



**London Borough
of Hounslow**

**Transport policy statement for young
people aged 16-18 in further education,
continuing learners aged 19 and those
young people aged 19 – 25 (inclusive)
with learning difficulties and/or
disabilities.**

(2023/2024)

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Policy is written to explain how the London Borough of Hounslow will meet its duties under the relevant legislation (sections 508 and 509 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by sections 54-57 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009) and in accordance with the Post-16 Transport and travel support to education and training Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities January 2019. This policy sets out the London Borough of Hounslow's policy and arrangement for the provision of transport for 16-25 year old to enable them to access appropriate education and training.

This Policy applies to young people both learners of sixth form age, and those with learning difficulties/disabilities up to the age of 25 attending education or training.

"Sixth form age" refers to 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 (school years 12, 13 & 14).

"Young person" refers to a person over compulsory school age, but under 19 or a young person with an EHCP, under the age of 25 and is attending a course that started before their 19th birthday.

"Young adult" refers to a person who is aged under 25, has an EHCP and started their current course after their 19th birthday.

The Policy specifies the arrangements for the provision of transport or other support that the Council considers is necessary to facilitate the attendance of all young people/adults of post 16 age 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, apprenticeships, 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.

All young people who live in a London Borough up to the age of 18 if they are in full time education, are entitled to free transport on buses within London. The Council considers that such an arrangement is sufficient to meet the transport needs of most young people of this age range. Transport routes and services in the Borough are generally very good, and schools and colleges are in close proximity to them.

The Council works with other Local Authorities to support Hounslow's young people/adults educated elsewhere who are eligible for support.

Consideration will be given to a range of options such as use of public transport, any need for assistance and the use of pick up points, if council provided transport is deemed necessary. Transport needs will be evaluated in the light of the desire to establish independence for young people/adults wherever possible.

The purpose of this policy is to provide travel assistance to those young people / adults whose ability to attend or to complete an educational course or training may be affected by their access to public transport.

Concessionary support is available for young people / adults, as outlined in section 3 over the page, however, additional travel assistance may be available to eligible young people or adults who require further support.

2. CONCESSIONARY FARES, DISCOUNTS, SUBSIDIES, PASSES OR TRAVEL CARDS AVAILABLE FOR LEARNERS

Schemes Operated by Transport for London (TfL)

Oyster Card

Young people aged between 16 to 18 (and still 18 by 31st August before the relevant academic year) and in full time education are entitled to free travel on local buses and trams. They need to apply for an Oyster Card (details are on the TfL website: www.tfl.gov.uk/tickets) to take advantage of this scheme.

Young adults beyond the age of 18 (as defined above) but enrolled on a course at a registered establishment are entitled to a 30 per cent discount off travelcard prices with an Oyster Card.

Apprentice Oyster photocard

With an Apprentice Oyster photocard young people aged 18 or above can get 30 per cent off the price of adult-rate Travelcard and Bus & Tram Pass season tickets. Further details on the scheme can be obtained by visiting the following website: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tickets>

The Young Person's Rail Card

Available to students aged 16-25 if in full time education. Further details on the scheme can be obtained by visiting the following website: <http://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/>

Discretionary Learner Support (DLS)

If you're aged 19 or over, on a further education course and facing financial hardship, you could get DLS. Young people need to apply directly to their academy, school, college or other training provider for support from the scheme.

Further details on the scheme can be obtained by visiting the following website: <https://www.gov.uk/discretionary-learner-support>

Schools and colleges help to determine the best form of provision in the given circumstances and further details can be obtained from each individual school/college.

16-19 Bursary fund

The 16-19 Bursary is managed by providers and is designed to help 16, 17 and 18-year-old young people who struggle with the costs of full-time education or training.

You could get a bursary of £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.

To be eligible for the discretionary bursary young people must:

- Be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2019 or
- Be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2019 and have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- Be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2019 and continuing 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.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is administered by education institutions, in accordance with its own Bursary Scheme Policy. Young people need to apply directly to their academy, school, college or other training provider for support from the scheme

If a young person feels aggrieved about how their request for a bursary was handled, they should follow the school's/college's/provider's complaints procedure.

Further details on the scheme can be obtained by visiting the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

Young Parents/Care to Learn

If you're studying and aged under 20 at the start of your course, Care to Learn can help pay for your [childcare costs](#) while you're learning.

