (£)	2 nd Instalment 2015/16 (£)
0 - 2.99	765	765	255	127.50	127.50
3 – 4.99	1020	1020	340	170.00	170.00
5 and over	1173	1173	391	195.50	195.50

The scale of financial charges is no more than 20% of the average cost of transport, regardless of the complexity of the transport required to match the individual transport needs of the student.

In comparison, for those students without learning difficulties or disabilities, where they are able to gain a seat on an Education E Route, the same scale of charges applies, and is full cost recovery.

Average Costs of Transport 16-18*

The average cost of transport for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is £5292 per annum. The scale of financial charges is no more than 20% of the average cost of transport regardless of the complexity of the transport required to match the individual transport needs of the student (for example a student requiring a tail gate lift and medically trained passenger assistant will not attract a higher financial contribution).

The average cost of mainstream discretionary transport across the full age range is £1149 per annum. (based on the financial year 2013/2014)

September 2016:

In September 2016, this policy will apply to all Post 16 young people, regardless of their year group be it Year 12, Year 13, or those continuing on a course commenced before their 19th birthday, for example those in an SLD school, in Year 14.

19 to 25:

Where a young person requires transport provision, at the age of 19 and up to the age of 25, they will be considered according to the individual needs assessment policy in place in Hertfordshire. Consideration will be given to the needs of the

individual student, whether they are attending their nearest suitable provision, their ability to travel independently, and any individual transport needs. Any provision agreed would consider the most suitable mode of travel support.

Hertfordshire's Commitment to Independent Travel Training

Hertfordshire County Council is committed to promoting and supporting the delivery of independent travel training (ITT), with its partners, so that in the medium term, the vision is that more young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will receive and gain independent travel training skills, in preparation for and during their transition into Post 16 education and training.

Independent travel training enables young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to engage in activities which support outcomes associated with growing independence. ITT supports being part of their local community, participating in education, training, supported internships and employment. Ultimately, preparing for adulthood; leading to independent living.

In this way, it is anticipated that there will be increasingly less requests for exceptional consideration of individual transport needs as the SEND reforms are embedded.

This is embedded in the Sustainable Modes of Travel published.

Transport Policy for Full-time Students Aged 16-18*

***and aged up to 19, and beyond 19, if they are continuing on a course started before the age of 19, which also includes learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**

This policy is published following the decisions reached by Cabinet on 13 October 2014, following extensive consultation and engagement with stakeholders, including disabled young people and their families between April and July 2014.

The county council has discretion to determine when to provide travel support to facilitate young people's participation in education and training. Usually where travel support is agreed, transport would only be provided at the beginning and end of the school/college day.

The new arrangements will apply to those students aged 16-18* who are commencing new courses in September 2015. For those aged 16-18* who are

continuing on the same course in September 2015, the existing policy statement will apply and can be found at the following link www.hertsdirect.org/schooltransport

This policy is designed to fund 16-18* transport at the right level, to support those in most need and introduce greater promotion of the 'Getting There' independent travel training scheme in operation in Hertfordshire. Also for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, for their assessment for travel support to be co-ordinated with travel training and where applicable, their education, health and care plan.

For young people with learning disabilities and/or difficulties aged up to 25 and who start new courses after their 19th birthday, the existing individual case by case consideration will continue.

Introduction

This Transport Policy Statement seeks to ensure that young people and their families are signposted to the **Core Offer and to sustainable travel options**, so that they can fully consider arrangements in place to help them plan their journeys when participating in full time education at school or college or full time training.

Please go to **Section A** of this Policy Statement

Who is the Policy for?

For the majority of 16-18* students, this policy is designed to signpost students to the Core Offer and other sustainable travel options (see Section A).

With the county council's pledge, travel assistance may be available for students from low income families, or where a student has learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 16-18* years old attending the nearest suitable full-time course at any establishment at which the county council secures the provision of education or training (eg school sixth forms, colleges of further education, or training providers), and those completing courses started prior to their 19th birthday.

Section A - Core Offer and Other Sustainable Travel Options

Hertfordshire SaverCard Scheme 11-18

Hertfordshire SaverCards are available to students up to the end of the academic year in which they reach their 18th birthday. Hertfordshire SaverCards are issued for one academic year.