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

This includes courses that take place in:

- schools
- school 6th forms
- 6th form colleges
- other colleges and learning providers, including Foundation Learning your community at Children's Centres

Further information for learners interested in applying for Care to Learn can be found by accessing the following website: www.gov.uk/care-to-learn

Some educational establishment may provide their own forms of travel and assistance. Refer to the school/college website for further information.

3. FOR STUDENTS WHO NEED TO STAY AWAY

For young people / adults who want to do a specialist course that is not available in the local area there are two main sources of potential support with the extra costs of studying away from home:

- Studying at a college that offers residential bursaries for certain courses.
- Applying for finance under the Residential Support Scheme

The Residential Support Scheme and the Residential Bursary Fund:

Residential Support Scheme

The Residential Support Scheme provides financial support with accommodation costs for learners (aged between 16 and 18) who need to live away from home to study because their course is not available locally. Most learners applying to the Scheme will be about to study their first full level 2 or 3. The scheme is administered centrally by the Learner Support Service.

Residential Bursary Fund

The Residential Bursary Fund is intended to provide financial support towards the costs of accommodation for young people attending specialist provision, where their course requires a residential element.

To apply for support from the scheme, learners can request an application pack from their learning provider, or from the Learner Support Service helpline.

Contact details

Learner Support Helpline

Telephone: 0800 121 8989

Education Funding Agency: Residential support team

Email: 1619bursaryfund.EFA@education.gsi.gov.uk

4. ELIGIBILITY

4.1 Support for young people without special education needs or disabilities:

All young people who live in a London Borough up to the age of 18 if they are in full time education, are entitled to free transport on buses within London. The Council considers that such an arrangement is sufficient to meet the transport needs of most young people of this age range to enable them a reasonable choice of course.

4.2 Support for those with special educational needs or a disability:

Young people with an EHC plan will have an institution named in their plan at Section I. There is no entitlement to transport to and from this named provider and transport should only be named in an EHC plan in exceptional circumstances where there are no other means of transportation available.

Where a young person / adult has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) decisions on entitlement to travel assistance will be taken once the placement has been agreed and a travel assistance application form submitted and assessed.

It is important that young people / adults and their parents/carers take into account the journey when considering placements as they may be responsible for arranging and paying for transport.

When determining eligibility for travel assistance for young people / adults remaining in full time education, training and apprenticeships, consideration will be given to a full range of travel options. These options reflect the core principle of promoting independence and will include, where available, the use of public transport, provision of a freedom pass, independent travel training, travel buddying, motability scheme, the London taxi card scheme and capital call, which is a complementary service to Taxicard.

It is recognised that in exceptional circumstances additional travel assistance may be required.

4.3 Applications for post 16 provision will be considered against the following criteria:

- Consideration of EHCP that the young person has.
- The young person / adult is 16-25 and is attending further education at a school, college or training provider.
- The course is deemed suitable and will provide an educational benefit to the young person / adult and has been agreed by the Council.
- The journey is impracticable or dangerous to take to an educational establishment of less than 3 miles. Applications assessed on individual merits.

Any future changes in Government policy or legislation will be taken into consideration when assessing eligibility.

4.4 When assessing eligibility and suitable assistance, the Council may also take into consideration:

- Whether a young person / adult has been provided with a mobility allowance or vehicle. It may be that additional travel assistance will not be provided.
- Whether a young person receives a 16-19 Bursary. It may be that the young person is not entitled to full assistance.
- A young person does not live within 3 miles (based on the shortest route which a young person/adult may walk in reasonable safety) to the nearest reasonable and appropriate education establishment and is unable to take the journey by public transport (Oyster Card / Disabled persons freedom pass).
- Whether a contribution is made by the young person to their travel assistance.
- The potential capability of the young person / adult to travel independently, with suitable Travel Training.
- The number of changes on public transport
- Travelling time.

4.5 A young person / adult is not eligible:

- When the young person/adult (or parents/carers) has decided to attend an educational establishment/training that is further away than the establishments the Council has deemed suitable to meet their needs. Young people/adults (or Parents/Carers) will be expected to fund and make the travel arrangements.
- If the young person moves to an address outside of the Borough responsibility for travel will revert to the new Local Authority where the family reside.

5. TYPES OF TRAVEL ASSISTANCE:

The most cost-effective travel assistance will be provided appropriate to the young person's / adult's needs.