Students may purchase a Hertfordshire SaverCard from the county council at a cost of £20 (currently reduced to £15 for online applications) per academic year. This entitles them to purchase single and return tickets at half the adult fare for travel on public bus services throughout Hertfordshire, with the exception of services operated for Transport for London, where other discounts are available. The Hertfordshire SaverCard can also be used to certain destinations outside of the county including:

- Amersham (college and railway station)
- Aylesbury Bus Station
- New Barnet Railway Station
- Chesham Broadway
- Dunstable Square
- Edgware Bus Station
- Enfield Town Centre
- Harlow Bus Station
- Harrow Bus Station
- Luton Town Centre
- Mount Vernon Hospital
- Southgate Tube Station
- Uxbridge Bus Station

The Hertfordshire SaverCard Scheme includes full time learners who fall into the following categories:

- Schools
- Institutions maintained or assisted by Hertfordshire County Council
- Further Education institutions
- Establishments (outside the Further and Higher Education sectors) at which the authority secures the provision of education or training where the Skills Funding Agency have funded education

This enables the student to travel to learning establishments (see details above). The Hertfordshire SaverCard can be used on public bus services at all times of the day, or any day of the week and over any distance (ie more or less than 3 miles). Eligibility for support for students from low income families may be available – see Section B.

To apply for a Hertfordshire SaverCard go to www.hertsdirect.org/savercard

Hertfordshire TrainCards

Hertfordshire TrainCards are issued at the start of the academic year, and expire at the end of the summer term. They are available to learners in Post 16 full time learning and education (eg attending school sixth form or college) aged 16-18 and those completing courses started prior to their 19th birthday.

Students may purchase a Hertfordshire TrainCard for £10 which will enable them to obtain a discounted season ticket for train travel within establishments (outside the Further and Higher Education Sectors) at which the authority secures the provision of education or training to learning establishments in Hertfordshire as described above. Eligibility for support for students from low income families may be available – see Section B.

Hertfordshire SaverCards and Hertfordshire TrainCards can be renewed each year, as long as the applicant is still eligible.

Spare Seats Scheme

Education ‘E’ Routes are the vehicles which the county council provide for children who have a statutory entitlement to free home to school transport, where it is best value to use this mode of transport. If there are any spare seats available on these routes, they are available to purchase by those pupils of statutory school age who do not have an entitlement to school transport. The places are offered according to the published criteria <http://www.hertsdirect.org/schooltransport>

If there is spare capacity available after the “Spare Places” demand has been met, students aged 16-18* may purchase a pass to travel on an ‘E’ Route.

Parents/carers should not assume that spare seats will be available for purchase from the county council, and should make their own travel plans in consultation with the sixth form/college provider.

The full cost recovery charges from September 2015 will be as follows:

Miles	Annual cost 2014/15 (£)	Annual cost 2015/16 (£)	Cost per Term 2015/16 (£)	1st instalment 2015/16 (£)	2nd instalment 2015/16 (£)
0 - 2.99	765	765	255	127.50	127.50
3 - 4.99	1020	1020	340	170.00	170.00
5 and over	1173	1173	391	195.50	195.50

For details of the “Spare Seats” scheme for Education ‘E’ Routes, please go to www.hertsdirect.org/schooltransport, for details of how to apply.

To enquire about the availability of spare seats please ring the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043. Proof of benefit is required where appropriate for an application.

Buy seats from other bus operators

Alternatively, students may purchase seats on vehicles run by individual schools, colleges or by third party commercial operators on the school or college’s behalf. For information on available routes please check individual school/college websites. Alternatively, a list of school routes is published at www.hertsdirect.org/schooltransport.

For information about public bus routes go to www.intalink.org.uk

Other Sustainable Travel Opportunities:

Hertfordshire County Council is keen to ensure that as many students as possible, plan their travel arrangements, so they can access their school, college or training provider place by using sustainable ways of travel.

We offer the following:

1. An online journey planner – this helps families and young people plan their travel to places of learning, www.hertsdirect.org/mapit
2. The promotion of an Active Travel Strategy – this complements the Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMOTs) published by the county council in relation to access to schools and colleges in Hertfordshire, www.hertsdirect.org/smots
3. Guidance about informal car sharing arrangements, www.hertsdirect.org/schooltransport
4. Capacity building support, to help others, be they schools, colleges or communities to consider running their own home to school/college transport arrangements please email: schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk
5. Promoting within the BIGHERTSBIGIDEAS Area of the county, the Scoots Scheme (this is a Wheels to Work project funded by the county council and managed by Community Development Action Hertfordshire). The Scoots Scheme seeks to enable those without the means to travel with a solution in the form of a 50 or 125 cc scooter. This is an offer which is available to anyone aged 16 and over, lives or works within the BIGHERTSBIGIDEAS

Project Area and has secured employment or is in a training or education placement. <http://scootsw2w.org.uk>

Further Education Residential Support Scheme

Students can apply for support if they need to attend a course that is not available within reasonable daily travelling distance and if similar courses of the same standard are not available nearer the student's home. Further information can be www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning.

Section B - Travel Support for Learners from Low Income Families

Travel Support will be considered for the learner where:

1. The family is on low income AND
2. The course attended is the nearest suitable to the home permanent address AND
3. It is over 3 miles and less than 10 miles from the permanent address, measured along the nearest available route AND
4. No other funds are available to fund the transport (for example from the Bursary Fund).

Note: Where the nearest suitable provision is more than ten miles, this will be assessed on an individual basis.

For full time learners from low income families who may not meet the above criteria, they may apply for a free Hertfordshire SaverCard (no charge for the SaverCard ticket) and then use it in the way described within Section A. The learner shall be encouraged to gain help towards their discounted fares from the Bursary Fund, held by their learning provider. The expectation is that the county council will not provide the traveller with additional funding to support fares.

Alternatively or in addition to a Hertfordshire SaverCard they may apply for a free Hertfordshire TrainCard (no charge for the Hertfordshire TrainCard), and then use it in the way described above.

Section C – Travel Support for Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

Introduction – We will assess travel needs for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, with or without a Statement of Special Educational Needs (Statement of SEN), or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan), or a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA), on an individual basis.

The county council has discretion to determine when to provide travel support to facilitate young people's participation in education and training. Usually where travel support is agreed, transport would only be provided at the beginning and end of the school/college day.

'Getting There' Travel Training Scheme

Independent travel training skills are key to the preparing for adulthood outcomes of being part of the local community, training, employment and independent living. The county council wishes to encourage young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to acquire travel training skills at the right time for them.

For more information, please see our current newsletter on Travel Training and the experiences of those who have gained these important new skills. We would ask that families, professionals and disabled young people begin to consider this training as part of planning for transition to adulthood from Year 9. Information can be found at the following link www.hertsdirect.org/schooltransport

Travel trainers are available in each of the four colleges across Hertfordshire, and we also encourage special schools to deliver these skills as part of the curriculum. As part of our arrangements, the county council has hosted a Travel Training Summit. The county council is also funding a pilot at The Collett School, Hemel Hempstead to support a group of circa 20 students acquire independent travel training skills, as they plan their transition into West Herts College.

The detail and experiences of those who have gained independent travel training skills can be found in Hertfordshire's Local Offer, go to localoffer@hertfordshire.gov.uk

As part of planning the travel arrangements for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, we will co-ordinate any travel support offer with the provision and delivery of travel training.

The ambition is that travel training will be a planned programme of activity agreed with the young person, their school and family. Usually when travel training is offered this will be on the basis that an assessment of readiness will have been undertaken by those working closely with the young person and their family for example their existing school, or college. If travel training is unreasonably refused by the young person or their family, after two offers, if the offer is declined and there has been no change in circumstances/need, any consideration under this policy will be refused.

Where a student with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is able to travel independently (and where applicable has received independent travel training) taking into account their individual needs, they will be considered within the general aspects of this policy statement. We will co-ordinate information about the young person's ability to travel independently with parents and the young person, travel trainers, schools and colleges, when we are assessing any request for provision of travel support.

In these circumstances, the student may be able to apply for a disabled concessionary bus pass for free travel at all times when boarding the bus in Hertfordshire (generally only at off peak times elsewhere in England). If they are unable to travel by bus without the assistance of another person then they can apply for a bus pass allowing a companion to travel with them free of charge within Hertfordshire.

[\(http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/pubtrans/hertravlnk/travpert/\)](http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/pubtrans/hertravlnk/travpert/)

They will also be able to apply for a Hertfordshire SaverCard and/or Hertfordshire TrainCard to make their journey to their place of learning. For those who qualify under the low income part of the policy, they would be considered under that aspect of the policy.