The types of travel assistance offered to eligible young people / adults:

- Funding of an oyster/travel card, where appropriate
- Independent Travel Training
- Walking Attendant / Travel Buddy
- Re-imbursment for mileage
- Personal transport budget where young adults/parents/carers take full responsibility for arranging transport to/from school.
- A seat on a suitable vehicle arranged by the Council from an agreed pick up point
- Other types of travel assistance deemed appropriate, including consideration of more flexible options or creative solutions

6. APPLYING FOR TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

5.1 When applying for School Travel Assistance:

- If you believe you are eligible, an e-application form must be completed, which can be found at www.hounslow.gov.uk/schooltravel. Further details can be obtained by e-mailing: schooltravelassistance@hounslow.gov.uk or phoning 020 8583 4177.
- Applications will be considered on their individual merits, in line with this policy. Refer to Additional Information, Appendix 1, Section 1 for information considered as part of the assessment when determining eligibility.
- It may be necessary to seek further clarification from parents/carers or young adults.
- Eligibility for Travel Assistance will be made by an Assessor in the School Travel Assistance Team based on the information and evidence provided by parents/carers and will be considered:
 - Firstly, to determine eligibility
 - Secondly, if eligible, to determine what type of travel assistance should be offered
 - The Assessor will aim to advise parents/carers or the young adult of the outcome of the assessment within 14 working days of receipt of their application.
- If travel assistance is approved, it is done so for an agreed period of time. Young adult/Parent/carers will be required to re-apply when prompted to do so by the School Travel Assistance Team.
- Young adults/Parents/carers will be required to re-apply if their circumstances change eg. moving address, a change of college etc

Failure to meet an application deadline will result in transport not being in place for the commencement of the academic year, possibly not for several weeks. During this period the parents/carers or young adult will be responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for getting to and from college/training.

The Council's Reviews & Appeals Process can be found at www.hounslow.gov.uk/schooltravel

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION USED TO ASSESS APPLICATIONS FOR TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

- The EHCP and Annual Review reports.
- Relevant professional reports e.g. occupational therapists and physiotherapist
- Information regarding the nature and reasonableness of the route e.g. journey times, bus changes, safety of the route etc
- Information from Social Care or Early Help assessments, if appropriate
- Information submitted by parents/carers/young adult during the application process
- Travel Training Plans/assessments in relation to Independent Travel Training.
- Further clarification where required.
- Other exceptional circumstances which prevent a young person/adult from taking themselves to school on their own or being accompanied.

2. WHAT IS NOT COVERED BY TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

The School Travel Assistance Policy applies from home/pick up point to college/training for eligible full-time young people/adults at the normal start and end times of the educational establishment's day. Responsibility falls to young people/adults/parents/carers in the following circumstances, but is not limited to:

- Where arrangements are made which take the young person/adult out of the normal or planned college day e.g. part-time attendance or early finishing for any reason.
- Collection from college due to illness
- Attendance at meetings
- Travel to or from extended hours clubs and trips
- Medical appointments
- Visits to other education establishment or locations (including arranged trips)

3. CHANGES IN TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

Travel assistance reviews may result in changes to the provision, including whether assistance continues to be provided or the way in which it is provided e.g.

- Meeting transport at a pick-up point, as opposed to being picked up and dropped off at home.
- The removal of the attendant
- Young person/adult providing their own chaperone (at no cost to the Council)
- Change in the type of transport e.g. on a shared vehicle, as opposed to travelling on their own.
- Referral for Independent Travel Training
- Offer of a re-imbusement, personal transport budget, oyster card or similar.

4. EDUCATIONAL RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT

Where a young person / adult attends residential placement:

- Parents/carers/young adults will be encouraged to make their own travel arrangements and may be supported by a reimbursement.
- The number of journeys funded will be in line with the school contract for the placement (e.g. termly).
- Young people/adults (or parents/carers) who wish to return home more frequently will be responsible for arranging and funding transport for these journeys.
- No additional assistant will be offered for parents/carers to attend open days, review meetings or similar events at educational establishments.
- Transport is likely to be on a shared vehicle (car, MPV, minibus etc.)
- The young person/adults will be expected to provide and arrange a chaperone, if required (at no cost to the Council).
- If a vehicle is provided it will have reasonable, but limited space for luggage.
- The Council will not incur additional expense to provide a larger or additional vehicle to transport extra luggage/items.