Financial Contributions

The county council will usually require a contribution of up to £1173 per annum towards the cost of providing travel support depending on the distance travelled. The scale of contributions is as follows:

Miles	Annual cost 2015/16 (£)	Cost per Term 2015/16 (£)	1st instalment 2014/15 (£)	2nd instalment 2014/15 (£)
0 - 2.99	765	255	127.50	127.50
3 - 4.99	1020	340	170.00	170.00
5 and over	1173	391	195.50	195.50

The scale of financial charges is no more than 20% of the average cost of transport, regardless of the complexity of the transport required to match the individual transport needs of the student.

You can pay the contribution for the seat annually, termly or half termly. This contribution is towards the cost of providing travel support.

The financial contributions charged support the county council's aim to fund this part of the school/college transport strategy at the right level.

This contribution may be waived if the family meets the “low income” definition and provides evidence that a claim for financial support from the Bursary Fund was unsuccessful or insufficient to cover the cost of transport. For students who plan to attend mainstream schools, special schools or colleges of further education, we will ask the learning establishment to provide a list of those who have applied for the Bursary Fund and the level of funds they have been allocated towards their transport costs.

Assessment

The assessment will take into account the general criteria below.

Decisions about a student’s travel requirements will take into account their individual needs and supporting evidence from professionals, including that provided in a Statement of SEN, an EHC Plan or an LDA.

Only in exceptional circumstances connected to an individual’s learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and where no alternative mode of travel is available, would taxi travel be considered.

Usually where travel support is agreed, transport would only be provided at the beginning and end of the school/college day.

In determining whether the county council will provide financial assistance for travel support, it will have regard to, among other things:

- The needs of those young people, who without travel support, would be unable to attend an education or training establishment;
- The county council’s duties to ensure that enough suitable education and training is provided to meet the reasonable needs of the 16-18 year olds who live in Hertfordshire;
- Distance and journey time from the student’s home to establishments of education and training, the cost of transport there and alternative means of facilitating attendance at establishments. Reasonable maximum one way travel is usually considered to be up to 10 miles with a maximum public travel time usually considered to be 75 minutes;
- Where the nearest suitable provision is more than 10 miles, this will be assessed on an individual basis;
- The nature of the route or alternative routes which the young person could reasonably be expected to take;
- The reasons why a young person wishes to attend one establishment rather than another;
- Anything said in a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or a Learning Disability Assessment, or an Education, Health and Care Plan about transport to the learning establishment;

- Where there is a nearer institution which is suitable and can provide the same or similar qualification(s) or course.
- The best use of the county council's resources;
- The nature of the student's special educational needs, disability and/or learning difficulty. This includes the physical ability of the young person to walk, accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult to the learning provision or a pick up point;
- Whether the student has received travel training skills, is able to travel independently and his or her ability to access public transport or transport operated by others;
- Information contained in the assessment made under the Children & Families Act 2014 together with any other relevant information supplied;
- The county council's legal obligations and, in particular, those imposed by the Equality Act 2010;
- The needs of those who would not access education or training if travel support were not provided.

Exceptional Circumstances:

Changing circumstances

The decisions reached in relation to students Post 16 will be kept under review to ensure that changing needs and circumstances during the course can be identified and met, where applicable.

Young Adults aged 19-25 cases

The individual transport needs of students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties but who do not have a Statement of Special Educational Needs may be discussed by the Youth Connexions Adviser when undertaking a Learning Difficulty Assessment or as part of preparing an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Transport eligibility decisions are based on information provided by Youth Connexions Advisors and also where appropriate, in consultation with the current place of education and after checks that the course is the closest of its kind to the family home. Parents and carers can also submit supporting evidence relating to the young person's individual needs which would also be considered as part of the assessment.

Complaints Process and Transport Appeals Process

Complaints

If you would like to make a complaint about the service you have received regarding home to school/college transport please follow the link below. Here you can find out more about the council's complaints procedure and where you can complete an on-line complaints form: www.hertsdirect.org/complaints

There is no statutory entitlement to transport post sixteen. Students and their families should therefore consider carefully the Post 16 transport policies when considering future pathways beyond sixteen.

A Transport Appeals process has been established for those who believe;

- 1) The local authority (LA) has not applied its home to school transport policy (including the 16-18* Transport Policy and 19-25 exceptions policy) correctly;
- 2) There are compelling reasons to justify making an exception to the policy (as fully defined in 1 above) on a discretionary basis.

If you wish to appeal a transport decision you should contact the Admissions and Transport Team by emailing transfer.admissions@hertfordshire.gov.uk or by calling the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043.

The Panel also consider cases where a parent/carer disagrees with the type of transport provision that has been identified for their son/daughter.

If you wish a transport provision to be reviewed please contact the Admissions and Transport Team by emailing transfer.admissions@hertfordshire.gov.uk or by calling the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043.

Definitions

Bursary Fund: The Bursary Fund is direct funding provided by the government to schools and colleges to assist certain 16-19 year olds on low income or in particular circumstances to continue in education. The fund may be used to assist with transport costs. For more information on the Bursary Fund please go to: www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

The fund is made up of two parts:

Bursaries of £1200 a year to the most vulnerable young people and a discretionary fund provided direct to providers (schools, special schools, colleges, academies and training providers).

The intention of the discretionary fund is to support students who face genuine financial barriers to participation, such as the cost of transport

The defined vulnerable group is made up of children in care, care leavers, those on income support and those in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance (ESA), and either Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

How the Bursary Fund will be taken into account:

Eligibility for support from The Bursary Fund will be taken into account when considering an application for transport. Prior to applying to Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) for transport assistance it is expected that an application would have been made direct to the relevant school or college for Bursary funding to support the cost of travel.

Local Offer: The Hertfordshire Local Offer includes information on transport and can be found at: localoffer@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Low Income: Low income families are defined as those whose children would be entitled to free school meals or whose parents are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit.

To be eligible for free school meals you must be getting one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit (guarantee credit)
- Child Tax Credit with income less than £16,190 (subject to change in April 2015) and not receiving Working Tax Credit

You are also defined as a low income family if you are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit.

Where a young person is living independently to their family home (including where private fostering arrangements exist), and is defined as low income, individual circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

To determine whether you are receiving maximum Working Tax Credit (WTC) When you are awarded tax credits, or following a change in your household circumstances, or following annual review, HM Revenue and Customs issue a "tax credit awards notice" detailing the breakdown and amount of the award.

Part two of the award notice gives details of "How we work out your tax credits" including details of the full WTC elements. This is the maximum amount you can receive in WTC in any year. It then lists "**any reduction due to your income**" and shows the net amount payable. In order to qualify for assistance under the Low Income criterion this amount must be £0.00.

Young Person: Over compulsory school age, aged 16-18 and those continuing learners who started their programme of learning before their 19th birthday.

Nearest suitable course: Students must normally attend the nearest educational establishment at which the course or the majority of the course is offered.

We will assess transport needs for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, with or without a Statement of Special Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan, on an individual basis.

The assessment will take into account the general criteria published in Section C. Decisions about students transport requirements will take into account their individual needs and supporting evidence from professionals.

Measuring Distances: Home-school distances are measured using roads and pathways from a young person's home address to the school, college or other relevant establishment. For full details please go to www.hertsdirect.org/schooltransport for full definition please.

For information on routes to school or college, please use the Journey Planner found at www.hertsdirect.org/mapit where you can also find the nearest school or college calculator.

Spare Seat Scheme: Education (E) Routes are run to schools by the county council for those who have a statutory entitlement to school transport (for statutory age pupils), where it is best value to do so. Any spare seats will be allocated on a yearly basis; however two weeks' notice will be given if a seat is required by a statutory entitled pupil.

Charges are in accordance with those published and are set annually based on full cost recovery. Application forms for spare seats for those aged sixteen plus, will be provided upon request, subject to routes/seats being available. For more information contact Admissions and Transport, contact number 0300 123 4043 or email transfer.admissions@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Travel Support: including different modes of transport (priority will be given to least restrictive modes where suitable), the offer (where applicable) of a mileage allowance, and individual alternative sustainable modes of travel. These alternative means may include for example walking (with a travel assistant/aid), and cycling. Travel support may also include the supply of a concessionary travel card; where applicable.

The mode of travel support may be a local bus route, an education route, a route run by a school or college, or train travel, taking into account cost-effectiveness and ensuring travel support is appropriate for the student's individual circumstances.

General Note: Travel/financial support would be dependent upon the student adhering to acceptable standards of behaviour and maintaining regular attendance