5. DUAL ROLE / LINKED PLACEMENT

The school/college where the pupil is on role is responsible for paying any additional transport costs, where a pupil:

- attends more than one school/college
- the school/college arranges a linked placement, resulting in:
 - o additional transport
 - o a change to the regular timings
 - o a requirement for transport in the middle of the school/college day.

The Council may consider assistance at its discretion on a case by case basis.

6. SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

Travelling is an essential life skill; the Council's aim is for our young people to become safe and independent travellers, where possible. Hounslow's Travel Training Project has successfully supported many children / young people to become independent travellers.

Travel training offers 1-1 person-centred travel training to students with disabilities from the age of 11 upwards who have been assessed by the Travel Training Team as having the ability to travel train.

The Council's travel training provider works with each student for as long as is necessary for them to be able to undertake their journey independently to/from home to school and includes:

- Learning a route
- Road safety
- Asking for help
- Problem solving
- Stranger awareness

The Travel Training Team work closely with the young person / adult, parents, carers and schools/colleges throughout the training, ensuring everyone is informed, consulted and comfortable with what is happening.

Once the student is trained to travel independently, the travel training team continue to be involved with the young person/adult to ensure that they remain safe on their journey. Additional support and training are given if the travel training team think additional support is necessary.

In determining whether you/young person may be suitable for ITT, we look at their needs according to their EHCP, a travel planner (who has travel training accreditation) will meet with the families/young people and carries out assessments of suitability and develops a travel plan. This helps inform decisions for those children/young people where it is not easy to ascertain their suitability just from the paperwork. We also liaise with schools and other professionals for views.

If the Council considers that travel training will facilitate a child's attendance at school and makes an offer regarding this, it is expected that parents / carers will engage and participate in the process to enable the training to take place and the Council to discharge the offer of assistance made. Similarly, if after a period of travel training, the child is able to travel independently to school, it is expected that parents / carers will support this.

Support with interim travel assistance will be provided to facilitate travel to and from school up until training commences and on required days during training. This interim support is provided subject to parents/carers engaging with the LA to enable the training to take place

If eligible and you have not been approached yet regarding Independent Travel Training, this can be discussed as part of the EHCP review or speak to the School Travel Assistance Team at any time.

7. PICK UP AND DROP OFF ARRANGEMENTS

Most young people / adults will be allocated a pick-up point for collection and drop off. Home pickups will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances. Pick up points will be reviewed from time to time and can be subject to change.

Parents/carers are responsible for bringing their young person / adult to and collecting them from the vehicle if required, whether this is from home or a pick-up point. Drivers and Attendants will not leave the vehicle to collect and return /young people/adults to/from front doors.

If it is believed it is safe for the young person/adult to make their own way to/from the vehicle, an instruction must be made in writing to the Transport Co-ordination Team to allow this. The Council will only take responsibility for young people/adults when they are on the vehicle and are not responsible for ensuring the young person's/adult's safety prior to boarding and after alighting from the vehicle.

The Driver and Attendant will not leave a young person/adult with any person who states they are there to collect them from transport. The Transport Co-ordination Team (not the Driver or Attendant) must be informed if an alternative person will be collecting the young person / adult.

Young people / adults who are allocated travel assistance on shared transport will only be transported to/from the educational establishments at its published start/finish times. Therefore, some young people / adults will be required to arrive earlier than their course start time and/or wait at the end of their timetabled day until all students are ready to depart on shared transport.

When allocating pick up and drop off times for students they are based on the most efficient route. Planning the routes to run efficiently and keeping travel times to a minimum is a priority. Therefore, it is not possible to take family circumstances into consideration when allocating these times.

An approximate pick up and drop off time is given, which is subject to change for various reasons throughout the school year. This could include young people/adults being added or removed from the vehicle, route efficiency, traffic, road works etc.

Young people/adults must be ready on time for collection and if being met at the end of the day from transport the parent/carer must be there on time at the drop off location. It is understood that on rare occasions circumstances may arise which are out of yours/young person's control which mean the you/young person is not ready on time. On such occasions, the vehicle may wait up to 5 minutes past the scheduled pickup time in the morning.

Should the young person/adult be consistently late, including collecting from the vehicle in the afternoon, then travel assistance may be removed, either temporarily or permanently, depending on the seriousness of the delays. If required, should parent/carer not be there at the end of the day and the Transport Team are unable to make contact, social care will be contacted, and the young person taken to a centre for safety. If no provision is available, the only option may be to take the young person/adult to the nearest Police Station. Parent/carers will be responsible for arranging the collection of the young person/adult from where they have been taken to.

8. APPOINTMENTS AND ABSENCES

At least 24 hours' notice must be given to the Transport co-ordination team (not the Driver or Attendant) when a student has a prior appointment and will not be on transport.

If transport is not cancelled with 24 hours' notice there is a cost to the Council.

If absence is due to sickness it would be helpful if the Transport Co-ordination Team could be informed with 24 hours' notice of the young person / adult returning.

9. BEHAVIOUR

Respect should be shown to Council staff by service users (young people/ adults/parents/carers). Verbal abuse and violence against Council staff will not be tolerated.

Young people / adults may be temporarily suspended from transport if allegations of unacceptable behaviour are received until a full investigation can be carried out, including collecting statements from any relevant parties. Concerns regarding behavior, which are not acceptable and could be of danger to the young person/adult and others, includes, but is not limited to:

- physical assaults
- fighting
- bullying
- abusing others
- spitting
- not wearing seatbelts
- not remaining in seats
- damaging the vehicle
- absconding from the vehicle

It is acknowledged that from time to time young people/adults demonstrate challenging behaviour and the Council's Transport Co-ordination Team will work with the them and their parents/carers and college to minimise risks. However, occasionally in more extreme cases where the young person/adult, other passengers, the Attendant, Driver or third parties have been or are at serious risk of harm the young person/adult will be suspended immediately from transport until a risk assessment is carried out and, where possible, amendments to provision made.

In cases of physical assault, the young person/adult will be suspension from transport, pending investigation, including obtaining written statements and further discussions with parents/carers and school.

In more extreme circumstances or where risks cannot be reduced to an acceptable level, the Council will remove arranged travel assistance due to the Health & Safety risks. In these instances, and with agreement of the Council a re-imbusement/ personal transport budget may be offered so that they can take responsibility for arranging suitable transport. In order for travel assistance to continue, in some cases, the young person/adult could be asked to organise another appropriate person to accompany them to/from college on arranged transport and no payment will be made by the Council for this.

During any periods of suspension, the young person/adult (or parents/carers) are responsible for making appropriate arrangements for getting to/from school. Temporary suspension of transport does not mean the Council is discharging its duty, but that the arranged transport, as a result of behavioural issues has had to be suspended or removed.

Parents/Carer and users of the Council's arranged transport are required to comply with behavioural requirements that prohibit violence or verbal abuse to staff and transport users.

10. MEDICATION

Transport staff are responsible for the health and safety of students in their care, but do not administer medication. If a young person/adult (or parents/carers) believe it is unsafe to travel on transport without medication being administered, the School Travel Assistance team must be advised at the time of application or immediately if there is a change of circumstances.

In cases where there are complex medical needs, the Council will seek to provide appropriate support, where it is not possible to provide suitable support the young person/adult (or parents/carers) may be required to arrange appropriate support (e.g. parent, relative, carer etc at no cost to the Council).

The Council's procedure is that emergency services will be called to deal with emergencies and parent/carers informed. It is for the young person/adult (or parents/carers) to decide if they wish to be transported under these circumstances.

11. SEVERE WEATHER

Transport will run unless parents/carers/young adult receive a text to advise otherwise. It may not be possible for the vehicle to enter certain roads due to unsafe road conditions, therefore, in these instances young adults/parents/carers will need to determine whether they are able to meet the vehicle at an alternative pick up point (e.g. top of the road, main road etc). Should an alternative pick-up point be used in the morning, it will also be the drop off location in the afternoon.

If colleges decide to close earlier than their scheduled finishing time or the weather deteriorates to an extent transport is dispatched earlier it will be necessary to return students home early, if it is not possible to make contact with parents/carers to ensure they will be there to pick up their young person/adult, they will be left at college and parents/carer will be responsible for collecting them.

12. CCTV & GPS

The Council may install CCTV with audio recording in its vehicles and will advise parents/carers/young adults on doing so, the CCTV footage will not be shared or circulated with anyone outside of the Council but will be used to help improve outcomes of incidents or allegations.

Many vehicles currently operate with GPS.